



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



PROVISIONAL

A/ES-7/PV.30
24 August 1982

ENGLISH

Seventh emergency special session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 19 August 1982, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. KITTANI (Iraq)

later: Mr. ZENTAR (Morocco)

- Question of Palestine: draft resolutions A/ES-7/L.5 to A/ES-7/L.7 /5/
(continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 5 (continued)

QUESTION OF PALESTINE: DRAFT RESOLUTIONS A/ES-7/L.5 to A/ES-7/L.7

Mr. LICHENSTEIN (United States of America): Once again, for the third time in less than four months, the seventh emergency special session of the General Assembly - called more than two years ago to address "The Question of Palestine" - has been resumed, this time in relation to the crisis in Lebanon. As the Members of this body are well aware, the United States Government has been profoundly concerned with the crisis in Lebanon and intensively involved in efforts to seek a diplomatic solution to it. It is therefore out of no lack of interest or commitment that we must question the wisdom of resuming the seventh emergency special session at this time.

Surely, the Lebanon crisis has not suffered for want of attention in the United Nations over the past 10 weeks. The seventh emergency special session has already met once during these weeks, and the Security Council has been almost continuously seized of the issue, having adopted 10 resolutions, issued one presidential statement and received numerous reports from the Secretary-General. Not least, we are quickly approaching the opening of the thirty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly, where the crisis in Lebanon and "The Question of Palestine" will undoubtedly be dealt with exhaustively in the manner to which we have become accustomed. Needless to say, we would not object if urgent necessity dictated meeting at this time. But a settlement in Beirut now appears imminent, and surely there is little that this body can do at this stage to affect the outcome of the negotiations.

We would do well to bear in mind Disraeli's maxim that there should be "moderation even in excess". To proceed otherwise - without moderation, without restraint - only has the effect of devaluing a currency that already is highly inflated and that can purchase little in the market-place of political influence.

The Members of the Assembly will note that the conflict in Lebanon is but one of four wars now in progress in the so-called Arc of Crisis, a

(Mr. Lichenstein, United States)

region smaller than the size of my own or a number of other countries - an Arc of Crisis that stretches from Lebanon in the west to Afghanistan in the east and to the Horn of Africa in the south. One might appreciate the General Assembly's all-consuming preoccupation with the conflict in Lebanon if it was being neglected at a time when intensive efforts were under way to resolve the other conflicts in the region. Unfortunately, quite the opposite is true.

Even as we meet today, efforts are under way to bring the painful and protracted conflict in Lebanon, and particularly in Beirut, to a peaceful settlement through negotiation. The American people, and indeed people everywhere who are committed to peace, are indebted to President Reagan's special envoy, Ambassador Philip Habib, who has worked ceaselessly and tirelessly to resolve the crisis in Beirut. From the very start, the goal of Ambassador Habib's mission has been to achieve a resolution of the crisis in a manner that avoids further bloodshed, secures the removal from Lebanon of all foreign armed forces, and allows the Government of Lebanon to re-establish its full authority throughout the country. This effort has been exceedingly difficult. Yet it holds out the only realistic hope for resolving the situation in Beirut and for achieving meaningful progress towards the restoration of full Lebanese sovereignty, a precondition for stability in the region. And today, this effort is on the threshold of success.

Throughout this process the United States has proceeded on two assumptions: first, that the terms of a settlement could not be dictated from above or from outside but could only be determined as a result of painstaking negotiation; and, secondly, that it was necessary to deal first with the immediate problem in Beirut before tackling the broader objectives of a solution to the Lebanese situation and a comprehensive Middle East peace.

The United States does not believe that the problem of Lebanon can or should be set aside while we address other issues related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Surely the people of Lebanon have suffered enough -- since long before 6 June, I might add. For years the sovereignty of Lebanon and the well-being of its people were sacrificed as external parties pursued their own interests and their own conflicts within its borders. Lebanon suffered and its suffering became a source

of instability for the entire region. Regional stability, therefore, no less than human compassion, requires that we put an end to the suffering in Lebanon.

The United States commitment to a comprehensive settlement of the conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors has, if anything, been deepened and reinforced by the crisis in Lebanon. The position of my Government with respect to such a settlement is well-known and has been frequently stated. Having been an active partner in the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab State, the United States has sought to create the conditions for a just and lasting peace in the region pursuant to the principles of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) -- the only authoritative framework for a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. These principles were incorporated into the Camp David Accords, which set forth a practical approach to solving the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestinian question -- the approach of negotiation based on respect for the security and territorial integrity of all States in the region and also recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and its just requirements. The first essential step is the provision of full autonomy for the transitional period to the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. The United States continues to stand by these principles and will oppose any effort to change resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) in ways that are incompatible with their original purpose.

(Mr. Lichenstein, United States)

We believe that the efforts now under way in Beirut will be a step towards the wider peace settlement that we seek. We look forward to a time, a time in the not too distant future, when Israel and its Arab neighbours will share peaceful borders and when there will be peace as well across the critical psychological frontier of enmity that separates Israel from the Arabs. Such a peace would undoubtedly leave many other conflicts unresolved, in the Middle East and elsewhere. But it would make the world an immensely safer place, no longer threatened by the periodic explosions of Arab Israeli hostility and better able to devote the creative energies of mankind to the solution of other dangerous problems and to the construction of a peaceful and just world order.

In light of these remarks and in view of the urgent concern of the United States to promote reconciliation and to resist the tendency to interpose new obstacles to the peace process that is now under way, the United States will vote no on the draft resolutions now before us.

Mr. VELLA (Malta): The seventh emergency special session has been convened for a specific purpose -- the cruel situation in Lebanon. This world body could no longer sit watching unconcerned the unfolding of a tragedy reminiscent both in philosophy and scope of some of the darkest events of the Second World War. Every right-thinking person, without distinction as to sex, colour, race or creed, indeed, even of nationality, has condemned the events of the last two months in Lebanon. This sense of outrage has been expressed loudly and clearly by speaker after speaker from this rostrum and my delegation joins others in vehemently denouncing Israel's illegal, unfounded and merciless aggression against the Palestinian people in Lebanon and against Lebanon itself and its civilian population. It is our individual and collective duty to censure such unacceptable international behaviour.

Our words will not bring much comfort either to the dead or to the maimed. Even though the guns may have been mercifully silent for the last few days, it must be recognized that this latest slaughter is the most recent episode in a tragic series of events that has brought cyclical death and destruction instead of peace and brotherhood to the Middle East. It is high time to break this vicious circle.

The problem of Palestine predates the birth of this Organization. With every year that has passed the plight of the Palestinian people has been rendered more and more desperate as Israel continues to flex its military muscles and as it seeks to impose an illusory peace by the use of arms and through territorial expansion.

Each time the United Nations has put forward a fair proposal to satisfy the requirements of peace and the legitimate aspirations of all concerned, Israel has repeatedly torpedoed these efforts, abetted in its arrogance by false propaganda and lethal military equipment. Once and for all, we must ensure that we turn away from this policy and especially induce Israel to desist from its expansionist aggression as a means of dealing with the Middle East situation in general and the Palestinian question in particular.

The most recent attempt by the United Nations to propose a peaceful resolution was contained in the recommendations of the Committee on Palestine six years ago. Each year, with increased support and insistence, the resolutions have been endorsed by the General Assembly as a basis for the solution of the Palestinian question. So far the Security Council, despite constant urging by the Committee, has been prevented from taking effective action. The elements of a new policy have remained before the Council for the last six years. It is only in that direction that the United Nations can make such progress. A unique opportunity now lies ahead in the forthcoming international conference on Palestine. Let us all join in the search for a just and lasting peace, united in our recognition that this can only be achieved through the practical attainment by the Palestinian people of their legitimate rights, freely expressed without outside interference. That is the missing link in the complex equation which has so far eluded our search, but it is not beyond our collective capability to resolve the equation. Today we can lay the foundations for a successful outcome.

Mr. MOHAMMAD (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): The General Assembly is meeting today for the third time this year in an emergency special session in order to examine a new development in the series of crimes of aggression committed by the Zionist entity without any respect for international law and the principles of the Charter and in disregard of the threat to international peace and security implicit in its crimes.

(Mr. Mohammad, Iraq)

We are meeting to discuss the greatest human issue and tragedy in the history of mankind: it is the tragedy of the Palestinian people which has been displaced from its homeland and on whose ruins a racist, fascist entity was established, a tragedy in which a peaceful people was subjected to genocide and massacre and in which an Arab country is being visited with death and devastation. The United Nations bears a historical responsibility for this tragedy since it adopted a resolution approving the establishment of the nazi, racist State in the territory of Palestine.

The United Nations and the world have failed to find a just solution to the cause of the Palestinian people. For more than 30 years the international Organization has been meeting and taking decisions until the archives of the United Nations are filled with resolutions which could have been implemented, but the Tel Aviv gang intransigently defied and disregarded these resolutions and not only rode roughshod over those resolutions concerning the Palestinian question but also pursued its criminal design of annihilating the struggling people of Palestine.

(Mr. Mohammad, Iraq)

The reason for the persistence of the Tel Aviv rulers in the implementation of their criminal schemes is the encouragement and support they receive from the United States Administration and its repeated use of the right of veto to obstruct any resolution that would impose severe sanctions on that entity for its obdurate disregard of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and its adamant implementation of its aggressive designs on the people of Palestine.

United States support of the Zionist-Nazi policy and its encouragement of continued aggression are the main reason for this Organization's failure to find a just and peaceful solution to the problem of the Palestinian people. It can even be said that United States policy is the main obstacle to the efforts of the international community to re-establish peace and security in the Middle East. Proof of that United States encouragement is the action of its Department of Defence during the recent visit by the Zionist war minister Ariel Sharon to Washington when he was presented with 65 new F-16 warplanes, advanced electronic equipment and enormous financial assistance.

The Zionist entity has disregarded the basic principles of our Organization by its continuous violation of the United Nations Charter and resolutions. In spite of resolution 181 (II), adopted in 1947, concerning the right of the Palestinian people to establish an independent State in its territory, and resolution 194 (III), adopted in 1948, concerning the right of that people to return to its homeland from which it was forcibly evicted, the Zionist entity is massacring the Palestinian people every day and depriving it of its legitimate right to establish an independent State on its own national territory.

The attacks in Lebanon, aimed by the Zionist entity at the annihilation of the Palestinian people and the elimination of its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), are but a manifestation of the Nazi policy pursued by the Zionist entity against the Arab people. Since last June the Zionist entity has been waging a brutal, dirty war against fraternal Lebanon and the Palestinian people there, using the most modern military equipment provided by the United States which has given it the green light

(Mr. Mohammad, Iraq)

to use it against the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples. That entity has murdered scores of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians and completely destroyed several Lebanese cities, scores of villages and 14 refugee camps. It has also displaced thousands of human beings and detained other thousands. Its tanks and planes have showered the city of Beirut with hundreds of thousands of bombs in a brutal manner, unprecedented in history. Not even the Jews experienced at the hands of the Nazis what the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples experience today at the hands of the criminal gang of Begin and Sharon. In one day, it was reported, more than 200,000 bombs were dropped on Beirut killing and wounding thousands of civilians - men, women and children.

The forces of the Zionist entity have imposed a siege on Beirut for three consecutive months, during which thousands of innocent people have been subjected to the worst and dirtiest form of aggression consisting in denying them water and electricity supplies, not to speak of the shelling of hospitals, schools and nursing-homes by Sharon's tanks and planes.

From the aims pursued by the Zionist entity we can perceive the other political and military links in the scheme of aggression designed to achieve the following purposes: military domination of the strategic islands which form an important geographical base for the Lebanese forces and the Palestinian resistance; inflicting mayhem on Lebanese residential complexes; and using this mayhem to wage psychological warfare. This was affirmed in the leaflets dropped by Zionist planes on Beirut, Sidon, Tyre and Damour. The Zionists are indicating that, after the completion of that plan, they will be ready for negotiations, as has been stated by their representative, and, in pursuance of its policy, the United States is actively engaged in promoting understanding between the Zionists and their supporters concerning sharing spheres of influence.

This critical stage has two dangerous aspects. One is the internationalization of the Zionist occupation of Lebanon and finding an opening for United States influence by creating favourable conditions for imperialist designs. The second is the establishment of buffer zones bordering on the settlements in upper Galilee, that is, the geographical neutralization of the Arab territories bordering on occupied Palestine. This is considered to be the most important goal of the Government of the terrorist Begin.

(Mr. Mohammad, Iraq)

Since Lebanon is a Member of the United Nations and a sovereign State, the flagrant violations committed by the Zionist entity against the fraternal Lebanese State and people require that the United Nations adopt a resolution to ensure that immediate action is taken to end this aggression against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples and to impose comprehensive economic and political sanctions against the Zionist entity. Pressure must also be brought to bear on the United States Administration to cease supporting and encouraging the Nazi policies pursued by the Zionist entity.

Iraq, convinced of the justice of the Palestinian cause and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and considering the Palestine Liberation Organization to be the sole legitimate representative of that people, has stood and will always stand by the fraternal Palestinian people and support it in its fight to secure its legitimate rights.

Iraq, throughout its relationship with the Palestinian revolution, has been a partner, not just a supporter, and believes that the revolution will not die, no matter how much the forces of evil try to suppress it. The revolution is not just a few thousand combatants besieged in Beirut; it is far greater than that. It is a revolution which reaches into the soul of every Arab citizen and extends from the Gulf to the Ocean. This revolution is fully capable of endurance and victory.

It has become obvious from the events that have occurred in the past 30 years that the question of Palestine constitutes the essence of the conflict in the Middle East region and cannot be dealt with in isolation from the question of the people of Palestine and its sole legitimate representative the PLO. The campaigns of elimination, annihilation and terrorism directed against the Palestinian Arab people by the Zionist racists will not succeed in defeating the Palestinian cause; nor will they eliminate the national aspirations of the Palestinian people.

(Mr. Mohammad, Iraq)

Iraq, through this Organization, calls upon all States of the world to take a united and just position vis-à-vis the Palestinian cause, and for the imposition against Israel of the sanctions provided for in the Charter for its violation of the principles of the Charter; it calls for an end to be put to the provision of economic and military aid to that racist, aggressive entity; it calls upon the international community, and especially the United States, to recognize the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and to grant that people its legitimate right to self-determination.

The Arab and third-world peoples and all peace-loving forces in the world consider the United States primarily responsible for the acts of aggression by the Zionist entity against the Palestinian people. We hope that we will succeed at this special session in adopting an appropriate decision to halt the aggression and ensure the Palestinian people's legitimate right to establish its own independent State.

Mr. D'ESCOTO BROCKMANN (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish):

Seventy-six days ago the world heard the news of the latest Zionist aggression on Lebanon, carried out allegedly to neutralize the Palestine forces in the southern part of that country. The Non-Aligned Movement immediately sent a communiqué to the Secretary-General expressing its deep indignation at that criminal attack by Menachem Begin's régime in clear contravention of all principles of international law and of those set forth in the Charter, which Israel, as a Member State, is supposed to abide by.

None the less, we never imagined the scale of that invasion and the extremes to which Israel was ready to go in order to attain its objectives, which were none other than the extermination of the Palestinian people, the elimination of its leadership and the establishment in Lebanon of a Government that would comply with its expansionist and racist policies.

Never since the time of Hitler has such mass genocide been witnessed and what is really to be regretted is that the United Nations showed itself totally incapable of putting an end to it. The Security Council, which exists in order to ensure peace and security throughout the world, was completely paralysed and prevented from carrying out its responsibility because of the arrogance of one permanent member of that Council which seeks to be regarded by the international community as a country that respects the law and is opposed to terrorism, when in fact it is instead the chief violator of the norms and principles which the States Members of our Organization are obliged to respect.

There can be no doubt that the United States, by its unreserved support for the Zionist régime, has become the principal apologist and promoter of terrorism in the world, and for this reason, in expressing our denunciation and condemnation in the most categorical terms of Israel's invasion of Lebanon and of the genocide being carried out against the Palestinian people, we cannot but condemn, too, in equally categorical and energetic terms the complicity of the Reagan Administration in those events, which are a disgrace to humanity. This United States policy of preventing the operation of the machinery established in our Organization for the maintenance of peace and security is, furthermore, an attack on the United Nations itself.

(Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann, Nicaragua)

We have said before and we say again here that more than the survival of the cause of the Palestinian people in their struggle to defend their inalienable rights is involved. What is at stake, underlying this United States policy, is the credibility and the very survival of the United Nations. Hence we appeal to the Reagan Administration to give serious thought to the consequences for the maintenance of peace and respect for the most fundamental rules of law in our world of its determination to oppose systematically the clear will of all nations of the world, since its total isolation and its standing alone by its Zionist puppets are of little importance to it.

The Ministerial Committee on Palestine and Lebanon, established in Nicosia on 17 July 1982, had as part of its mandate to visit the capitals of all States Members of the Security Council. Nicaragua is a member of this Committee and this was enough for the Reagan Administration to decide not to receive it, the United States thus being the only member of the Council that would not allow us to carry out our mandate. Israel also prevented it by its refusal to allow us to visit Beirut. Possibly the Reagan Administration, aware of the clear and courageous way in which the new Nicaragua expresses itself, was afraid that we might speak out just as candidly on that occasion, as we are doing from this podium. Truth is painful and we understand that they do not want to hear it, but the consequences of closing one's ears to the outcry of the world will be even more painful and contrary to the interests of the great United States people which we are all familiar with and admire, and so we are sure that we can say that it cannot agree that its Government should become the principal violator of law and the principal promoter and defender of genocide.

Furthermore, it seems important to me to highlight the fact that in the light of the foregoing our Organization is in a state of total powerlessness to halt the criminal actions being carried out in Lebanon, which does not mean that our countries individually are absolved of the moral responsibility incumbent on each and every one of them to adopt the measures and sanctions that should be implemented to stop Israel's actions and to see that its troops withdraw immediately from Lebanon as well as from the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

(Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann, Nicaragua)

There are principles and obligations that take precedence over what appears to be the immediate interests of the foreign policy of any country. And if the Security Council is paralysed because of the misuse of the right of veto by any of its members, as is the case in question, nothing can or should prevent us as individual States Members of the United Nations from acting consistently with our principles and conscience. There may be a country that regards itself as lord and master of the universe and seeks to impose its will as divine, but this does not mean that the rest of us have to accept such madness, because to do so would make us accomplices. It could be said that the United States, which, after all, is the country that many are afraid to oppose, is a very powerful country and that it has an indisputable ability and will to take action against anyone who opposes what it regards as "its" interests.

(Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann, Nicaragua)

We understand the risks involved in acting in a responsible manner, refusing to be an accomplice to the immorality of others, particularly when we are talking about unscrupulous powerful countries. None the less, the fact of being such a small country and the fact that we are under the eye of the Reagan Administration or that at this very moment the United States DD-963 destroyer Sprauance is lying, in a very threatening attitude, about 10 miles from our coast in the Pacific, has not forced us, nor will it ever force us to act in a manner contrary to what our moral principles demand of us. In the case of Israel, these principles oblige us to go much further than rhetorical condemnation or verbal expressions of solidarity with the just cause and struggle of the people of Palestine. Two weeks ago the Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua officially broke off relations with the Government of Israel.

I cannot fail to inform you that, in taking this measure, we felt rather uncomfortable because it might have been thought that our Government had been maintaining some kind of relationship with Israel. Fortunately, the international press made it clear that, in learning of our decision, the Israeli Government had said that it did not know that they had any relations with Nicaragua since their only relations had been with Somoza. We are grateful that that matter was made clear because it is correct. Since 19 July 1979 the Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua suspended all contact with the Zionist régime, since that régime had been, until the last moment, allied with Somoza and a direct accomplice in the genocide he had waged against our people. All that remained was to break off diplomatic relations formally, which we had not done earlier solely because of the political decision we had taken not to have recourse to such a measure against any country at all.

(Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann, Nicaragua)

None the less, on the 5th of this month we decided to make an exception to this rule of conduct as a means of making it even more clear our rejection and condemnation of the aggression, racism and expansionism of the Zionist régime. If Nicaragua, a small country militarily, and economically harmed by United States imperialism, had the moral courage to take this measure, we cannot understand why countries which are infinitely stronger than we are and far less vulnerable cannot act in a similar manner.

To compromise values and principles is in itself a far greater evil than anything that can arise as a result of reprisals on the part of those who seek to rule our conscience and it is for this reason that, with all respect and in humility, I venture, on behalf of our Government, in the name of our revolutionary and Christian people, and in sympathy with the outcry that arises from all men of goodwill, to appeal to everyone, to all Member States to act according to their conscience and to break off all relations with the Zionist régime of Israel, without going on hoping for any change to come about in the Reagan Administration that would make possible the free operation of the machinery provided for in our Organization, so that Member States can be compelled to respect the purposes and principles of the Charter and thus ensure peace and security throughout the world.

I repeat: it is not enough for us all to recognize that the only reason why sanctions have not been imposed against Israel is the opposition of Washington. The Government of the United States can continue to prevent the Security Council from fulfilling its responsibilities, but it cannot prevent sovereign decisions being taken by each and every Member State. We understand the power of the pressure of United States imperialism, but we consider that the pressures of conscience can and must be even more powerful. With regard to the people of Palestine, and its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, we are convinced that its just cause and struggle will eventually triumph.

(Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann, Nicaragua)

The withdrawal of the Palestinian combatants from Beirut to prevent any further massacre of the civilian population can be viewed as one more proof of the flexibility, maturity and high-mindedness of the PLO and the leader of that organization, Yasser Arafat. But this does not solve the problem of peace in the Middle East, nor does it diminish the responsibility of Israel and its great accomplice, the Government of the United States of America, for all the crimes committed against the people of Palestine, for the failure to implement Security Council resolutions and for all the manoeuvres to undermine the effectiveness, authority and importance of the United Nations. Consequently, the eventual withdrawal of the Palestinian combatants from Beirut will in no way change our determination to take all necessary measures to restrain Zionist madness and ensure respect for the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine and of all Arab peoples harmed or threatened.

We say again that the solution to the question of Palestine is the key to achieving lasting peace in the Middle East. We consider furthermore that the question of Palestine and the conflict in the Middle East can only be resolved in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. Such a solution, under the auspices of the United Nations, must be a just one, comprehensive and lasting, and must ensure the unconditional and complete withdrawal of Israel from the territory of Palestine and from the other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, so that the people of Palestine can be enabled, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, their sole legitimate representative, to exercise their inalienable rights, including the right to return to their homes and the right to self-determination, national independence and the establishment of a sovereign independent State in Palestine, in accordance with United Nations resolutions concerning the question of Palestine, in particular General Assembly resolutions ES-7/2 of 29 July 1980, 36/120 A to F of 10 December 1981 and ES-7/4 of 30 April 1982.

(Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann, Nicaragua)

We demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli occupying forces from Lebanon and we also condemn Israel's failure to abide by Security Council resolutions, the vetoes of the Government of the United States and the open warning of that Government that it will accept no resolution applying sanctions against Israel.

In conclusion, we wish to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, and to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the many efforts made to bring about peace in the Middle East and we renew our readiness to co-operate with him and with you Sir, at any time in the pursuit of this lofty and urgent objective.

MR. MOUSHOUTAS (Cyprus): The peoples of the world are at present witnessing a dramatic reversion to the use of force for the solution of a long-standing international problem and a parallel contemptuous disregard for United Nations resolutions. The world has not yet recovered from the failure of the second special session on disarmament to achieve positive results and the bitter fruits of this failure are already apparent and confronting mankind. The unbridled use of force by Israel against Lebanon and the Palestinian people, even though in line with Israel's past policy of absolute disregard of the provisions of the Charter calling for the peaceful settlement of international disputes, is, we feel, directly related to the results or, rather, the absence of any results of the second special session on disarmament. The inability of mankind to agree to end the arms race as a first step and to proceed towards disarmament in a realistic and logical manner by implementing the provisions of the Charter calling for the establishment of an effective international security system making it possible for nations to disarm has brought to the fore the doctrine of "might makes right", as demonstrated by the Israeli attack on Lebanon. The Israelis, taking advantage of the United Nations inability to implement its resolutions because of the lack of an effective international security system, struck once again at the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Lebanon, causing devastation to this neighbouring and friendly country.*

* Mr. Zentar (Morocco), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Moushoutas, Cyprus)

The attack was launched with the declared purpose of exterminating the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). For more than two months now, the world has been witnessing the tragic siege of Beirut, including indiscriminate bombing unparalleled in brutality, killing thousands of civilians and destroying most of the city. The Israeli aggression against this small country, the indiscriminate bombing and killing of thousands of civilians, is a reversion to the law of the jungle. It is proof, if any was needed, of a world prone to force and domination. The Israeli action strikes at the roots of the moral fibre of mankind and places a further black mark on its own history, for a holocaust has been caused by those who were the victim of a holocaust. Under the pretext of provocation by the PLO, the Israeli Government has committed a crime against mankind. The action Israel has taken against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples, the result of its expansionist policy against its Arab neighbours, has been universally condemned, since it constitutes one of the most ignominious episodes in mankind's history. Israel has lost far more than what, if anything, it has gained in Lebanon, and proof of this will be forthcoming in the near future. On the other hand, the tremendous loss of life and the courage of the defenders will remain a symbol of dedication to principles and lofty ideals, demonstrating the heights of endurance to which man can rise in defence of eternal values.

However, what is utterly disheartening is the fact that the world Organization stood literally helpless when the Palestinian and the Lebanese peoples were targeted for extinction. The Security Council resolutions calling for cease-fires went unheeded time and time again. The impotence of the United Nations to maintain peace and security and its failure to check aggression and immediately stop a military conflict which was a clear and imminent danger to international peace and security have been prominently demonstrated.

As a result, the role of the United Nations was further eroded. When the bells were tolling for the injustice done to the Palestinian and the Lebanese peoples, they were also tolling for the credibility and the prestige of the United Nations, for we as an Organization have for years failed the Palestinian people and other peoples by not giving the Organization the means

(Mr. Houshoutas, Cyprus)

to fulfil its paramount responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Thus the problem we face today goes beyond the Palestinian question and enters the sphere of the very usefulness and existence of this Organization. The United Nations stood aside immobilized when Israel arrogated to itself the right to decide not only the fate of Beirut and Lebanon or the future of Palestine or the PLO but also that of mankind through a decision for world war or world peace. What is more, after the cease-fire agreement, there is now a well-organized endeavour to prevent the United Nations from playing its role in the solution of the problem. We feel that the United Nations peace-keeping force can and should contribute to monitoring the withdrawal of the Israeli troops, to the protection of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and to ensuring that supplies continue to flow into Beirut. We believe that the United Nations is the appropriate forum for the solution of the Palestinian problem in accordance with its relevant resolutions. Thus the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from Lebanon should be carried out in accordance with Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982).

The Non-Aligned Movement has consistently supported the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the right of the Palestinian people to return to their ancestral homes and lands and the exercise of their right to self-determination. The right to return to one's home and land is inalienable and cannot be taken away no matter how many years have passed. We therefore continue strongly to support the rights of the Palestinian refugees and the displaced people to receive what is rightfully theirs. As the representative of a country whose people have been rendered refugees in their own country, having been uprooted by an invasion and persecuted by the occupation army, we understand fully the cause of the Palestinians and we stand by them in brotherly solidarity.*

* The President resumed the Chair.

(Mr. Moushoutas, Cyprus)

The position of my Government on the Question of Palestine has been reiterated on several occasions in the United Nations and in other international forums, more recently in Nicosia on the occasion of the Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries. We believe that without a just solution to the Palestinian problem, which forms the substance of the Middle East problem, there can be no peace and security in the region. What is more, we believe that any peace effort, in order to be just and to be successful, must take into consideration the legitimate rights and interests of the Palestinian people.

It is imperative that the Palestinian people, through its sole and legitimate representative, the PLO, be a party to any negotiations concerning its homeland, because the future of a people, whether in Palestine, Namibia or elsewhere, cannot be decided in its absence or behind its back.

My Government fully supports the provisions of the Final Communiqué of the Co-ordinating Bureau held at ministerial level in Kuwait -- provisions which were reaffirmed in Nicosia at the Extraordinary Session of the Co-ordinating Bureau on 15 - 17 July 1982 - namely:

Firstly, the complete, total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all the Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories, in conformity with the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force;

Secondly, the free exercise of the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and properties from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and, to those who choose not to return, the payment of equitable compensation; and

Thirdly, the attainment and free exercise of the inalienable rights in Palestine of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination without external interference, and to national independence and sovereignty; and the right to establish its own independent sovereign State.

(Mr. Moushoutas, Cyprus)

Such recommendations have been made in the past by various organs of the United Nations, by the Non-Aligned Movement and in a number of international forums. Similar recommendations have also been made by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, of which my country is a member. It is only by implementing these recommendations and decisions that a just and lasting peace can be achieved in the Middle East. It is imperative that the United Nations play a decisive and comprehensive role in the solution of the Palestinian problem.

This emergency special session should, therefore, demand:

First, that the current crisis in Beirut be ended and that all hostilities cease;

Secondly, that the Israeli troops be unconditionally withdrawn from Lebanon to their own territory;

Thirdly, that the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) should be employed so that the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Lebanon may be effected within the framework of the United Nations;

Fourthly, that urgent and effective action be taken by the Security Council to ensure Israel's compliance with Security Council resolutions as was decided by the Security Council on 4 August 1982 in resolution 517 (1982), to the effect that the Council should "consider adopting effective ways and means" to compel compliance with its resolutions and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab territories it has occupied since 1967; and

Fifthly, that there be a comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem, through the achievement of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine.

Mr. ZAKI (Maldives): The subject under serious consideration today is not new to us, nor does it contain any elements which have not received very careful attention by the United Nations Security Council in particular or by all other international forums which cherish international peace and security.

(Mr. Zaki, Maldives)

The difference which we observe in respect of the question of Palestine today is that it has increased in intensity, which in turn has resulted in unprecedented death and destruction, to a degree which frightens every one of us.

As we all know, the alarming deterioration of the situation, and the rather dangerous turn taken by the developments connected with this sad episode, started in early June this year. And what has since then happened in Lebanon cannot, in the opinion of my delegation, be described as anything less than flagrant violations of international law, a blatant affront to world public opinion, and callous disregard for the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The savage and ceaseless attacks on innocent civilians, including women and children, cannot be condoned. Furthermore, the Israeli response of contempt and arrogance to the numerous attempts by the United Nations to prevent indiscriminate destruction of life and property in Lebanon can only go down in human history as a shameless act of depravity to promote the notorious doctrine that Might makes right.

My delegation wonders for how long those countries that support this type of dangerous political, military and territorial adventurism will continue to do so. My delegation extends every possible support to our Palestinian brothers, not only because they are our brothers in faith but also because they have been forced to exist without their basic human rights for the past 30 years and more. I do not believe that it is necessary for me to repeat here what those inalienable rights of the Palestinians are; they are only too well known to us all.

What I should like to state here, however, is that, no matter what cruelties are meted out to the Palestinians; no matter how long they are denied their basic inalienable human rights, their spirit of freedom, their struggle for self-determination and their heroism will continue unabated. The greatest source of inspiration and encouragement for our Palestinian brothers, led by the Palestine Liberation Organization, is their implicit trust in Almighty God. Their guiding light is not revenge, but truth and justice.

(Mr. Zaki, Maldives)

It is in this spirit that my delegation supports the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly seeking an immediate cease-fire in Lebanon and the unconditional withdrawal of all Israeli military forces to the internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon. It is in this same spirit of seeking justice and human rights that my delegation sincerely appeals to all concerned to make every endeavour to maintain the present cease-fire in order to start the process of bringing about a lasting solution to the question of Palestine.

My delegation makes this appeal and supports the United Nations on this issue not only because our Palestinian brothers are involved, but also because we sincerely feel that it would be dangerous to allow the continuous build-up of tension the world over, thus helping to promote frustration, despair and even hatred in international relations, because it can only result in more and more dangerous conflicts and bloodshed.

My delegation firmly believes that it is not at all too late for this emergency special session of the General Assembly to endorse the Security Council resolution on the situation in Lebanon and to demand that every country respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon under United Nations supervision.

(Mr. Zaki, Maldives)

My delegation remains convinced that unless immediate respect for United Nations efforts to remedy this deplorable situation is shown by every country concerned, further deterioration could result in a worse catastrophe than we may even imagine.

My delegation is under no illusion that without a just and fair solution to the question of Palestine there can be any lasting peace in the Middle East. Indeed, no lasting solution can be achieved without the recognition and restoration of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. To this end, we, in our humble way, shall continue to extend every possible support.

The PRESIDENT: We have just heard the last speaker in the debate. Before I call on those delegations that have indicated their wish to explain their votes before the vote, I now call on the representative of Qatar, who has a statement to make with regard to draft resolution A/ES-7/L.7.

Mr. JAMAL (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/ES-7/L.7, submitted by Kuwait, I should like to inform the General Assembly of an amendment which consists of the deletion of paragraph 2 of this draft resolution.

The PRESIDENT: The Secretariat will circulate a revised version of document A/ES-7/L.7 reflecting the amendment of which we have just been informed.

I shall now call on representatives who wish to explain their votes before the voting. I remind representatives that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by them from their seats.

Mr. PINIES (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): During this emergency special session of the General Assembly, whose convening my Government responded to quickly and affirmatively, I had the opportunity to explain in some detail Spain's position on the question of Palestine. This position, deeply rooted in what we consider to be principles of morality and justice which should govern international coexistence, is not based on any purely opportune interest and remains immutable. None the less we note with great concern that, in the

(Mr. Pinies, Spain)

two years since this session was convened and in the past couple of months, despite some very positive measures such as the fact that Egypt was able to recover the Sinai, there have been many more negative factors which have worsened the situation in the Middle East and have made even more remote the prospects of a solution of the question of Palestine which, as has been stated and restated during this debate, is the very essence of the conflicts in that beleaguered region.

The illegal annexation of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, the intensification of the repression of the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza through such measures as the removal of Palestinian mayors who were democratically elected by their own people, the establishment of new Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories, are samples of the unacceptable attitude of the Israeli authorities who, in flagrant defiance of the international community, continue to disregard the resolutions of this Assembly and of the Security Council.

More recently, Israeli armed intervention in Lebanon, with the attendant destruction and loss of human life, has shocked the world and aggravated the situation in the Middle East. Regardless of the settlement that is finally reached on the crisis in Lebanon, no one should forget - and my delegation wishes to insist on this point - that no just or lasting peace can be achieved in the region as long as the people of Palestine have not been able to exercise their full right to self-determination and to national independence and as long as their representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, does not take part in efforts to arrive at a comprehensive settlement to the conflict.

In the light of the foregoing, my delegation will vote in favour of draft resolutions A/ES-7/L.5, A/ES-7/L.6 and A/ES-7/L.7, because we feel that besides being moderate and realistic and regardless of their effectiveness or otherwise, they put forward a number of praiseworthy ideas, in both political and humanitarian terms, and this does serve as a reminder of the basic principles of the doctrine of our Organization on the question of Palestine.

Mr. OZORES TYPALDOS (Panama) (interpretation from Spanish): Panama has maintained and continues to maintain that the question of Palestine is the crux of the problem of the Middle East. Therefore the establishment of a just and lasting peace in that region calls essentially for the people of Palestine effectively to exercise their inalienable right to return to their homes, to self-determination, to independence and sovereignty and to the establishment of their own State in Palestine under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, their sole legitimate representative.

It is on this basis that my country conceives of a proper solution to the question of Palestine. Therefore my delegation must energetically condemn the attempt - which is bound to fail - to solve the question of Palestine through the massacre, annihilation and extermination of the Palestinian people.

More than two months ago the international community witnessed in horror the invasion and occupation of Lebanon by Israel and the consequent merciless slaughter of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians and the destruction of Beirut, in flagrant violation of the most fundamental principles of international law. As a member of the Security Council, Panama voted in favour of all the resolutions adopted by that body in the last two months in order to put an end to the Israeli aggression in Lebanon, but unfortunately those resolutions were systematically disregarded by Israel.

(Mr. Ozores Typaldos, Panama)

In accordance with those Security Council resolutions, Panama repeats the demand that Israel should immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its military forces from Lebanon and that it should restore and respect the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon. Panama points out that the international community must redouble its vigilance to ensure that the agreements on Lebanon which are about to be concluded are being faithfully executed by the interested and concerned parties and that the announced withdrawal of Palestinian forces leads without delay or excuses to the total withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon so that there is no extension in any way of Israeli occupation of any part of Lebanese territory.

We consider that the painful tragedy suffered by Lebanon and the people of Palestine in the last few months must induce us to deal decisively with the problem of the Middle East on the basis of the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the relevant General Assembly resolutions designed to bring about complete, just and lasting peace in the region, so that all countries and States of the region, including Israel, can exercise their right to exist, to live in peace and to decide their own future without fear within secure and recognized boundaries.

My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolutions in documents A/ES-7/L.5 and L.6, since their substance essentially coincides with my country's position on the question of the Middle East in general and on the question of Palestine in particular. My delegation will also vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-7/L.7 in its revised form.

Mr. ELMER (Sweden): In the eyes of my Government the reconvening for the third time this year of this emergency special session could serve a constructive purpose as a manifestation of the existing, virtually total, international consensus on the condemnation of Israel's invasion of Lebanon and of its utter disregard for human life and human suffering which have been demonstrated during the past 11 weeks. It is a reason for disappointment, therefore, that the draft resolutions before us will not serve that purpose. My delegation finds itself obliged to abstain in the vote on all three drafts, and I shall very briefly indicate why.

Even if we are in an emergency special session on the question of Palestine, it would have seemed appropriate for the main substantive draft - draft resolution A/ES-7/L.5 - to address itself directly to the situation in Lebanon and to reaffirm the inviolability of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We regret that that is not the case. Even more regrettable is the fact that some of the provisions in the text are quite unacceptable to my delegation -- notably operative paragraph 2, which lends itself to the interpretation that Israel as a State should be eliminated; and operative paragraph 4, which has the effect of reaffirming a number of resolutions of this Assembly which my Government has been unable to support.

We shall abstain on draft resolution A/ES-7/L.6 concerning the international conference on the question of Palestine for the same reason that led us to abstain when resolution 36/120 C was adopted on 10 December last. It is the Swedish view that the parties must agree on negotiations and on the procedure for such negotiations for there to be any likelihood of positive results. The conference referred to in the draft does not meet those criteria. A lasting solution to the problem of the Middle East can be attained only through direct negotiations involving all parties. This implies that Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) must agree to face one another at the negotiating table.

With reference to draft resolution A/ES-7/L.7 concerning the innocent children victims of aggression, my delegation does not favour the selective commemoration of children of only certain nationalities, victims of violence inflicted by one side only and, in the opinion of my delegation, even in its revised form the draft has that effect.

Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador)(interpretation from Spanish): Ecuador rejects the use of force in international relations, does not accept the acquisition of territory by armed occupation, remains faithful to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, and condemns all aggression.

In the case before the General Assembly at its seventh emergency special session, as in all those where foreign troops occupy the territory of others, Ecuador has unswervingly maintained that all foreign troops must withdraw so as to leave the inhabitants of the various territories free to decide their future through democratic processes.

Lebanon is a democratic country which has placed its trust in the United Nations. There must be an immediate end- because it is intolerable and in violation of the most fundamental principles of international law- to the destructive activity of foreign forces which have imposed themselves upon that country and made its cities battlegrounds in the midst of the torture and death of the civilian population. The Lebanese people has the sovereign right to live in peace and to decide the future of its national institutions and its international preferences; in turn, the world community must respect the territorial integrity, political independence and national unity of Lebanon.

Furthermore, it is unacceptable that the repeated decisions and resolutions of the United Nations, adopted by both the General Assembly and the Security Council, should continue to be ignored. This attitude diminishes the political strength of the main body responsible for international law in our time to which weak peoples in particular have entrusted their security and in which they have placed their hopes.

Hence there is a pressing need to strengthen the machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes provided for in the Charter and of the role of observers and the United Nations peace-keeping forces, particularly in the theatre of the Lebanese crisis and in every aspect thereof affecting the Middle East, where the key to stability and understanding lies in eliminating the injustice and mistreatment suffered today by the Palestinian people. That people has a right to a homeland, self-determination, the restoration of its occupied territories and full participation in the relevant international talks,

(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

on an equal footing with all other countries in the region, in exercise of its inalienable rights.

For all those reasons the delegation of Ecuador will support the draft resolutions that are before us by voting for them, as it has done in the case of previous draft resolutions discussed in the Assembly on this topic, in keeping with the principle underlying the international behaviour of Ecuador. We are hopeful, because we have noted in this debate the statements made from the rostrum by the representatives of all parties to the conflict concerning their decision to withdraw the foreign armed forces involved in the acts of violence which have caused so much damage to the Lebanese nation and to the efforts of the international community to achieve peace and civilized coexistence among all the peoples of the Middle East.

Mr. SANZ de SANTAMARIA (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish):

Colombia will vote in favour of draft resolution A/ES-7/L.5 because we feel that the quest for a just and appropriate solution to the problem of the Middle East is necessary and that talks should be held involving all interested and concerned parties, without exception and with no priority for any of them, as soon as possible and that account should be taken of the interests and obligations of the parties, together with respect for the existence and rights of the State of Israel.

Mr. GEORGES (Haiti) (interpretation from French): The entire world is distressed at the unprecedented scope which the threat to peace in the Middle East region has taken on as a result of the situation at present prevailing in Lebanon, a situation the full tragedy of which is apparent from the great losses of human life and the material damage being experienced by Lebanon as a State entity because of the erosion of its sovereignty and the damage done to the right of its population to a peaceful existence. In the light of these considerations my delegation would like to make its position clear on draft resolutions A/ES-7/L.5, L.6 and L.7.

My delegation abstained when the vote was taken on resolution 36/120 C, in which the General Assembly decided to convene an International Conference on the Question of Palestine. Nevertheless, in view of the turn which events have taken we believe that such a Conference may well prove useful. That is why we will support draft resolution A/ES-7/L.6 in principle. My delegation hopes that that Conference will produce positive elements which will at least add up to a possible outline for a comprehensive solution to the problem in the Middle East.

My delegation, while deploring the consequences of the Israeli intervention in Lebanon, has been relieved to note that the outcome of that crisis seems already to be discernible. We believe that Lebanon will once again be able to be master of its destiny, under a Government free of external interference. That is why, in view of the imminent ending of the Lebanese crisis, my delegation feels that it must abstain on draft resolution A/ES-7/L.5.

(Mr. Georges, Haiti)

Regarding draft resolution A/ES-7/L.7, my delegation will vote against it because we feel that such an initiative is hardly likely to serve the cause of peace.

Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway): The loss of life and the material destruction following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon have caused distress and great concern among the people and Government of Norway. The reactions have been particularly strong to the suffering and devastation that resulted from the most recent Israeli shelling and bombardment of densely populated areas in Beirut.

According to today's news, an agreement on the evacuation from Beirut of the forces of the Palestine Liberation Organization has now been accepted by all parties concerned. My delegation hopes that that agreement, which has been reached through the untiring efforts of the United States mediator, Ambassador Philip Habib, will mark the end of the suffering of the civilian population of Beirut and that it will facilitate progress towards a solution in a broader Middle East context.

In relation to Lebanon, the Norwegian Government continues to support Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982). It is a matter of deep concern and regret to the Norwegian Government that Israel has chosen not to comply with those and subsequent resolutions of the Council, thereby undermining the authority of the Security Council.

It follows from what I have already stated that the Norwegian Government has been profoundly distressed by the human suffering following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Even so, my delegation has some reservations about the draft resolutions in front of us. In the view of my Government, a just and lasting peace in the Middle East can be achieved only on the basis of respect for the fundamental interests of all parties. In the Norwegian view, there can be no lasting peace in the area without recognition of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination. Of equal importance is recognition of the right of Israel to exist within secure and recognized borders as a precondition for any settlement of the problems in the Middle East.

(Mr. Vraalsen, Norway)

In the opinion of my delegation the draft resolution contained in document A/ES-7/L.5 now before us does not strike the kind of careful balance between the interests of the parties concerned that is needed if the resolution is to facilitate progress towards a just and lasting solution. At the same time it tends to prejudice the outcome of future negotiations. Beyond these general misgivings, my delegation also has reservations about the wording of certain paragraphs of the draft resolution and consequently my delegation will have to abstain on that draft resolution.

By way of conclusion, I have a few words to say about draft resolution A/ES-7/L.7, which I understand will now be revised.

My delegation does not believe that the measures provided for in that draft resolution represent the most appropriate way to commemorate the innocent victims of the war in Lebanon. Rather, we would suggest that a better way to manifest sympathy and sorrow would be to donate funds to the relief work being carried out in Lebanon.

My Government for its part has already contributed a total of Nkr 25 million, the equivalent of \$US 4 million, which has been donated to various humanitarian organizations working in the area. We are, for our part, ready to do our utmost to alleviate the plight of the civilian population.

Mr. KUEN (Austria): My delegation will vote in favour of draft resolutions A/ES-7/L.5 and L.6 and abstain on draft resolution A/ES-7/L.7.

Our vote on draft resolution A/ES-7/L.5 should be seen as an expression of Austria's generous support for the aspirations of the Palestinian people concerning the realization of their national rights. At the same time, we wish to re-emphasize our full support of the right of Israel to exist within safe and secure boundaries. Draft resolution A/ES-7/L.5, in our view, contains a number of formulations which lack clarity or may have legal or political implications that could further complicate, rather than facilitate, our future efforts.

(Mr. Kuen, Austria)

I would like to refer in particular to operative paragraphs 2 and 4 of the text. The draft resolution does not take into account the most recent development, especially with regard to the efforts of United States Envoy Philip Habib, to whom we would like to express again our gratitude for his tireless efforts in negotiating an agreement acceptable to all parties.

Concerning draft resolution A/ES-7/L.6, my delegation feels that the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which is now scheduled to take place in August 1983 could, if properly prepared, emphasize the urgency of achieving a peaceful solution of the Palestinian question and make a positive contribution to a comprehensive political settlement of the problems of the Middle East. It is in this sense that we will follow with interest the further preparations for the Conference.

As to draft resolution A/ES-7/L.7, my delegation supports the general idea, but we have doubts as to the manner in which it should be implemented. Furthermore, we feel that we should not forget the fate suffered by innocent victims in other wars and conflicts.

Mr. KUMAR (Fiji): My country respects and whole-heartedly supports the inalienable rights of the displaced Palestinians to self-determination, including the right to a national homeland. We also fully support the call for Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied during and since the 1967 war.

At the same time, we firmly believe that for any just and lasting peace it is essential to acknowledge and respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State, including Israel, and the right to live within secure and recognized boundaries.

With that preamble, I turn to the three resolutions before us.

(Mr. Kumar, Fiji)

Resolution A/ES-7/L.5 has the over-all support of my delegation. My delegation would, however, wish to place on record its reservation on operative paragraph 2. We fully support the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination, but at the same time we firmly believe that any settlement arising out of such an exercise should recognize the rights of all States within the region, including Israel, to exist within secure boundaries.

The second resolution, A/ES-7/L.6, has the full support of my delegation, as its objective, calling for an international conference to resolve the conflict is consistent with my Government's avowed policy of exploring all peaceful avenues to resolve the ongoing conflict in the region.

With regard to resolution A/ES-7/L.7, my delegation wishes to place on record its reservation and would accordingly abstain on this resolution.

Mr. DESKER (Singapore): The reconvening of this seventh emergency special session on the question of Palestine reflects the mounting concern of the international community at the grave situation arising from Israel's invasion of Lebanon on 4 June 1982.

In statements issued on 11 June, 16 June and 7 August 1982, the Foreign Ministers of the ASEAN countries strongly condemned the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which violated the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon and caused great loss of life and destruction of property. By its acts, Israel has contravened the principles enshrined in the Charter and disregarded the decisions of the Security Council. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers called for the immediate implementation of the relevant United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

The Government of Singapore believes that a just and comprehensive settlement of the situation in the Middle East cannot be achieved without the participation on an equal footing of all the parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization.

(Mr. Desker, Singapore)

In the light of these considerations, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolutions contained in documents A/ES-7/L.5, L.6 and L.7.

With regard to operative paragraph 2 of A/ES-7/L.5, it is the understanding of my delegation that it refers to the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. We support the establishment of a Palestine homeland in these territories and cannot accept the annexation of territories occupied by force. My delegation fully supports the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) which established the fundamental basis for a durable, stable and lasting peace in the Middle East. One element in the search for a lasting peace would be the recognition of the right of all States in the region, including Israel, to existence and security, as well as "their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force".

Mr. KERGIN (Canada): Canada's position regarding the tragedy of Lebanon is well known. The Canadian public, Parliament and Government have all expressed their abhorrence at the violence and suffering which we have witnessed in recent weeks. It is with profound relief that we now see an agreement that will bring about an end to the recent death and destruction in Lebanon. We hope that it will now be possible to proceed with the international community's relief efforts as well as the work of rebuilding Lebanon. With this under way, it should be possible to renew efforts to forge a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East without which the cycle of violence cannot be expected to end.

We had hoped that this emergency special session would have had something new to offer the parties in dealings with the broader issues relating to the Arab-Israeli dispute which gave rise to the tragedy in Lebanon. The draft resolutions before us break no new ground and do not, we believe, contribute to the solution of the essential problem which is to bring the parties together to negotiate a settlement of their differences.

(Mr. Kergin, Canada)

As a general comment on various aspects of the three draft resolutions my delegation wishes to put clearly on record Canada's position on the following points. As we indicated at the resumed seventh emergency special session in June, we do not agree that the Assembly is the appropriate body to make a determination regarding the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression. This clearly is the prerogative of the Security Council. We also do not endorse the implied status regarding the Palestinian Liberation Organization as the representative of the Palestinian people. Furthermore, we cannot accept the assertion that the Palestinian question is the core of the Arab-Israeli dispute. We believe that there are a number of other issues central to the Arab-Israeli conflict besides the Palestine question. Equally important is the acceptance of Israel in the Middle East and its right to secure and recognized boundaries. This principle, enshrined in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), is fundamental to our policy and a prerequisite to peace in the region.

With regard to the specific resolutions, my delegation has particular difficulty with operative paragraphs 2, 4 and 11 of resolution A/ES-7/L.5 and will abstain on it.

(Mr. Kergin, Canada)

With reference to operative paragraph 2 in draft resolution A/ES-7/L.5, Canada supports the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinians. We support their right to play a full part in negotiations to determine their future and their right to a homeland within clearly defined territory - the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. However, we have refrained from advocating any specific options open to the parties regarding the nature of the homeland in the negotiations which will eventually have to settle this issue.

Regarding operative paragraph 4 of that draft resolution, my delegation cannot agree with the demand that Israel comply with all General Assembly resolutions relating to the occupied territories, since Canada has not supported all the resolutions to which reference is made.

We believe that an international conference on the Middle East, such as the one called for in operative paragraph 11, will not at this time promote the comprehensive settlement in the Middle East desired by all, given the long-standing positions on this idea of the parties directly involved.

As regards draft resolution A/ES-7/L.6, when the subject of a conference on the Palestinian question was first considered at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Canadian delegation voted against the resolution. We did so primarily because we doubted whether such a conference would make a positive contribution to achieving a settlement in the Middle East. We regret that this draft resolution does not dispel these doubts. However, in the hope that this Conference, which the General Assembly has now agreed to convene, will make a serious effort to reach balanced conclusions and perhaps explore new directions in the search for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East problem, my delegation will not oppose this draft resolution but will abstain.

Canadians have been deeply distressed at the plight of the children caught up in the present conflict. Our concern has been reflected in the contributions which my Government has already made to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the Red Cross for humanitarian relief in Lebanon. However, given the selective nature and political orientation of draft resolution A/ES-7/L.7, as revised, we shall have to abstain when it is put to the vote.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.