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President: Mr. Hamilton Shirley AMERASINGHE
(Sri Lanka).

AGENDA ITEM 29

The situation in the Middle East

1. The PRESIDENT: This afternoon the Assembly will begin consideration of agenda item 29. Before calling on the first speaker, I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this agenda item be closed on Friday, 3 December—that is, tomorrow—at 6 p.m. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that it is so decided.

It was so decided.

2. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The General Assembly is today resuming its debate on the present situation in the Middle East, the perpetuation of which constitutes a serious threat to the chances for peace and stability in the area, thus endangering international peace and security. As the General Assembly debates this situation, it is undoubtedly cognizant of its dimensions, alert to the consequences of its perpetuation and aware of the manoeuvres to obstruct and freeze peace efforts on one pretext or another. Hence the General Assembly is certainly well aware of its responsibilities when, on behalf of the world community, it voices its categorical rejection of all that tends to consolidate occupation, obstruct a solution or perpetuate violation of the principles of the Charter and disrespect for its objectives. It is certainly well aware, too, of its responsibility for taking the initiative in due time, should progress and momentum towards a just and durable peace in the Middle East in accordance with United Nations resolutions and Charter principles fail to materialize.

3. Egypt has clearly demonstrated on more than one occasion, and particularly since the October 1973 war, a definite desire for a just peace and a firm policy of participating in all that is conducive to its realization. Such has been its desire and policy, in order to spare the area further possibilities of confrontation and the scourge of war to which it has been exposed for over 25 years, that is to say, since the Palestinian people were deprived of their legitimate rights to self-determination and independence in a manner unprecedented in history, especially in this era when the United Nations Charter constitutes the cornerstone of man's progress and development.

4. The October 1973 war opened the road to a just peace in the Middle East, for it clearly demonstrated that the feelings of superiority, invincibility, conceit and arrogance with which Israel's leaders have since 1967 been imbued and on which they have built their policies and attitudes are false, and equip them poorly to cope with established facts. It is impossible for the Arab peoples to accept continued foreign occupation of their territories, the denial of their rights or the desire of others to expand at their expense, control their destinies and obstruct their march towards progress. The October 1973 war showed clearly that the Israeli occupation will not last and that it was only through force that the Palestinian people was compelled to succumb to a state of homelessness. It was all a false dream. Thus, occupation has collapsed and so have its fortifications, destroying the myth of Israel's invincibility. It has become clear to the whole world that the only way to a solution, the establishment of a just and durable peace, lies in bringing to an end the occupation of all the Arab territories occupied since the war of 5 June 1967 and in restoring the national rights of the Palestinian people within the framework of international legitimacy, United Nations resolutions and Charter principles, in particular those relating to sovereignty, territorial integrity, the right to existence and self-determination.

5. Egypt has been aware all along of the universal desire for peace on the condition that it is just and based on firm grounds that take due account of rights and reciprocal obligations without infringing on fundamental principles of international relations, the most important of which are the principles of sovereignty and self-determination. Thus, on 16 October 1973, while the war was still on, President El-Sadat called for the convening of a peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations in which all the parties concerned, including the Palestinian people and Israel, would participate in working out the process for establishing a just peace in the area. It was within that framework that the United Nations Peace Conference on the Middle East was decided upon and actually convened—and Egypt calls for the speedy resumption of that Conference, again with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], the representative of the Palestinian people, to consolidate peace and to achieve a just solution of the problem. In Egypt's view, that is the only effective road to a peaceful solution. We are convinced that the General Assembly, with all the weight it carries internationally and with its universal representativity, shares this view. We are encouraged in this view by the series of resolutions it has adopted—resolutions that express the opinion of the great majority of the States and peoples members of the international community regarding one of the most important and grave problems faced by humanity in contemporary times. We therefore call on the General Assembly to

request the immediate resumption of the United Nations Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX).

6. Egypt, whose policy aims at the establishment of a just and therefore durable peace in the Middle East, believes that the peace effort should be conducted within the framework of the United Nations, under the aegis of its Charter and in conformity with its resolutions. This has always been and will continue to be Egypt's policy in the future. A peaceful solution should be achieved in conformity with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations and with the principles of the Charter, which prohibits the acquisition of territory by force and holds sacred the principle of self-determination. Let it then be clear that Egypt's aims are to bring about Israel's withdrawal from all the Arab territories it has occupied since 1967 without any exception whatsoever, and to ensure that Israel respect the Palestinian people's right to establish an independent State on Palestinian soil. These are two issues which are not subject to bargaining or bartering. The crux of the peace talks should be the establishment of a just peace in the light of the principles of the Charter together with the provision of the necessary international guarantees to ensure the right of each party to an independent entity, sovereignty and territorial integrity, to political independence and self-determination, and its right to live within internationally recognized boundaries, which would be guaranteed and hence secure. This is the crux of the peace talks and in fact of all United Nations resolutions hitherto adopted with respect to the situation in the Middle East, whether emanating from the General Assembly or the Security Council.

7. I wish to reiterate once again that the United Nations and its principal organs, the Security Council and the General Assembly, should supervise the peace effort. We should always bear in mind that the Peace Conference was based on Security Council resolution 338 (1973) and was therefore convened within the framework of the United Nations and, more specifically, under the direct auspices of the Security Council, as this matter falls within its immediate competence. In view of this, it is necessary and imperative that the Security Council meet in due time to follow up the peace effort and the implementation of the United Nations resolutions, to give impetus to matters and to put a halt to manoeuvres intended to procrastinate or to perpetuate the stalemate.

8. In this connexion, the Secretary-General early this year deemed it important—and rightly so—to resume his endeavours to put an end to the stalled peace effort. Therefore the Secretary-General suggested that he resume contacts with all the parties to the conflict, including the PLO, through their representatives at United Nations Headquarters, with a view to preparing for the resumption of work for the establishment of a just and durable peace. Egypt's support for this initiative—an initiative to be considered within the framework of the resumption of the United Nations Peace Conference on the Middle East—was clear in its reply to the Secretary-General. It also expressed appreciation of the judicious step he had taken in contacting the PLO for this purpose. This represented an honest and strict implementation of General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX), provid-

ing for the participation of the PLO on an equal footing with the other parties in all deliberations dealing with the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

9. The Egyptian delegation therefore calls on the General Assembly to support the initiative of the Secretary-General and further to entrust him with the task of once again contacting the parties he notified by his note of 1 April 1976, with a view to preparing for the convening of the Peace Conference. The Secretary-General would be called upon to submit a report on the results of his efforts and contacts to the Security Council and the General Assembly within a specified period, since procrastination and obstructive tactics cannot be accepted under any circumstances. That is how Egypt envisages the process towards resumption of the Peace Conference, which is the natural and internationally accepted framework for action to achieve a sound and just settlement in the area. Egypt is furthermore willing to co-operate in all initiatives and moves intended to break the stalemate and to put a halt to all attempts to obstruct progress towards the reconvening of the Geneva Conference with the participation of all the parties concerned and the two Co-Chairmen of the Conference—the Soviet Union and the United States—so that serious consultations can be pursued with a view to the establishment of a just peace in the Middle East.

10. I should like here to express our belief that the Co-Chairmen of the Conference and the Secretary-General of the United Nations have to play the principal role in effectively paving the way for the resumption of the Peace Conference and in proceeding with the task of establishing a just peace in the Middle East. In this connexion, the latest Soviet initiative was very timely.

11. At the same time, I wish to affirm our conviction that the United States can play a significant and major role in exerting its influence with Israel so that the latter will cease its procrastination and obstructive tactics and take positive action to achieve a settlement. Our conviction emanates from the fact that Israel has been and remains totally dependent on the United States in all aspects of its life, especially for the consolidation of its military and economic power. Accordingly, the country that can grant so much assistance surely possesses the means and the power to influence and bring the other party to reason and to dissuade it from wild ventures of expansion and domination. In this context, the United States has adopted a positive stand, namely, its agreement to the consensus statement adopted by the Security Council on 11 November 1976,¹ strongly deploring Israeli policies and practices in the occupied Arab territories.

12. Israel's continued denial of the established rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination—this natural inalienable right provided for in the United Nations Charter—constitutes a serious obstacle to peace, which can never be realized or be lasting unless the core of the problem and the conflict are settled. This will be achieved only with the restoration of the Palestinian people's rights. This is a matter which is no longer the responsibility of the Palestinian people alone or of the Arab

¹ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1976*, document S/12233.

peoples alone; it is an international and collective responsibility which devolves on us all, and our consciences and history will hold us accountable.

13. As President El-Sadat declared before this Assembly at the previous session, “the cause of the Palestinian people [is] the cause of every free people seeking peace, calling for justice and accepting the rule of law as arbiter between good and evil, right and wrong”.²

14. While Egypt is doing its utmost to spur on the process towards a just peace, Israel is going further in its attempts to obstruct that process and to consolidate its occupation. Irrefutable evidence of that irresponsible Israeli policy is furnished by the violations and the crimes committed by the Israeli authorities in the occupied Arab territories and their designs to alter the geographical features and demographic composition of those territories. The practices which Israel has undertaken constitute serious violations of international conventions, which it refuses to apply despite unanimously adopted resolutions of the General Assembly. Those practices are merely part of the Israeli plan which obviously seeks to obstruct peace and impose a fait accompli which I hereby declare, on behalf of the Egyptian Government, that we absolutely, categorically and totally reject. At the same time, I also declare that the said practices do not confer any right upon Israel and do not bind us under any circumstances whatsoever.

15. When the Security Council convened in November to examine the dangerous situation existing in the occupied territories as a result of Israeli practices, it took note of those practices and dealt with their impact on the peace effort. On 11 November 1976 the President of the Security Council issued, on behalf of the Council, a consensus statement, which declared that the Council considered those Israeli practices illegitimate, having no legal validity and constituting an obstacle to peace and that all those obstructive practices—and some that may yet be revealed in the near future—are but links in the chain of Israel’s attempts to perpetuate its occupation and avoid peace.

16. Hence the Egyptian delegation places on record its rejection of all such attempts and its insistence on giving peace efforts the chance to come to fruition. In all events, the option is clear to us. We have opted for a peaceful solution, provided it leads to a speedy, just and durable peace in the Middle East. This calls for the convening of the United Nations Peace Conference during the first months of the new year and the beginning of preparations forthwith. We are working towards that end, and we request the General Assembly, on behalf of the international community, to adopt the relevant resolution and issue the necessary directives. Should obstructive tactics and procrastination continue, thus eliminating the chances for political action in the near future, then Egypt and the Arabs will proceed to liberate their territories and to recover their rights, using to that end all the means called for by the legitimate rights of self-defence provided for in the Charter, to regain our territories, protect our sovereignty and ensure the future of our children.

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2388th meeting.*

17. Israel would be committing the biggest folly if it once again became the slave of its conceit, its arrogance, its designs and attempts to impose an expansionist fait accompli on the Arab peoples and States and even on the international community as a whole. Egypt calls upon all States to discharge their responsibility for peace by declaring their rejection and condemnation of Israel’s procrastination and obstructive tactics and by withholding any assistance of any kind that would encourage Israel in its persistence in such a course, whether through its present practices in the occupied territories or otherwise.

18. Providing momentum in the present situation and convening the United Nations Peace Conference on the Middle East as speedily as possible to examine the core of the problem in all its dimensions is a principal step. It is necessary to start preparations for this immediately. The participation of the PLO in all this is a decided matter and the Egyptian Government maintains that all these matters should not be left undefined. Hence its request that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should submit his report to the Security Council within a fixed period of time is meant to ensure the effectiveness of preparatory work and to put matters, especially the role of the Security Council, in their right context.

19. A just settlement in the Middle East should include a number of elements which are indispensable if we wish to have a durable peace and not merely an armed truce. Foremost among those elements are: Israel’s withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967, the restoration of the national and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the provision of guarantees of the right of all peoples in the region to live in peace within their recognized boundaries—all of which is in accordance with the principles of the Charter and in compliance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

20. In conclusion, I wish to express, on behalf of my country, our appreciation to those peoples and Governments which have steadfastly supported Arab rights, rejected Israeli aggression and demanded an end to it and the realization of a just peace in the area.

21. We shall continue to act within the context of the United Nations, submitting our cause before the representatives of the people of the world and hoping for their support and backing, for in matters of war and peace the United Nations constitutes the framework for action. We have in the principles of the Charter a constitution from which we should not depart and in United Nations resolutions a plan which we should adhere to and implement in order to achieve a just peace in the Middle East.

22. Mr. ALLAF (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Barely 10 days ago the General Assembly concluded its discussion of the question of Palestine, and at the end of that discussion it adopted by an overwhelming majority the report and recommendations of the 20-member Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People; it also urged the Security Council to take the necessary measures, in keeping with its responsibilities under the United Nations Charter, to implement the Committee’s recommendations [*resolution 31/20*].

23. Today the General Assembly is beginning its discussion of the problem of the Middle East. This problem originated at the same time as the question of Palestine, and it is the direct result of the catastrophe that befell the Palestinian people in 1947, when its homeland was partitioned and it was driven from its land and its homes and transformed into a group of more than 3 million refugees living in camps under oppression, occupation and domination.

24. But those two items are not the only direct consequences of the tragedy of the Palestinian people discussed by the General Assembly at each of its sessions. Very recently the Special Political Committee concluded its discussion of the question of the Palestinian refugees, and the General Assembly adopted five resolutions [resolutions 31/15 A-E]; on assistance to Palestinian refugees, on assistance to persons displaced as a result of the 1967 hostilities, on the financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East [UNRWA], on the return of the 1967 migrants and on the situation of Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip. Just this morning the Special Political Committee also concluded its consideration of Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the population of the occupied Arab territories. It adopted four draft resolutions [resolutions 31/106 A-D], deploring those Israeli practices, condemning the establishment of Jewish settlements and Israel's deliberate destruction of the Syrian town of Quneitra, confirming that the fourth Geneva Convention is applicable to the occupied Arab territories, and deploring Israel's continued violation of that Convention.

25. It should not be forgotten either that the Security Council has had innumerable discussions on Israel's repressive and expansionist policy in the occupied Arab territories. In a consensus statement adopted on 11 November last, the Council condemned all those practices. Finally, I would recall that these questions have been studied many times in the General Assembly and the result has always been a condemnation of zionism in all its aspects, including its racism, and of the co-operation between Israel and the racist régime of South Africa.

26. The representative of Israel is complaining and wondering why lately the General Assembly and its Main Committees and the Security Council have been devoting so much effort and so much time to studying Israeli practices and the consequences of its aggression, expansion and racism. The fact is that none of the other Members of the United Nations—and there are now 145—has violated the United Nations Charter and United Nations resolutions as Israel has done. Israel has been condemned and denounced far more often than all of the other Members of the United Nations taken together since the Organization was established more than 31 years ago.

27. Why is all that happening in the United Nations? Why is exactly the same thing happening in the specialized agencies and other international bodies? Why is Israel so generally condemned—in the Commission on Human Rights, in the World Health Organization, in the International Labour Organisation, in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] and in dozens of other international organizations?

28. The reason lies in the very nature of Israel as a racist, expansionist entity. That is no secret to anyone, not even to Israel's traditional friends in North America and Western Europe—friends who have been deluded about Israel.

29. The Zionists have deceived world public opinion for far too long. They have exploited the crisis of conscience in Europe by speaking about the oppression, genocide and injustice suffered by the Jews at the hands of the Western world. They have thus won the pity and support of these peoples, using the deceptive Zionist slogan of “a land without a people for a people without a land”, as well as the legend of the “wandering Jew”, whose existence is threatened, who is pursued by oppression and discrimination, and who has been denied the right to exist.

30. But was Palestine truly a “land without a people”? And did the Zionists come to that part of the world to flee oppression and discrimination or to practise discrimination and oppression?

31. When the British Zionist writer Israel Zangwill propagated his great lie in 1901, in his article “The Return to Palestine”,³ by saying that “a land without a people should be given to a people without a land”, at that time there were more than half a million inhabitants in Palestine, including more than 460,000 Moslems and Christian Arabs, or about 91 per cent of the entire population. But there were only 47,000 Jews, or about 9 per cent of the total population.

32. However, Zangwill admitted his lie some 20 years later when, in *The Voice of Jerusalem*, a book published in 1920, he wrote:

“There is, however, a difficulty from which the Zionist dares not divert his eyes, though he rarely likes to face it. Palestine proper has already its inhabitants. The pashalik of Jerusalem is already twice as thickly populated as the United States, having fifty-two souls to every square mile, and not 25 per cent of them Jews; so we must be prepared either to drive out by the sword the tribes in possession as our forefathers did, or to grapple with the problem of a large alien population . . .”⁴

33. In fact, Palestine has never been an uninhabited land. Throughout the centuries Palestine has been the Holy Land of the three revealed religions. It has been inhabited by hundreds of thousands of people, with an overwhelming majority of Arabs, especially during the last 14 centuries.

34. When Herzl, in 1896, evolved the concept of a Jewish State, there were 453,000 Arabs as against 47,000 Jews.

35. At the time of the proclamation of the Balfour Declaration, in 1917, there were 642,000 Arabs as against 58,000 Jews.

36. When the British Mandatory Government carried out the first census in Palestine, in 1922, the whole population amounted to 757,182 inhabitants, of whom 88 per cent

³ Israel Zangwill, “The Return to Palestine,” *New Liberal Review*, II (December 1901).

⁴ See Israel Zangwill, *The Voice of Jerusalem* (London, William Heinemann, 1920), p. 88. Quoted in English by the speaker.

were Moslem and Christian Arabs and only 11 per cent were Jews.

37. Despite the massive immigrations of Jews inundating Palestine, legally and illegally, in complicity with the British Mandatory Power, when the second and last census was taken in 1931, it was found that the total number of inhabitants in Palestine was 1,033,314, of whom 83 per cent were Arabs and 17 per cent were Jews.

38. The massive Jewish immigration continued during the following 15 years, and on the eve of the partition resolution of 1947 [resolution 181 (II)] the population of Palestine had reached approximately 2 million, of whom two thirds were Arabs and only one third Jews.

39. Thus, Palestine remained until the last 50 years—during which it became the target of the Zionist plot which ended in the creation of Israel—a land populated by an overwhelming majority of Moslem and Christian Arabs.

40. And just as Palestine has never been “a land without a people”, so the invading Zionists were not mere innocent refugees fleeing from oppression and racial and religious discrimination.

41. Zionists poured into Palestine, coming from the four corners of the earth, to take it away from the indigenous people, who had lived on their own land and under their own skies for tens of centuries—since the dawn of history—and to reduce these people who had committed no crime to the status of refugees, landless and homeless.

42. The Zionists had nurtured this tragedy of the Palestinian people from the time they began to weave their odious plot to rob the Palestinians of their land. Theodor Herzl, the father of political Zionism, recognized this himself in his memoirs, when he said:

“We intend to work the poor population across the frontier surreptitiously by providing work for them in transit countries but denying them any employment in our land.”⁵

43. The Zionists confirmed that goal at the First Zionist Congress, held in Basel in 1897, and since then they have continued their endeavours to attain that goal. In 1917 the Balfour promise confirmed the establishment of a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine, and Palestine was hastily placed under British Mandate. This was provided for in the documents of the Mandate. In their hundreds of thousands, the Jewish immigrants invaded Palestine. They continued to do so, winning, pressuring and buying heads of State and political leaders to their side, until the day they succeeded in having Palestine partitioned by the 1947 resolution and establishing “the Jewish State” over most of the land of Palestine snatched away from the Palestinians. They have always tried to get rid of the indigenous Arabs by means of pressure and terrorism. That was their plan even before the partition of Palestine, and in 1943 they requested the American President Roosevelt to support the Biltmore programme, which had been adopted by the Zionist organization a year earlier, in order to open the

doors to unlimited Jewish emigration to Palestine and to the removal of the Palestinian Arabs to Iraq.

44. After its aggression of June 1967, Israel occupied the rest of the territory of Palestine, the Golan Heights and Sinai, and the Zionists have continued to carry out their expansionist plan of driving the Arabs from their land and establishing Jewish settlements and filling them with Zionist aggressors.

45. The great Jewish philosopher Ahad Ha'am foresaw the suffering which the Palestinian Arabs would endure as a result of the Zionist colonialist greed. He said:

“In Basel, yesterday, I sat lonely among my brothers, like a mourner at a wedding . . . This new enthusiasm is an artificial one, and the results of treacherous hopes will be despair . . . The salvation of Israel will come through prophets and not through diplomats . . . One thing is clear to me: we have destroyed much more than we have built up.”⁶

46. Some years later, after Ahad Ha'am had lived in Palestine and had seen with his own eyes the consequences of Zionism and its crimes against the Arab population of Palestine, he wrote in the newspaper, *Ha'aretz*:

“Our people wanted no part of this barbarous life . . . What shall we say now if this is really true?”—referring to the murder of innocent Arabs—“My God, is this the end? Is this the goal for which our fathers have striven and for whose sake all generations have suffered? Is this the dream of a ‘return to Zion’ to stain its soil with innocent blood? . . . And now God has afflicted me to have lived to see with my own eyes that I apparently erred . . . If this be the ‘Messiah’ then I do not wish to see His coming . . .”⁷

47. At the beginning of 1961 *Ner*, the monthly review published in Jerusalem by the “IHUD” Association, wrote, in expressing the point of view of the philosopher Martin Buber:

“Only an internal revolution can have the power to heal our people of their murderous sickness of causeless hatred [for the Arabs]. It is bound to bring complete ruin upon us. Only then will the old and young in our land realize how great was our responsibility to those miserable Arab refugees in whose towns we have settled Jews who were brought from afar; whose homes we have inherited; whose fields we now sow and harvest; the fruits of whose gardens, orchards and vineyards we gather; and in whose cities that we robbed we have put up houses of education, charity, and prayer while we babble and rave about being the ‘people of the book’ and the ‘light of the nations’”.⁷

48. These flagrant injustices suffered by the Palestinian people at the hands of the Zionist invaders are the sole and direct reason for the creation of the Arab-Israeli conflict which is at present called the problem of the Middle East. This conflict began at the very time when Palestine was partitioned and the racist “Jewish State” was implanted in the heart of Palestine.

⁶ *Idem.*

⁷ *Idem.*

⁵ Quoted in English by the speaker.

49. Before 1947 there was no Arab-Israeli conflict, but there was a Zionist-Palestinian conflict. Before 1947 there was no crisis in the Middle East, because "Israel" had not yet been implanted by aggression and injustice in the very heart of the Middle East region.

50. This truth, the truth that the tragedy of Palestine is the main reason for the outbreak of the crisis in the Middle East and the Israeli-Arab conflict, has become a fact recognized by the whole world except by "Israel", of course.

51. The representative of Israel repeated yet again his fallacious arguments when he claimed in his statement made on 18 November 1976 during the debate on the question of Palestine [70th meeting] that the crux of the Israeli-Arab conflict was neither the question of the Palestinian Arabs nor that of the territories occupied by Israel.

52. It is really strange that the Zionists should be blind—or feign blindness—to such an extent, for if the fate of the Palestinian people and the fate of the territories occupied by Israeli forces do not constitute the crux of the problem of the Middle East, then what is that crux?

53. Throughout the years the Arabs have repeated that the two sole conditions for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East are: recognition by Israel of the national rights of the Palestinian people and the withdrawal of Israel from all the territories it had conquered as a result of its 1967 aggression.

54. The Arabs have not imposed any other conditions for putting an end to the Middle East conflict or for the restoration of peace. If it were not for Israel's violations of the rights of the Palestinian people and its occupation of that people's territory and of the neighbouring Egyptian and Syrian territories in violation of the United Nations Charter and United Nations resolutions, there would not be any conflict or crisis in the region.

55. The best proof of the fact that the Middle East problem is the direct consequence of the problem of the Palestinian people is that the state of war and conflict continues between Israel and the Arab countries and has been going on from 1947 up to 1967—in other words, for 20 years. Before any part of Egyptian or Syrian territory was occupied by Israel, Israeli aggression was rife because of the increasing complexity of this conflict. It reached its culmination against the Arab States in 1967, but the 1967 war was not the beginning of the conflict. We can say also that the withdrawal of Israel from Syrian and Egyptian territory will not in itself be sufficient to put an end to the causes of the Middle East conflict. There also must be an end to the Israeli aggression inflicted on the Palestinian people. The Palestinian people must return to their lands and exercise their rights to sovereignty, independence and self-determination on their own soil in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions.

56. This truth has become completely clear to the overwhelming majority of peoples and nations and it is supported by those peoples. As proof of this, it is sufficient to refer to the statements made by 50 States that took part

in the debate in the Security Council at the beginning of this year on the Middle East problem, including the Palestinian crisis, a debate in which the PLO participated, in conformity with resolution 381 (1975), which was adopted on the initiative of the Syrian Arab Republic, when the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force [UNDOF] was renewed.

57. During the debates we had this year and last year it became evident that the world understood that we could never achieve a just and peaceful settlement in the Middle East without finding a solution to the problem of Palestine and without giving the Palestinian people the ability to exercise their inalienable national rights. The principles laid down in draft resolution S/11940,⁸ which would have been adopted by the Security Council at the end of that debate if the United States veto had not been imposed have become the sole basis for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The majority of countries which are sincerely trying to help the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East have confirmed this, as did the report of the 20-member Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People:

"The draft resolution (S/11940), proposed by six members of the Security Council but not adopted because of a veto, clearly affirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, as well as the basic elements for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. This draft resolution remained, in spite of its obstruction, the most supported basis for a peaceful and just settlement in the Middle East". [A/31/35, para. 57.]⁹

58. Without the United States right of veto, the Security Council would have confirmed in that draft resolution, which unfortunately was not adopted, the following:

"(a) That the Palestinian people should be enabled to exercise its inalienable national right of self-determination, including the right to establish an independent state in Palestine in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

"(b) The right of Palestinian refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours to do so and the right of those choosing not to return to receive compensation for their property;

"(c) That Israel should withdraw from all the Arab territories occupied since June 1967;

"(d) That appropriate arrangements should be established to guarantee, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries".⁹

59. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People adopted these principles in

⁸ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1976*.

⁹ Quoted in English by the speaker.

paragraph 52 of its report from which I quoted, as well as in its recommendations in paragraphs 68, 69 and 72 of that report. Moreover, the General Assembly, in endorsing, by an overwhelming majority, the recommendations of the Committee on 24 November 1976 [resolution 31/20], consecrated those principles which, in the view of the overwhelming majority of Member States, represent a fundamental basis for the establishment of a true peace.

60. Since the overwhelming majority of the international community has recognized the valid principles for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, why then cannot this peace be established and who is preventing its establishment?

61. Which is the party that is preventing the establishment of peace and is manoeuvring in order to delay, to maintain the *fait accompli* and to prolong its occupation?

62. Which is the party that is undermining all serious measures to find a comprehensive solution, and who is inventing and invoking pretexts and imposing unacceptable conditions so as to prevent any progress in the search for peace with the participation of all the parties concerned in the conflict? Which is the party that is frantically trying to annex occupied territories so as to establish settlements and to change the demographic and cultural character of the territories in order to Judaize them and eliminate from them any other characteristics, Arab, Christian or Moslem?

63. The Arabs have stated and affirmed on every occasion their acceptance of law and of all that is legitimate and have never asked for anything else than the implementation of United Nations resolutions on the question of Palestine and the Middle East as the basis for a settlement. But what has Israel done?

64. Israel has stubbornly and persistently refused—and continues to do so—to implement any United Nations resolutions, even the resolutions by which Israel was established and became a Member of the United Nations and even the two resolutions of the Security Council which have been repeatedly and constantly referred to hypocritically by the representative of Israel in order to confuse others, without the Israeli entity taking any serious action to implement their provisions. The Zionists are sparing no efforts to distort and misinterpret those two resolutions—242 (1967) and 338 (1973)—and they do so shamelessly in order to evade the obligations imposed on Israel by those two texts.

65. The United Nations resolutions as a whole invite the parties to take concrete and clear measures to ensure the maintenance of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and to resolve the question of Palestine, but Israel does not recognize any of those measures except one, which, according to Israel, would enable it to retain the Arab territories that it has acquired by force and aggression. Among the more than 240 resolutions which have been adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council, Israel only recognizes Security Council resolution 242 (1967), from which it selects one or two paragraphs that it interprets to suit itself.

66. For example, the Zionists have nothing to say about the first principle reaffirmed by resolution 242 (1967),

namely, that it is inadmissible to acquire territory by force, and Israel deliberately distorts that text and misinterprets the principle laid down in paragraph 1 of that resolution, namely, the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied as a result of the 1967 conflict, claiming that such a withdrawal does not mean withdrawal from all of the territories occupied during the conflict but from only a part of them. This is a ridiculous and dishonest interpretation. It is dishonest in the sense that it admirably shows the imperialist mentality, because the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force cannot admit of any exception or partial implementation. Anything that is prohibited as a whole cannot be permitted in part, and what applies to the whole applies to each part because stealing is stealing whether the victims number thousands or millions. Moreover, Moshe Dayan himself recognized that Israel was obliged to withdraw from all the territories occupied in 1967 in accordance with Security Council resolution 242 (1967), when he said at a closed meeting of the Knesset on 19 June 1968, according to the newspaper *Davar*, that:

“The Security Council explicitly resolved that Israel should withdraw to the lines of 4 June 1967. It is no good playing with words and trying to interpret the Security Council resolution in any other way.

“Israel must be frankly reserved as regards the Security Council resolution, which clearly calls for an Israeli withdrawal to the 4 June lines”.¹⁰

It was not I who said that, but Moshe Dayan himself, the then Defense Minister of Israel.

67. It is a paradox that aggressive and expansionist Israel—which has unleashed three wars of aggression against the Arabs in 20 years and has made hundreds of raids and attacks over Arab frontiers and which has extended its territory many times by force and aggression—should talk constantly about the provisions of resolution 242 (1967) concerning respect for sovereignty, independence and the right of every State in the region to exist in secure and recognized boundaries.

68. It would seem that the only one to benefit from those provisions was Israel; indeed, the phrase “every State in the area” means for the Zionists, the State of Israel alone, and the words “secure and recognized boundaries”, for the Zionist entity, mean the frontiers of Israel alone. It would seem that it was Israel that had suffered aggression during the last 30 years, and that it was the Arab States that had crossed frontiers, occupied territories, established settlements and displaced populations.

69. However, when has Israel sincerely endeavoured to implement Security Council resolution 242 (1967), despite the defects that characterize that text? When has it reacted favourably to what that text calls for—namely, the withdrawal of Israeli troops and respect for the sovereignty and frontiers of all the countries of the region? Furthermore, I do not need to speak—I believe—of the absolutely negative attitude of Israel towards the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, appointed in pursuance of paragraph 3

¹⁰ Quoted in English by the speaker.

of resolution 242 (1967). Moreover its attitude has been passive with regard to the efforts of the Secretary-General himself under the terms of resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

70. Actually, Israel has never been sincere about accepting or being willing to implement resolution 242 (1967); the same is true of resolution 338 (1973), which Israel certainly does not want to implement. It is in that spirit that Israel has always impeded the convening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, which was to have been held in accordance with that resolution. In addition, it has stubbornly refused to agree to the participation of the Palestinians in that Conference.

71. There is virtually unanimous recognition that the problem of Palestine lies at the very heart of the Middle East conflict and that, without a just solution of that problem, it will be impossible to establish lasting peace in the region.

72. In its resolution 338 (1973), the Security Council calls for the immediate implementation of resolution 242 (1967) and at the same time for "negotiations . . . between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East."

73. Thus, if the solution of the Palestine question is a pre-condition for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and since the Security Council in resolution 338 (1973) calls for negotiations among the parties concerned, under appropriate auspices, in order to reach a settlement, who is more interested in the Palestine question—which is at the very heart of the problem—than the Palestinians themselves?

74. To insist on convening the Peace Conference without the participation of the representatives of the Palestinian people is like asking to have a marriage service held without the participation of the bride and bridegroom. If there is indeed an earnest and sincere desire to attain a just and honourable peace in the region, how can one imagine arriving at such a peace while neglecting the Palestinian element which is at the very heart of the problem question and is the direct reason for the conflict?

75. Among the obstacles which Israel places in the path of peace is its refusal to recognize the right of the Palestinian people to establish their national independent entity in their own land, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the Organization, especially those on self-determination.

76. This is an inalienable right, recognized by the Charter and by the relevant resolutions—especially General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX), 3376 (XXX) and 31/20.

77. Actually, the right which Israel arrogates to itself to oppose the creation of what it calls "any third State between itself and Jordan" is most unusual, for who gave Israel the right or the authority to decide what should or should not happen outside its frontiers?

78. General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, the partition resolution—irrespective of its injustice

and violation of the rights of the Palestinian people—is the sole basis, in the estimation of the United Nations, for the creation of the Zionist entity, because it was that very resolution which created "Israel". But that same resolution also established the Arab Palestinian entity—or, rather, divided the Palestinian land into two States: Arab and Jewish. If Israel is opposed to the establishment of an Arab Palestinian entity on the soil of Palestine, this means that Israel opposes General Assembly resolution 181 (II), by which the United Nations conferred official existence on Israel. Hence if Israel persists in its opposition to the existence of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine, that means that it disputes the legitimacy of resolution 181 (II), thereby casting doubt on the legality of the resolution on the basis of which Israel was established and by virtue of which it claims to be a State.

79. Furthermore, Israel's opposition to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine violates one of the two conditions on which Israel's admission to the United Nations was predicated. For, under the terms of General Assembly resolution 273 (III) of 11 May 1949, Israel undertook to carry out resolution 181 (II), on partition, and resolution 194 (III), concerning the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine and the repatriation of the Palestinian refugees. This flagrant violation by Israel of one of the two conditions on the basis of which it was admitted to membership in the United Nations entails serious complications and consequences with regard to Israel's status as a Member.

80. At a time when Israel erects so many obstacles to peace, it spares no effort in solidly establishing its colonial domination in the occupied Arab territories and is feverishly creating Jewish settlements in those territories, filling them with colonialist Zionist foreigners, and increasing measures of repression and oppression against the legitimate Arab population in order to displace them and evacuate their cities and villages so that they can be replaced by new Zionist colonies.

81. By next year there will be nearly 100 Jewish settlements on the Golan Heights, in the West Bank, in the Gaza Strip and in the Sinai. Moreover, the Israeli authorities are no longer making any secret of their intention to settle 500,000 Jews in the occupied Arab territories within the next 10 years.

82. The United Nations, through the General Assembly and the Security Council, has repeatedly condemned this policy of expansionist settlement pursued by the Zionist régime with a view to effecting a radical demographic and cultural change in the occupied Arab land, and Judaizing this land in order to annex it and prepare for the realization of "Greater Israel", the racist, colonialist dream.

83. The racist, Zionist plan to Judaize the Arab territories is not confined to the Arab territories occupied since 1967, but also extends to the Arab lands of Galilee and other overcrowded areas inhabited by Arabs living in what at present is called "Israel".

84. On 26 November 1975 the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv* published an article on the Zionist plan to create a whole Jewish town in Galilee, adding that Mr. Abba Eban, a

member of the Knesset and former Foreign Minister of Israel, had proposed a plan to establish a new town in Galilee to be populated and financed by Jews from the United States.

85. These Jewish settlements, feverishly established in Arab territories occupied either a long time ago or recently, reveal the imperialist policy of settlement of the Zionist entity and prove that Israel has no desire to live in peace or to coexist with the countries and peoples of the region. The establishment of Jewish settlements in the Arab territories flagrantly and dangerously violates the Geneva Conventions, particularly the fourth, the convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, signed on 12 August 1949, to which Israel is a party but which it violates every day and refuses to apply in the occupied Arab territories.

86. Among the latest condemnations of this Israeli policy of colonization I would recall the unanimous declaration of the Security Council adopted on 11 November last, the UNESCO resolution and the resolutions of the Special Political Committee adopted this morning.

87. Israel, in refusing to implement the resolutions of the United Nations, including those of its principal organs, namely, the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the tripartite Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, complains that most of the members of those bodies have no diplomatic relations with Israel and that these bodies are biased against it.

88. But Israel has taken the same defiant attitude with regard to the latest consensus adopted by the Security Council, although the majority of the members of the Council maintain diplomatic relations with Israel, and a large number are actually considered friends of Israel.

89. In connexion with the consensus in the Security Council, the Israeli Foreign Minister, Yigal Allon, commented on 17 November, as reported on Radio Israel:

“... this consensus was inaccurate, misleading, damaging both from the point of view of its content and its timing. Israel rejects it outright. As far as we are concerned, it does not exist.”¹¹

90. In the Knesset, Allon attacked all the members of the Security Council, and especially Israel's friends, as follows:

“... whoever lends a hand to resolutions or consensus of this kind--and this especially applies to Israel's friends in the Council--is taking a heavy responsibility on his shoulders. They are responsible for propagating illusions in the Arab world to the effect that it is possible to achieve the provisions of this miserable consensus.”¹¹

91. This unmasks Israel's lie to the effect that it opposes the resolutions and recommendations of various United Nations bodies because those bodies are biased, as it claims,

or because the majority of their members are hostile to it. The present composition of the Security Council is far from bearing out that lie. However, Israel took the same attitude with regard to the unanimous declaration denouncing and condemning those practices; this, I take it, is Israel's habitual position in regard to any recommendation or resolution designed to put an end to its aggression and to its racist practices.

92. The fact is that the false feelings of racial and religious superiority which animate the Zionists cause them to oppose any criticism of Zionist policy, because any criticism of Zionist practices is considered as a criticism of Judaism and thus as anti-Semitic. Israel, the Zionists think, should be beyond all criticism. For, as long as Israel is the “State of the Jews”, any criticism of its policy or action is an attack on the Jewish religion, and is therefore an act of anti-Semitism. In other words, Israel--according to them--is a super-State and has immunities enjoyed by no other State in the world, not even the Holy See--which Israel did not hesitate to attack when the Holy See failed to approve of the Zionist plans, notably with regard to Jerusalem.

93. Israel is afraid of peace, because it knows that peace can be founded only on justice. Israel fears justice, for it knows that if justice is secured on a solid basis that would put an end to its racist expansionist plans to annex Arab lands and completely annihilate the Arab people of Palestine.

94. Israel is so afraid of peace that its Permanent Representative delayed the meeting of the Security Council at the beginning of this week for two days for fear that the Security Council resolution 398 (1976) of 30 November 1976 concerning the renewal of the mandate of UNDOF on the Golan Heights might refer to what Israel considers a danger to itself and a threat to its security.

95. The representative of Israel--who is going to speak shortly and will repeat his lies about peace and his desire for peace--tried desperately to prevent the inclusion in the said report of the following small phrase in the second preambular paragraph: “... and the urgent need to continue and intensify such efforts”¹²--meaning, of course, the efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Imagine how dangerous this phrase is to Israel!

96. There is another paragraph, too, that the representative of Israel sought for two days to prevent the Security Council from announcing. The dangerous bomb that scared Israel so much was simply the following phrase, quoted from the Secretary-General's report in connexion with UNDOF:

“Despite the present quiet in the Israel-Syria sector, there can be no question that the situation in the Middle East will remain unstable and potentially dangerous unless real progress can be made towards a just and lasting settlement of the problem in all its aspects.”¹³

97. That is the second dangerous sentence which frightened Israel so much. For two days Israel tried to prevent

¹² *Idem.*

¹³ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1976*, document S/12235, para. 32.

¹¹ Quoted in English by the speaker.

the inclusion of that sentence in the decision adopted by the Security Council.

98. However, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 398 (1976) on the extension of the mandate of UNDOF for a further six months. The second paragraph of the preamble of that resolution, which was maintained despite Israel's objections, notes "the efforts made to establish a durable and just peace in the Middle East area and the urgent need to continue and intensify such efforts". At the same time, the President of the Council made a complementary and official statement on behalf of all the members of the Council in which he warned of the unstable and potentially dangerous situation in the region. That consensus statement, appearing in document S/12247 of 30 November 1976,¹⁴ supplements resolution 398 (1976). In that statement the Security Council endorses the views of the Secretary-General.

99. The fact is that Israel, in its expansionist plans to annex the occupied Arab territories, has always sought, since the establishment of UNDOF on Golan and UNEF in Sinai, to maintain those forces permanently, and to have their mandates renewed automatically and routinely, without making any serious effort in the interval to secure peace or to implement the resolutions of the United Nations. It would seem as though the United Nations troops were stationed in the occupied Arab territories in order to serve as a screen for the Israeli occupation and to allow Israel to avoid taking the necessary measures to place its soldiers along the cease-fire line and to transform its aggressive presence into a *fait accompli*.

100. But the patience of Syria and Egypt, and of the entire international community, has limits. The members of the Security Council as a whole rejected these Israeli manoeuvres and plans, and rejected the idea of renewing the mandate of UNDOF and UNEF routinely. This would have served the interests of the Israeli aggressor, which would like to gain time, maintain its presence in those territories forever, and preserve the *status quo*.

101. At the time when it accepted the extension of the mandate of UNDOF, the Syrian Government issued the following statement:

"The mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) ends later this month. In response to appeals made to it by friendly and peace-loving States and to efforts by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Syria has, in the past, accepted the renewal of this Force with the objective, at that time, of providing an opportunity for international attempts to achieve true progress on the road to peace. That progress, however, did not materialize, due to Israel's obstinate refusal to implement the United Nations resolutions. This led to a return to the state of 'no-war no-peace' in the area and placed the Middle East region at a cross-roads, thus increasing tensions and diminishing the opportunities of reaching a just and lasting peace, with all the possibilities this entails of an explosion endangering international peace and security. Notwithstanding these conditions, created by Israeli intransigence, international

efforts are still under way with a view to reaching an over-all solution to the Middle East conflict. Syria has, more often than not, responded favourably to these efforts, thus giving the international community more opportunities to intensify its efforts to begin building a just and permanent peace based on complete withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and ensuring the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. It is to be hoped that these opportunities will not be lost, since the Arab countries, which have on numerous occasions demonstrated their desire to achieve a just peace, cannot in the meantime remain silent regarding Israel's persistent defiance of the will of the United Nations and its depriving the Arab people of Palestine of their rights, as asserted in numerous United Nations resolutions and documents, the latest of which was the unanimous statement adopted a few days ago by the Security Council strongly denouncing Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories and stating them to be an obstacle to peace.

"The Syrian Arab Republic, proceeding from a position of principle and in keeping with the spirit of giving international efforts a chance to achieve a just and lasting peace based on the aforementioned principles, has decided to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a further six-month period, thus proving once again its awareness of its national and international responsibilities, hoping that this time the international community will assume its responsibility and prevent Israel from continuing to undermine the chances for peace, to violate the Charter of the United Nations and to defy the United Nations and its resolutions on the question of Palestine and the Middle East problem. However, Syria cannot, meanwhile, accept—and in that it is in complete solidarity with its fellow Arab States—Israel's endless occupation of the Arab territories and its persistence in depriving the Palestinian people of their rights." [A/31/345-S/12237, annex.]

102. These are the reasons and considerations which prompted Syria to respond to the appeal made by fraternal and friendly countries as well as to the efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Waldheim. Syria demonstrated its goodwill and its sincere desire to see peace established by giving a new opportunity for the international efforts undertaken to achieve peace.

103. I warn Israel against any attempts to misinterpret this new and pacific measure taken by Syria in accepting the renewal of the mandate of UNDOF for another six months, or to try to exploit that period to impede the search for peace and to maintain the policy of *fait accompli*.

104. We shall never agree that Israel should continue to exploit the peaceful Arab intentions and initiatives. If Israel continues to practise the same policy of delay, its efforts will be doomed to failure.

105. The Arab countries want peace based on justice, because peace without justice is mere surrender.

106. The road to a just peace in the Middle East is clear and simple. There is no lack of solutions to the problem of the Middle East. What is lacking is the implementation of

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Supplement for October, November and December 1976.

principles which have been recognized and supported almost unanimously.

107. The three principles which constitute the basis for a just and lasting solution of this problem are known to all the world. If these principles are sincerely respected and implemented in their logical and chronological order, we shall be able to realize a dream that is very dear to the peoples of the region: to achieve a bright future based on peace, justice and prosperity.

108. The first principle is the total withdrawal by Israel from all the occupied Arab territories, in conformity with the principle of the inadmissibility of acquiring territories by force, with the provisions of the Charter, with the resolutions of the United Nations and with the principles of international law.

109. The second principle is recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, of which they have so long been robbed, to return to their homes and their lands, to national independence and sovereignty, and to the creation of an independent State on their own territory, in conformity with the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

110. Respect for these two principles and their implementation will logically and automatically lead to the realization of the third principle on which a just and lasting peace in the Middle East must be based, because if the occupation of the Arab territories comes to an end, if the Palestinian people recover their national rights in their entirety and if they can exercise them, there will no longer be any reason for conflict in the region and all the peoples and States of the region will live in complete peace and security.

111. It is perfectly normal that, if aggression and occupation cease, and if all the peoples and States of the region accede to self-determination, to independence and to sovereignty, the international guarantees of the Security Council and its permanent members, and of the United Nations will be sufficient to ensure that all parties respect their obligations and commitments under the Charter and in conformity with the provisions of these international guarantees. The peoples of the region will then be able to begin to lay solid foundations for progress and for economic, social and cultural development, and to save future generations from the scourge of war and destruction which has afflicted that unfortunate area for over half a century.

112. This is the challenge for peace which the Arab States address to those who sincerely desire peace. But any mystification, any deceptive words about negotiations, any pressure, oppression and occupation, any fallacious arguments about the need for putting an end to war at a time when Israel by its occupation and practices is in fact committing the most hateful acts of war in the occupied territories—all that no longer deceives anyone, for world public opinion now recognizes Israel's two faces: world public opinion now knows that Israeli acts and practices in the occupied territories irrefutably show its claims and arguments about peace, justice and coexistence to be false.

113. The Arabs are ready to implement and respect all United Nations resolutions concerning Palestine and the

Middle East without any exception whatsoever, whether adopted by the Security Council or by the General Assembly.

114. We defy the Israeli representative to announce the same commitment. If he does not—and we are sure that he will not—it will then be for the General Assembly to determine who is the aggressor and who is the victim; who respects the United Nations and its resolutions and who violates them; who wants peace based on justice and who wishes to impose on others a resignation based on submission.

115. The Arab nation will pursue with all its energies its struggle to free the occupied territories and recover its plundered rights. The Arab nation will give peace every chance and possibility, but never at the expense of its security, its future or the sacred right to defend itself and its land.

116. The Syrian Arab Republic firmly believes in the United Nations and in the Charter. It believes in the power of the United Nations to impose—if it wished to do so—respect for the Charter and its resolutions and to play a constructive role in establishing a just and lasting peace in the region.

117. In conformity with these considerations, the Syrian Arab Republic welcomes the two draft resolutions prepared by the non-aligned Group on the Middle East problem. The first concentrates on the elements and principles of the question and on the just bases for resolving the problem, while the second stresses immediate measures which should be taken by the Secretary-General and the Security Council, as well as by the major Powers responsible for the efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the region. We welcome the idea of taking measures, in accordance with a definite time-table, to implement the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

118. The Syrian Arab Republic co-operated to the extent of its modest means, together with Egypt and the other fraternal Arab countries, with the non-aligned group and other friendly countries in regard to these two draft resolutions, which will shortly be submitted to the General Assembly. At this stage I shall not repeat what the representative of Egypt said in detail concerning the provisions of these two texts, I shall merely say that the Syrian Arab Republic is in full accord with the countries—our brethren and friends—of which I spoke in seeking a solution to the problem of the Middle East and achieving positive results which will put an end to the impasse that Israel would like to perpetuate, for our aim is to bring about a just and lasting peace.

119. We believe that it is the duty of all the members of the international community and in their interest to join us in our efforts to achieve these goals, which we all desire, for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East serves not only the interests of our region but also the interests, security and the peace of all the peoples of the world.

120. Mr. HERZOG (Israel): I do not wish at this moment to enter into any particular discussion of the substance of

the matter. I reserve my right later on to give expression to our view on various aspects of the problems in the Middle East, should the need arise. However, I merely want to draw attention to the very obvious fact that we are here again and to ask the representatives, For what purpose. Because the only question we should be asking ourselves today is, Are we by yet another debate going to bring peace any closer? The answer is very obviously "No". I can but repeat that there are two very serious aspects to this continuous and endless debate devoted to attacking Israel, which occupies at least 50 per cent of the time of this Assembly.

121. We are wasting vast quantities of money, even taking into consideration only the direct financial implications of each of these debates, which run into millions of dollars, just in order to hear the Arab representatives and their friends repeat their allegations against Israel, without adding a single new point of any significance, and to hear the Israeli representative reply to them without, obviously, being spectacularly original on each and every occasion.

122. The budget of the Assembly is close to \$30 million. It is estimated that the cost of maintaining delegations here during the Assembly is approximately the same. In other words, the luxury of concentrating attacks on Israel for 50 per cent of the time is costing approximately \$30 million, or more than the total national budget of quite a number of States Members of this Organization. For what purpose?

123. The money wasted on these debates would be better applied to relieving some of the misery in the world while allowing the parties to the conflict to resolve their problem in direct negotiations.

124. Here before me I see delegations whose countries are faced with the most dire political and economic problems, whose Governments are engaged in a seemingly hopeless struggle against poverty, hunger, disease affecting their populations, countries whose citizens are in many cases suffering from oppression, imprisonment, torture, lack of freedom and other disabilities --

125. The PRESIDENT: I call the representative of Israel to order and ask him kindly to co-operate with the President by addressing himself to the Middle East question and not to the privations of citizens of other countries. I must appeal to him.

126. Mr. HERZOG (Israel): Mr. President, we have just heard a statement almost two hours long on the Middle East and one before that --

127. The PRESIDENT: Yes, but they were on the Middle East question.

128. Mr. Herzog (Israel): I think, Mr. President, that we should address ourselves to this waste of time. Nevertheless, in deference to your request, I shall continue my statement.

129. Instead of dealing with pressing problems affecting hundreds of millions in the world, and perhaps more, the Assembly is again bowing to a dictate of the Arab representatives and bringing up a subject for debate we discussed orally last week and in relation to which in the two

weeks remaining to this session of the Assembly we shall have to discuss at least five further draft resolutions, if not more.

130. All this is, needless to say, to discuss one specific aspect of the Middle East problem, pursuant to the pattern of selectivity which characterizes this Organization on every issue. We shall studiously avoid discussing a conflict in the Middle East which has torn the area apart and which, according to the Lebanese representative has cost 50,000 lives and left 100,000 wounded and a million refugees. We shall ignore the many conflicts which beset the Middle East and as a result of which in many borders fully mobilized armies face each other across inter-Arab borders. All this will be ignored within the scope of—mark you—a "Middle East debate". We shall be regaled with a series of speeches to be made primarily—according to the list available now—by the Arab and Communist bloc delegations, speeches whose contents each and every one of us here knows in advance by heart and does not have to hear again. Do we really have to accommodate the various Arab countries so that because one had its day in the Security Council and another showed its prowess in the Palestine debate, a third must monopolize the Assembly for a further three to four days so that it, too, may have its say in the game of one-upmanship with which we are regularly regaled? In agreeing to this situation, the Assembly is merely satisfying the whims of the few Arab politicians who want to score politically regardless of the effects the debate may have in the Middle East.

131. I repeat what I said the other day. The oil-producing Arab countries together contribute only 0.99 per cent—less than 1 per cent—to the United Nations budget and in return for that contribution, which is ridiculously low having regard to their income, monopolize over 50 per cent of the time of the Assembly with their paranoia about Israel.

132. For how long can this Organization allow itself this luxury? This waste of time continues at the expense of problems which are absolutely vital to the world and its well being. We are not advancing the cause of peace in the Middle East by one inch by acquiescing in this type of debate.

133. The question that each and every one of us here must ask if he or she is sincere about peace in the Middle East is this, Is the barren shouting match which occupies 50 per cent of the time of the Assembly going to move the Middle East one inch towards peace? If it will, I shall have no complaints, but everyone here knows as well as I do that it will not. On the contrary, it moves the area away from peace, designed as it is to befog the issues with a flood of vituperative rhetoric. We had a good example of this in the long, repetitive Syrian statement made this afternoon.

134. As the representative of the United States, Mr. Scranton, said last week in the last debate on this subject:

"Over and over again the same speakers say the same things, and none of this excessive rhetoric advances the negotiations even by one step". [76th meeting, para. 85]

135. What is further so disturbing is the fact that the General Assembly is consciously and deliberately trying to erode the authority of the Security Council.

136. The Security Council has produced two resolutions which form the basis, in the view of the Government of Israel, for negotiations towards a just and lasting peace. These resolutions have been accepted by the States which are parties to the conflict. Security Council resolution 338 (1973) calls upon the States involved in the 1973 conflict "to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts". This resolution decided furthermore that:

"... negotiations shall start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East".

137. Security Council resolution 242 (1967):

"1. *Affirms* that the fulfilment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

"(i) Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;

"(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force".

This resolution further affirms the necessity of, *inter alia*, "guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones". I believe it is relevant to point out that this resolution was adopted unanimously by the members of the Security Council at its 1382nd meeting.

138. We have here in these two resolutions the framework within which we can move towards negotiations. If the Arab delegations do not accept the basis set out in these two resolutions, let them say so, and we will know at least where they stand. If on the other hand they do accept them as a basis, let them stop prevaricating, let them stop talking around the subject and introducing diversionary resolutions every week. It is high time that all this double talk ceased and that, as the representative of the United States said the other day, we stopped talking and began negotiating.

139. Here we have the two resolutions which have been accepted by all States parties to the conflict. Let us act on them and stop debating here.

140. Members have read the position of the Government of Israel, reiterated only recently by our Prime Minister, that we are ready for the Co-Chairmen to reconvene the Geneva Conference as originally constituted. We learned the other day—not directly, but through the media and in an address to members of the United States Congress—of President El-Sadat's declaration that he is ready for a reconvening of the Geneva Conference. If that is the case, what do we need another debate for? What is the purpose of it? Why should the debating take place here at an

enormous cost and with no practical results? Why should the States parties to the conflict not be debating one with the other at the Conference?

141. Only last week, during a consideration of the Ganges dispute, the representative of Egypt was very active in suggesting that the best way of solving a conflict was for the two parties to get together and work things out, and that the forum for discussion was not the United Nations General Assembly.

142. Let me place on record what must be a historic declaration: I find myself in full agreement with the representatives of Egypt. The method he proposed for the Ganges dispute is the only normal, civilized manner in which disputes can be solved—namely, that the parties sit down together and discuss it.

143. We have had too many declarations here and too little action.

144. Over a week ago, the representative of Jordan concluded his remarks with what I thought was an appeal to common sense—an appeal, as he put it, "to unshackle ourselves" from the past and to "replace the tank by the tractor" [69th meeting, para. 52]. I welcomed his remarks and I declared solemnly before this forum that I was willing to descend from this rostrum and, in our own limited manner, to begin the process of face-to-face negotiations and reconciliation. My plea evoked no response. My offer still stands. My hand is still outstretched in a gesture of reconciliation. If he means what he says, let us at least before this Assembly show our goodwill and take one step forward. As Chairman Mao pointed out, "An advance of a thousand miles begins with one step".

145. Last week, at the Socialist International in Geneva, my Prime Minister made an important statement on this issue. Permit me to quote a number of extracts from his remarks. He said:

"... The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe carried a crucial lesson in basic diplomatic commonsense. It taught all Governments that international relations have to project the synthesis between the hope of the world as we would like it and the world as it really is, that in this last quarter of the twentieth century wars solve nothing, that talking is better than killing, that history cannot be reversed and that, therefore, *de facto* situations require responsible, reasonable and realistic solutions.

"This I see to be the achievement of Helsinki. It tackled the reality of an imperfect situation and attempted to build upon it a new structure of European stability and peaceful coexistence. And because it achieved some measure of success we are now able to ask ourselves the question, 'What next?'

"What, indeed?"

"I would like today to suggest one answer. I address it to my colleagues of the Socialist International in the spirit of the principles and purposes for which our great movement stands.

"I put it to the Socialist International that the time has come to advocate the example of Helsinki as a model for peace-making in my own region. Let a renewed Geneva Peace Conference become the Helsinki of the Arab-Israel dispute. I speak of a Geneva Conference on security and co-operation in the Middle East.

"I believe it is opportune. I am convinced that the Helsinki experience is invaluable. Its purpose, pattern, composition, agenda and principles all have application, in their spirit if not exactly in their letter.

"I have no doubt that such a conference—like Helsinki—will have its disadvantages and limitations. For, like Europe, the problems to be solved in the Middle East are sometimes complex and deeply rooted. But I am also equally convinced that they cannot be resolved by war.

"I would wish that this be the view of others in our region. We have recently heard some voices in the Middle East—communicated through the media and by visitors to a certain Arab capital—that seem to suggest that it might. However, I speak with no measure of certainty. I say this because none of the talk on a desire for a peaceful solution has been addressed to Israel.

"I believe, therefore, that if the intentions are, indeed, serious, the place to examine them is in the kind of conference I propose.

"Its decisive imperative must be, as in Helsinki, dialogue, not the threat of war.

"The conference must not attempt the impossible through a futile illusion that history can be put back. Its theme has to be détente and coexistence. Its goal should be the creation of a new regional structure of stability, security and peace founded upon Middle East realities.

"Allow me to draw the Helsinki parallel still further. I do so because it has impressively important political ramifications for our situation.

"What made the European Conference possible was not only the two great Powers. It was, in the first instance, the European Powers themselves. They were the ones who created the building blocks of regional détente as a basis for a broader East-West dialogue. The principal characters of creative peace-making were the parties located in the geography of Europe itself."

He went on:

"Helsinki teaches us that the détente of our region is our own responsibility—Arabs and Israelis together. It is we who must create the building blocks of regional understanding. Only when we fulfil our part can the outside powers possibly fulfil theirs in helping to cement the structure we prepare . . .

"Coexistence, security, trade, technology, co-operation and human bridges—these are the essence of the Helsinki baskets. And I buy them. I buy them as the essence of an agenda for a Geneva conference on security and co-operation in the Middle East. For lasting peace is a matter of

relations and exchanges between peoples. Not only Governments.

"There is one important area where I must depart from the example of Helsinki as an example for us in the Middle East. In the European Conference, momentous *de facto* post-war territorial changes did not become an issue. The map of 30 years ago was solidified if not legitimized.

"Israel is asking for much less. We do not consider the existing lines as final *de facto* realities. Unlike the realities of Europe, we do not demand their perpetuation in peace.

"In accordance with our declared policies, Israel is willing to negotiate with its neighbours peace boundaries that are different from the existing ones, short of squandering away again our vital security and defence."

Our Prime Minister concluded his remarks with the following:

"It is our collective task and challenge to communicate the spirit of Helsinki across the Mediterranean to a region long in need of its message. For all its limitations and imperfections, Helsinki articulates an historic effort to break down walls of enmity between nations even while matters of borders and territory remain to be finally resolved. It transmits the understanding that wars solve nothing, that in their stead there has to be dialogue, first between the regional parties themselves, and backed up at the proper time by the great Powers.

"Given this, the stage will be set for a Middle East Helsinki here in Geneva. Given this, the Arab-Israel conflict will be well on the way to a permanent, peaceful solution."

146. The Government of Israel has made its position clear. For our part, the Geneva Conference of December 1973 can be reconvened tomorrow. What purpose, therefore, I ask you, is there in all this fruitless barren diatribe? What advantage can and will be gained from hearing once again the endless repetitions which this debate brings forth from the Arab delegations and their friends and, yes, from the Israel delegation, not to mention the time-worn dialectic of our Communist colleagues? Nothing.

147. You know as well as I do. It is a ridiculous, purposeless waste of time and money which could be put to better use.

148. May I therefore suggest to the representatives who initiated this debate and to the General Assembly that we stop this debate and move towards face-to-face negotiations between the parties in accordance with the framework already created by the Security Council.

149. The position of the Government of Israel is clear and unequivocal as expressed in the words of my Prime Minister which I have just repeated.

150. We are ready for negotiations leading towards peace.

151. In the history of our long conflict no advance has ever been made without negotiations. On the other hand, we have never entered into negotiations without a resultant advance. Let us therefore stop all this talking and start negotiating.

152. The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Israel for the modest deference he showed to my modest request. As regards the financial implications of these long debates, we may have to consult the Fifth Committee and those vigilant custodians of our funds, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

153. Mr. PETRIĆ (Yugoslavia): The Middle East crisis has been threatening world peace and international security for almost three decades. The United Nations has been engaged in many initiatives and efforts to find a way leading to a peaceful, lasting and just solution of this crisis, in order to curb aggression and the occupation of Arab territories, to put an end to the oppression of Arab peoples and to eliminate the danger of war. The world Organization has many times adopted important decisions regarding the causes of the crisis and the ways and means to resolve it. The States Members of the United Nations in their vast majority have condemned the aggression of Israel, expressed their views about its behaviour and formulated concrete proposals for the achievement of a just and durable settlement. The lessons of 1973 are clear, and we should not allow a return to the state of "no war, no peace", as this would be fraught with grave consequences for peace and security.

154. Yugoslavia's position with regard to the problem of the Middle East crisis is well known. Our strong and consistent support for and assistance to the just objectives of the liberation struggle of Arab peoples and our solidarity with them stem from Yugoslavia's profound dedication and firm stand against all forms of foreign domination, aggression and occupation. As far as we are concerned, there are no valid reasons that could justify the holding of foreign territories by force or justify annexations under any pretext whatsoever. The international community and the United Nations have rejected attempts at legalizing such a practice, regardless of the various pretexts advanced for the purpose of vindicating it, because otherwise the world would soon be engulfed in a state of lawlessness where the might of arms would be the only relevant factor.

155. For this reason, Yugoslavia has been constantly demanding that Israel withdraw from all the Arab territories occupied since June 1967. Israel should realize that this is a *conditio sine qua non* not only for achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East but also for its own security and the peaceful life of its people. It would be illusory to believe that the passing of time can legalize occupation or that occupied peoples can ever accept the authority and order of the occupier. Israel should seize this historic opportunity and, finally, adopt a realistic approach to the solution of this problem, because this opportunity may not recur.

156. A very extensive and useful debate on the rights of the Palestinian people was held in this hall recently. The great majority of participants reaffirmed the position that there could be no just and lasting peace in the Middle East

without the solution of the question of Palestine and realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. It was emphasized that the question of Palestine had been at the core of the problem of the Middle East for many years and that consequently adequate attention should be paid it in the process of resolving the Middle East crisis. We hope that Israel will realize how greatly mistaken were its attempts, over a number of years, to build the freedom of its own people on the usurpation of the rights and freedom of the Palestinian people. It should also understand that it is no longer in a position to prevent the Palestinian people from realizing its right to its own State. Unfortunately, Israel is still endeavouring to drive a wedge between the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and its only legitimate representative, the PLO. In similar situations, history has invariably provided the same answer, namely, that no foreign Power, regardless of the means at its disposal, can separate a people from its leadership while the latter represents the genuine aspirations and interests of the people in their struggle for freedom. The unity of the Palestinian people and its leadership, embodied in the PLO, has been confirmed throughout a period of severe trials during the struggle waged by the Palestinian people, especially in the course of the past few years. Therefore it is indispensable for Israel to recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and its representative, the PLO. That would create a possibility of setting in motion the process of genuine settlement of the Middle East crisis, with the participation of all the parties directly concerned.

157. We are firmly convinced that such an approach ensures conditions for a comprehensive resolution of the Middle East crisis, which should embody both international guarantees for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all the States and peoples in the region and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized borders. We support the initiatives and the readiness of the majority of members of the Security Council to exert efforts towards that end. The manner and time of providing such guarantees should be the object among the parties to the conflict and those who wish to contribute towards securing those guarantees—of course, under the auspices of the United Nations.

158. Yugoslavia has been exerting constant efforts and making an active and constructive contribution, together with other non-aligned countries, to the search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. Such an attitude towards the Middle East crisis was also confirmed at the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Colombo, which reaffirmed its all-out support for the Arab peoples in their struggle for the liberation of occupied territories and the establishment of a Palestinian State. However, the Conference emphasized that the failure to resolve the Middle East crisis constituted a threat to peace and security.

159. During the recent debate on the question of Palestine, many delegations stressed that Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) constituted an important component of the framework for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis. Some delegations singled them out as the only agreed framework. Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) are no doubt very important for the settlement of the Middle East crisis, and they

constituted at the time of their adoption the only agreed framework. In the meantime, however, the international community has recognized that the question of Palestine cannot be reduced to merely its humanitarian aspect, a refugee problem, but that it is a first-rate political problem involving the realization of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, without which there can be no adequate settlement of the Middle East crisis. In view of this evolution, it is indispensable to adapt resolution 242 (1967) to the new reality. This means that, among other things, the PLO must participate in all efforts at solving the problem. We consider that the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council by its non-aligned members last January,¹⁵ a resolution whose basic elements received the widest support in the Security Council and among Members of the United Nations, embodied the most important elements for a comprehensive and generally acceptable resolution of the Middle East crisis.

160. In accordance with the aforesaid, the Yugoslav delegation believes that the time has come to convene in Geneva the United Nations Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, including the PLO. There is no more time for waiting; constructive and meaningful negotiations should start as soon as possible.

161. In our mind this session of the General Assembly should, above all, provide an incentive for the resolution of the crisis in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council. In the view of my delegation, the following principles provide the most appropriate basis for a just settlement: first, the withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967; secondly, the recognition and realization of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to establish its own State; and thirdly, appropriate guarantees for all the States and peoples in the region and their right to live in peace and security.

162. At the same time the General Assembly should ask the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in accordance with his initiative of 1 April 1976, to request the Security Council to make arrangements for reconvening the Geneva Conference with a view to starting the process of real negotiations towards the settlement of the Middle East crisis.

163. We hope that at the next session of the General Assembly we may be able to welcome favourable results of those negotiations which might lead to the solution of this very important question.

164. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): I must confess that I marvel at the concern of the representative of Israel over the financial position of the United Nations, a concern which, unfortunately, is not matched with a similar one for the fate of the Palestinians.

165. The complaint just uttered by the representative of Israel that the General Assembly devotes 50 per cent of its time to the discussion of issues unfavourable to Israel must be seen in the light of Israel's behaviour in the region and here in the United Nations. Even were the General

Assembly to devote 90 per cent of its work and time to the question of Palestine, it would not, in our view, be commensurate with the magnitude of the tribulations and hardships inflicted on the Palestinians and on the Arab countries by Israel. No other people has suffered so much and yet preserved its resilience and strength. The whole of Palestine has been usurped, annexed and assimilated according—as everybody knows—to a preconceived plan that has been rigorously implemented regardless of the suffering and the loss of dignity caused the indigenous people of Palestine. As we know, there was at the beginning a partition plan which was implemented together with excessive expansion; this was followed by the truce lines of 1949, which were part of the Armistice Agreement at that time, and which left no more than 20 per cent of the original Palestine in Arab hands. That was achieved through brute force, in contrast to the original partition plan, illegal as it was. The war of 1967 completed the total absorption of Palestine, plus all of Sinai and the Syrian Golan Heights. When the United Nations initiated negotiations or mediated between the parties concerned to secure the withdrawal of forces from the occupied Arab territories, Israel gave its famous answer to the famous Jarring aide-mémoire¹⁶ by saying that it would “not withdraw to the pre-5 June 1967 lines”.¹⁷ That was an official answer to an official inquiry from the representative of the United Nations. What more convincing document does the United Nations need to understand the expansionist nature of Israel?

166. When Arabs speak of Zionist expansion, some may, perhaps, have doubts about the nature of Zionism. Zionism calls for an ingathering of Jews into Palestine at the expense of the indigenous Palestinian people. It means the displacement of the real inhabitants and the settlement of foreign settlers in their place. It means the uprooting of the real owners and the importation of alien settlers. The invitation to all Jews to settle in Palestine means, by its nature, expansionism with utter disregard of the rights of others. The concept of defensible borders advanced by Israel is, in modern international politics, virtually a tool of expansion. The section of Palestine allotted to Israel, according to the partition plan, did not take into consideration the future Jewish influx into Palestine, thus making expansion seem dictated by the Zionist character of the Jewish State.

167. The Jewish concept of a State in Palestine is a State made large enough not only to accommodate the influx of Jewish immigrants but also to maintain so-called defensible borders, which imply creeping expansion and encroachment on the territories of neighbouring Arab States. Is there any other country in the world apart from Israel that strives to make room for an unlimited number of immigrants with concomitant expansion? Is there any country other than Israel that insists on securing ever-expanding borders? Is there any other country that builds settlements for imported foreigners in the territories of others and has the audacity to inform the world publicly that these settlements are built to remain? The world has not yet comprehended the true nature of Zionism, which is based not only on the displacement of the rightful owners of the land but also entails transforming that land into an expansionist monster that threatens its unlucky neighbours.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Twenty-sixth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1971, document S/10403, annex I.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, annex III.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Supplement for January, February and March 1976, document S/11940.

168. The Israeli occupation of Arab territory has passed its tenth year. More than enough resolutions have been adopted. What has happened to them? Who remembers them? The Israeli defiance of those resolutions has become proverbial. The contempt with which those resolutions are treated is an insult to the United Nations. The principle of the inadmissibility of acquiring territory by force, which is a fundamental norm of the Charter, has been flouted with impunity. What we all do here is to adopt resolutions that ease our conscience but are sooner or later relegated to oblivion. Yet those resolutions, which are often more honoured in the breach than in the observance, will not contribute to the stability of the Middle East if not followed by punitive measures.

169. We talk so much about the aims and goals of the Charter, but we never do anything to sanctify those goals. Nothing is inherently sacrosanct unless the world makes it so in words and deeds. There is no sanctity in the Charter if we do not collectively uphold its provisions. Yet we dare to talk about Israel's violation of the Charter, which is aided and abetted by our silence and apathy. We are all reluctant to face the real responsibility conferred upon us by the Charter. Everybody knows for sure that Israel will not disgorge the occupied territories if this wishy-wash approach continues. Only through firm action by all Member States, including the United States, will Israel accept the principle of withdrawal from Arab territories. We talk much about the inadmissibility of conquest, yet we do too little to enforce this principle. We pay lip service to the fundamentals of the Charter when the violation of those fundamentals does not affect us. We are in the habit of talking too much and taking little action to match our words.

170. Some of us even now, have not yet explicitly denounced the acquisition of territory by force. They find refuge in linguistic sophistry about withdrawal from "territories" or "the territories"; and some have gone to the other extreme leaving the issue of borders to the process of negotiation. We are called upon to express our adherence clearly and unequivocally to the principles set out in the Charter. The Charter of the United Nations does not allow its provisions to be sacrificed for the sake of political expediency. The goals and aims of the Charter cannot condone tampering with sacred principles to which Member States swore to be faithful.

171. Too much has been said about Security Council resolution 242 (1967) during the debate on Palestine last week. Many voiced the view that this resolution is the only accepted framework for a solution in the Middle East. Yet the most salient provision of resolution 242 (1967) is the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. To that principle, not only Member States, but also permanent members of the Security Council, have pledged their support. Let us examine how Israel interprets that provision which is so much emphasized.

172. As I said earlier, Israel's answer to Jarring is well known and need not be repeated. More than 60 Jewish settlements have so far been built in the West Bank and Gaza. The Syrian Golan Heights are the site of daily construction work on Jewish settlements. Sinai does not fare better. The building of the city of Yamit is going on

uninterruptedly. Settlements in Sharm el Sheikh in Sinai and the extension of a railway from the tip of the Egyptian peninsula to Yamit are in full swing.

173. In this context, *The Times* of London of Friday, 19 November 1976, only two weeks ago, reported that Mr. Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel, during a visit to the development town of Yamit in northern Sinai, denied there was any conflict between Israel's desire for peace and its claim that that town—meaning the city of Yamit, a part of Egyptian territory in Sinai—"must be absorbed", according to Mr. Rabin, "within the borders of the State of Israel to ensure defensible borders".

174. *The Times* of London continued:

"Yamit, settled since the 1973 war by a nucleus of Russian and American immigrants, now has 200 families. It was originally envisaged by Mr. Dayan, the former Defence Minister, as a port with a population of 25,000, but at present plans do not cater for more than 3,000."

175. In spite of Mr. Rabin's disclaimer, Yamit could prove—according to *The Times* again—a serious obstacle to progress towards peace if Arabs and Israel return to Geneva. Israel, according to *The Times*, is determined to hold that city and the surrounding settlements in northern Sinai and hopes to divide the peninsula along a line drawn roughly from those settlements to Sharm el Sheikh. That suggests an intention to keep the overcrowded Gaza Strip with its 400,000 Arabs, although the Arabs see Gaza as part of a Palestinian State and the General Assembly has already endorsed such a plan. What more evidence does anyone want of Israel's expansionism? What more convincing proof can there be of Israel's contempt for United Nations resolutions?

176. The *Washington Post* wrote recently, in September 1976, that 68 Israeli settlements cut the map from the Syrian Golan Heights in the north down through the Jordan rift in the West Bank to the Egyptian Sinai in the south. They are home for 75,000 Jews on lands captured from the Arabs in the 1967 war and they have become the focus of a growing international controversy over Israel's intention in any future Middle East peace settlement.

177. Lord Caradon, a British diplomat, once called those Jewish settlements "signposts to destruction". Lord Caradon, who contributed to drafting Security Council resolution 242 (1967)—which has become, according to the *Washington Post*, the basis for the proposed negotiations between Israel and the Arab nations—added: "Force in hostile territory is not an insurance of peace but a guarantee of continuing enmity."

178. Israel's approach to peace is not only contrary to the United Nations Charter but is also insulting to the Arabs' sense of comprehension and dignity. Mr. Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel, thinks that there is no conflict whatsoever between peace in the Middle East and Israel's building of Jewish settlements in Arab lands. That is not only adding insult to injury but also displaying a brazen arrogance that will prove detrimental to Israel's future.

179. Jerusalem will continue to be one of the fundamental issues in the solution of the Middle East problem. Israel

unashamedly speaks of its incorporation of Jerusalem as final and as an indivisible part of its territory. The Security Council has adopted many resolutions that call upon Israel to rescind its measures in Jerusalem and declare Israel's incorporation of Jerusalem null and void. Israel is mistaken if it thinks that its annexation of the Holy City will contribute to the establishment of peace. Every inch of Arab land annexed by Israel will remain a spark that will eventually trigger a major war. But the city of Jerusalem, which Israel has incorporated and annexed with unusual ease, must provide an additional powder keg to the turbulent area. No Arab, indeed no man, let alone Moslems, will accept the submission of Jerusalem to Israel's rule.

180. The incorporation of the city of Jerusalem is in violation of the United Nations Charter, about which we speak so much and so profusely; it is contrary to the principle of the inadmissibility of occupation by conquest; it is a challenge to the overwhelming sentiment of the international community that opposes the annexation of cities of other countries by force or conquest; and it will prove to be one of the most insurmountable obstacles to the achievement of peace in the Middle East.

181. The presence of Israeli troops on Arab territories in itself constitutes a *casus belli*—a cause of war. By the sheer fact that there are foreign troops on their territories, States have the unquestioned right to repel the occupation. The present lull in the Middle East will undoubtedly erupt into full flames in the future if Israel does not withdraw from the territories it has been occupying for many years. The present situation is deceptive, since it lures many of us into the belief that the area is heading for some compromise, especially in the wake of pronouncements from many sides. There will not be a compromise on the principle of acquisition of territory by force. There will not be a compromise over Jerusalem, the Holy City of the three great faiths. There will not be a compromise on the rejection and unacceptability of Jewish settlements in Arab lands. Israel is sowing the seeds of perpetual confrontation by building Jewish settlements in Arab territories.

182. In this age there is no room for the myth of secure borders. The borders of each country are safe, provided mutual understanding exists between neighbours. Borders that are sustained by force are bound to give rise to confrontation once that force erodes. Only understanding and mutual consent on the issue of borders eliminate tension. Israel is indeed not only mistaken if it thinks that borders can be maintained by force; more than that, it will sink into the quagmire of destruction if it continues to harbour the illusion that expansion and aggression should be the mainstay of its relations with the Arab countries. This is the age of missiles and technology, so Israel must fully realize that natural barriers of seas and mountains have suddenly lost meaning as effective security barriers and devices. The existing superior military technology of Israel may also prove to be ephemeral, of a fleeting nature and of no lasting value. The Arabs view every inch ceded to the enemy as a land-mine that may erupt at an unexpected moment. Through its policy of creeping annexation, Israel sows the seeds of its own troubles. He who sows the wind, will reap the whirlwind. That is a famous Arabic proverb.

183. The United Nations has the right to question the sincerity of Israel's pronouncements relating to the estab-

lishment of peace in the Middle East. Its deeds contradict its words. Building settlements in the Arab lands and insisting on annexing major portions of the occupied Arab territories does not qualify Israel to talk about peace. Israel's prescription for peace includes, among other things, the annexation of Jerusalem, the incorporation of considerable parts of Sinai, the absorption of Gaza and the retention of Jewish settlements in Arab land. And yet Israel expects the Arabs to be deceived by the statements of its leaders. This is an affront to our comprehension. Israel's overtures for peace should not be taken at face value. Its actions invalidate and pre-empt the words of its leaders. No sensible human being expects the Arabs to accept Israel's prescription for peace. Mr. Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel—according to the quotation of his representative here—spoke recently of a Middle East conference modelled on the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe at Helsinki. He did not say that Israel would respect the principle of the non-acquisition of territory by force. What he had in mind was an arrangement concerning borders that would reflect the weight of military victory and the power of might. The policy of *fait accompli* pursued so strenuously by Israel will not lead to peace. Israel understands that the Arabs are not so credulous as to take its words seriously. A peace in which the spoils of war are retained cannot be attained. Israel has to choose either peace without the spoils of war or the continuation of military confrontation. But surely it cannot get peace with the spoils of war. The withdrawal from all Arab territories is imperative for the establishment of peace in the region. Only last week, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the inalienable right of the people of Palestine to establish their State in their homeland [*resolution 31/20*]. The principle of total withdrawal from the occupied territories and the rights of the Palestinians represent a *sine qua non* for the prevalence of peace in our region. Without them the present course in the area will be continued, punctuated, as it is by truces, war and bloodshed.

184. The international community has a moral responsibility, let alone an interest, in establishing peace in the Middle East. The present situation is a threat to international peace and security. The events may escalate at any moment into full-scale conflagration. The United Nations is in duty bound to arrest the drift towards war before explosion. Member States have an inherent interest in exerting the maximum pressure on Israel to withdraw from Arab territories. Punitive measures, in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter may not be possible in view of the position of certain Member States; but unilateral action and pressure on Israel is indispensable to make Israel realize that the world cannot tolerate its actions, especially since those actions may drive the world into a nuclear holocaust. The occurrences of October 1973 are not so remote as to warrant our forgetting them. The Israeli strategy in this Organization is over the passage of time to weaken world opposition to the acquisition of territory by force.

185. It is extremely important to debate the situation in the Middle East in the United Nations, regardless of the concern of the representative of Israel over financial arrangements in the United Nations. Complaints about the extravagance of anti-Israeli debates are utterly irrelevant, as it is Israel that by its own deeds invites such extravagance. We here breathe out words and utter sentiments, but words

expose the nature of mischievous deeds. World indignation at Israel's behaviour is expressed here through words, though we should like words to be matched by deeds. The debate here provides a factual account of what is taking place in the Middle East. I understand that Israel is nervous about the debate because it exposes the nature of its misdeeds, which are not only in violation of the United Nations Charter but are also threatening world peace and security.

186. All of us indeed with the exception of Israel, are interested in arriving at a durable, peaceful arrangement in the Middle East. All of us attach great importance to the present debate as it represents the contribution of Member States to the promotion of peace in the Middle East. All of us should realize that peace will remain as elusive as ever if it is based on the spoils of conquest. No peace will ever be witnessed if Israel does not withdraw from all the occupied territories. And thus peace will remain as elusive as the mirage of the desert if the rights of the people of Palestine to their homeland are not restored. The future does not bode well in view of Israel's behaviour in the occupied lands and its intransigence against the Palestinians. The rumours of a future war are gathering momentum. Will this General Assembly firmly face its responsibility by telling Israel that we have had enough of its procrastination, we cannot allow it to continue on its adventuristic course of precipitating another war which may engulf the world in an inferno? Israel must be sensible and accept the principle of withdrawal and the restoration of the rights of the Palestinians in their homeland. We cannot tolerate this suicidal attitude. If the General Assembly conveys this message and Israel listens, then we will have peace in the Middle East; otherwise, count the days before the next cycle of bloodshed and mutilation erupts.

187. This day is the most religious occasion in Islamic countries. I offer them here the most profound and warmest congratulations. It is the day of Id al-Adha, which comes immediately on the heels of the most sacrosanct Moslem religious occasion when the Prophet Mohammed stood on top of Mount Ararat near Mecca to bid farewell to the Moslems before his departure to the Happy Valley or Paradise. He said to the Moslems:

“O, God, be my witness; O, God, I have informed them;

“O, God, be my witness.”

188. I find no more appropriate conclusion than to paraphrase the words of the Prophet by saying to the General Assembly, We have told you that there will be a war in the Middle East sooner than you expect unless Israel comes to its senses and withdraws from Arab territories and restores the rights of the people of Palestine.

189. Rev. T. A. MATHIAS (India): The situation in the Middle East is fundamentally untenable and unstable, as any situation is bound to be, so long as it is based on aggression and occupation of the territories of other countries. Furthermore, Israel's failure to vacate Arab territories constitutes a continuing violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. It also poses an ever-present threat not only to regional tranquility but to

international peace and security as well. The sooner Israeli occupation of Arab territories is terminated, the safer it will be not only for the future of world peace but also for the security of Israel itself.

190. At the root of the problem is the manner of termination of the British Mandate over Palestine, which resulted in the creation of the State of Israel. A tragic succession of events followed, with several rounds of hostilities over a period of some 28 years, and the Middle East remains on the brink of another war. Meanwhile, the Arab people of Palestine have been denied their legitimate national rights, including the right of self-determination and the right to have a nation-State of their own. They continue to live as refugees in lands that are not their own, while Israel remains in occupation of their lands and of the territories of neighbouring Arab States. It is a profoundly human problem compounded by violations of international law and confused by claims based on ancient history and legend.

191. The United Nations cannot accept a situation based on the acquisition of territory by force. Nor can it allow a situation to persist if it portends the most frightful consequences for the future of the world. Attempts made within the United Nations and outside to solve this problem have so far not produced satisfactory solutions. The so-called step-by-step negotiations have resulted only in partial progress because certain vital aspects of the problem have been completely neglected.

192. Fresh efforts are urgently needed in order to reach a comprehensive settlement which, *inter alia*, must provide for the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian Arab people. There is no contradiction between the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people and the right of the State of Israel to exist. It is as absurd to contemplate the extermination of the State of Israel as it is to imagine the extinction of the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people.

193. It is clear that the present *status quo* cannot be sustained for long. It is also clear that any change in the situation cannot be brought about through military action. It is necessary, therefore, to break out of the vicious circle of aggression, reprisal and expansion. A peace settlement has to be founded on equal justice for all parties if it is to last.

194. The relevant resolutions of the Security Council provide the basis accepted by all parties for a negotiated settlement. Recent events indicate a general movement in favour of reconvening the Geneva Conference in the near future for resumption of negotiations. It goes without saying that unless all the parties concerned participate in that Conference and that includes the PLO there can be little progress towards a just peace.

195. There comes a time and tide in the affairs of nations which if taken at the flood can lead to justice, peace and goodwill. Perhaps we are now at that historic moment when the General Assembly could determine the time and induce the tide towards a peace conference in which the Great

Powers as well as the great movement of non-aligned countries could assist in the building of enduring peace in the Middle East and in promoting mutual goodwill between Arabs and Jews based on justice.

196. The PRESIDENT: Before adjourning the meeting I should like, although the hour is late, to refer to two problems that have arisen and become more complicated recently with regard to the list of speakers.

197. The first is the growing tendency on the part of representatives to ask to be the last speaker in a debate. The second is the practice of representatives to request to speak more than once in the same debate.

198. With regard to the first problem, I refer to rule 68 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which states: "The President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak." My interpretation of that rule is that the order is determined by the time at which a representative inscribes his name on the list. No delegation here can, in my opinion, claim to have the last word on a subject. It might be a tactical manoeuvre, but it would lead to an impossible situation if more than one representative should ask to be the last speaker. I would certainly suggest to speakers that, one second before the time of the closure of the list, they should inscribe their names on the speakers' list and so ensure that they are the last; but that would require split-second timing, and I

cannot rule out the possibility of disorder when more than one person scuffles for the same position.

199. So I shall adhere to the rule that nobody can claim the right to have the last word on any subject.

200. The second problem is the practice of representatives speaking more than once in the same debate. In the past the General Assembly has not had recourse to rule 72 of the rules of procedure, which states that it "may limit the time to be allowed to each speaker and the number of times each representative may speak on any question." Of course, it goes on to say: "Before a decision is taken, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, a proposal to set such limits."

201. I do not want to start another debate in the middle of a very complicated one. But I would suggest to the representatives that we limit the number of times any representative may intervene in the debate to two. There is always the device of the right of reply, which they can use to provide a third occasion.

202. I shall not ask for a decision on this now because my remarks may have come as a surprise to many. But I shall certainly seek the guidance of the Assembly and its co-operation tomorrow. I hope that it will be ready to co-operate with the Chair.

The meeting rose at 6.50 p.m.