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**President: Mr. Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA
(Algeria).**

AGENDA ITEM 108

Question of Palestine

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call upon the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to introduce draft resolution A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2.

2. Mr. KELANI (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic is happy to present to the General Assembly draft resolution A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2, submitted by 72 countries. The text of the draft resolution is as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Considering that the Palestinian people is the principal party to the question of Palestine,

"Invites the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine in plenary meetings."

3. It should be pointed out on this occasion that our debate today will be limited to discussion of the draft resolution, which is a procedural one having no bearing on the substance of the issue—the question of Palestine itself—which will be examined in detail at a later stage, beginning in the first week in November. The draft resolution is based on one primary consideration: the decision taken by the General Assembly to include the question of Palestine in the agenda of its present session. It is normal that the Palestinian people, the principal party to the question, should have its representatives present here during the Assembly's consideration of this item on its agenda. The Palestinian people, numbering more than 3 million persons, does not live under the normal conditions of life which other peoples enjoy and which would have enabled it to elect its representative by democratic and parliamentary procedures. The reason for that is that it has been compelled to live in a different situation, with one part of its population exiled far from its fatherland, dispersed throughout various parts of the world for more than a quarter of a century and another

part that has lived under Israeli occupation on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip since June 1967.

4. It is inevitable that this people in exile and under occupation should be in a state of revolt to recover its legitimate rights that have been taken from it. Like any other revolutionary people, the Palestinian people has selected its leaders and is represented by the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO].

5. The PLO was not born of nothing; quite the contrary, it was selected from among the ranks of the Palestinian people and born of that people, which it represents. That people has thus conferred upon it a legitimate character. The PLO was born of a long struggle waged by the Palestinian people for more than half a century and still continuing. The Palestinian people has paid a high price in blood: tens of thousands of its people have died; it has suffered the bitterness of exile; it has been dispersed; and it has undergone the disaster of occupation.

6. The PLO reflects the struggle of the Palestinian people and is, therefore, recognized by more than 90 States as the legitimate representative of that people. This has been affirmed in a clear way by international and regional conferences. I can mention the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Algiers from 5 to 9 September 1973. That Conference recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in its just struggle. I can mention also the Second Islamic Conference of Kings and Heads of State and Government, held at Lahore from 19 to 22 February 1974, which reaffirmed that the PLO was the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in its just struggle. Similarly, the twenty-third ordinary session of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity [OAU], held at Mogadiscio from 12 to 15 June 1974, affirmed its total support of the PLO in its heroic struggle against Zionism and racism.

7. The PLO has been accorded observer status at a number of international conferences. This year it was present at a UNESCO conference, at the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, held at Geneva from 20 February to 29 March and at the World Population Conference held at Bucharest from 19 to 30 August. It was also present at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea held at Caracas this summer and at a meeting of ICAO held at Montreal. The PLO will shortly participate in the World Food Conference, to be held in Rome.

8. From the juridical point of view, an invitation to the PLO to participate in the discussion of this problem is based on the principles of the Charter, the right to self-determination and United Nations resolutions.

General Assembly resolutions have, since 1969 till today, stressed recognition of the fact that the Palestinian people has the right to exercise its equitable and inalienable rights, including its right to self-determination.

9. The forced absence of the Palestinian people—which has prevented it from participating in discussions, including those on resolutions of decisive importance for its very existence and fate—has been a principal reason for the Palestinian tragedy and one of the continuing manifestations of that tragedy. For this reason and to deal with the Palestinian question in a valid and correct manner, in a way that will yield practical, concrete and equitable results, we must take into consideration the necessity of enabling the Palestinian people to be represented here in this hall during our debates as a principal party with the sole right to defend its rights and to express its demands and aspirations.

10. On that basis, the General Assembly has the right to address an invitation to the PLO to participate in the discussion of the question of Palestine when that question is examined in the plenary Assembly during the first week of November. This is provided for in the operative paragraph of the draft resolution, and the delegations that have sponsored the resolution hope that it will receive the full support of the General Assembly.

11. In conclusion, I request that a roll-call vote be taken on the draft resolution.

12. Mr. PETRIĆ (Yugoslavia): The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, Mr. Kelani, has on behalf of the 72 sponsors introduced draft resolution A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2 very eloquently and in a well-argued manner.

13. My delegation is gratified to be among the first to address the General Assembly on this question and to call upon it, by adopting this draft resolution, to redress a grave historical injustice inflicted upon the Palestinian people and thus to make a unique contribution to, and lay down the indispensable foundation for, the solution of the Middle East crisis, which has been plaguing the world for a quarter of a century.

14. In doing this, we proceed from Yugoslavia's firm and consistent position regarding the right of peoples to self-determination and to their free development, and the necessity of resolving the Middle East crisis as a matter of urgency, and on the basis of and through recognition and realization of the national rights of the Palestinian people, and the withdrawal of Israel from all the Arab territories occupied during the 1967 war and since that time. Our position reflects our resolute support for the just struggle of the Arab peoples for the liberation of their territories from the Israeli aggressor and, in particular, our support for the just struggle of the PLO for the realization of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to freedom, self-determination and independent development in conditions of peace and security. It is difficult to find in contemporary history such an example of infringement of the freedom and violation of the most cherished rights of a people—a people that has been denied justice, driven out of its homeland, turned into refugees and subjected to attempts at depriving it of its national territory, while at the

same time attempts are made, through transforming the problem into a mere question of humanitarian assistance, to deprive that people of its national character instead of securing its rights to a home and to national identity, thus removing the question from the purview of the international community.

15. I wish to emphasize here that my Government's relations with the PLO, which we consider to be the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, have been based on firm friendship and full understanding for a long time. The mission of the PLO in my country has been in existence for more than a decade. We have from the outset supported the admission of the PLO to the non-aligned movement, which, at the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, held at Algiers from 5 to 9 September 1973, gave its full support to the rightful struggle of the Palestinian people.

16. The Organization and the General Assembly have borne from the very beginning, that is, since 1947 and 1948, a great and historic responsibility towards the Palestinian people and its fate, and a just solution of the problem of Palestine. At the same time, however, without fulfilling the basic demand embodied in the draft resolution before us—namely, that the PLO, as the representative of the Palestinian people, should be invited to take part in the consideration of this question in the plenary Assembly—this problem cannot be properly discussed.

17. From the very beginning, the question of Palestine has been dealt with in the General Assembly. As is both natural and logical, it has been allocated, at the present session, to the plenary Assembly. It is, therefore, fully justified and inevitable that the PLO, as the only representative of the Palestinian people and the party most directly concerned, should take part in the consideration of the question of Palestine in the plenary Assembly.

18. It is quite clear today that there can be no successful solution of the Middle East crisis without a solution of the Palestinian problem, and that consequently, in the absence of such a solution, there can be no guarantee for the peace and security of all the countries and peoples of that region. The struggle of the Palestinian people, as an element of the struggle for liberation of Arab and other peoples from foreign occupation, colonialism, racism and foreign domination, has resulted in the question of Palestine becoming one of the most important issues of our time.

19. The placing of the question of Palestine on the agenda of the General Assembly with such wide support is a reflection of a growing feeling in the world that the Palestinian problem is a vital element in solving the Middle East crisis. Therefore, the Palestinian people must be fully supported in its endeavours to realize all the rights that are now enjoyed by the peoples of Member States of this Organization. The PLO, as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, already recognized by about 100 States and liberation movements, must participate actively in all efforts and phases of the solution of the Middle East crisis, and, in particular, the solution of the problem of Palestine.

20. Consequently, it is high time for the General Assembly and the international community to begin, through the debate on the question of Palestine in the General Assembly, to deal concretely and comprehensively with the problem of Palestine in all its aspects.

21. In supporting this draft resolution, Yugoslavia is giving real expression to its well-known position, namely, that the legitimate representatives of a country or people, in any part of the world, must fully participate in the shaping of their own destiny.

22. By adopting this draft resolution, the General Assembly will fulfil its obligation and accomplish a historic act; it will provide a specific solution for a unique problem.

23. For all the aforesaid reasons, we hope that the General Assembly will adopt this draft resolution in a manner befitting the significance of the action taken by us and corresponding to the needs of the present moment and the expectations of all peace-loving and freedom-loving mankind.

24. Mr. ADJIBADÉ (Dahomey) (*interpretation from French*): The question of Palestine has been of concern to the United Nations ever since 1947, when the British Government reported on its administration of the Mandate which it held in Palestine, and asked the Organization to reach a decision concerning the future of the Government of that Territory. We recall that after many ups and downs, after a vast number of essentially selfish and partisan dealings, the Organization decided to divide Palestine into an Arab State and a Jewish State, thus flagrantly flouting the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and violating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

25. Since that time there has existed a Jewish State; but we are obliged to observe that the Palestinian Arabs have been driven from the land of their ancestors, forced to relinquish their properties and to be scattered throughout the world in a life of begging and indigence. The moral and material destitution of the Palestinian Arab people is a fact which needs no proof; nor need it be shown how they have been scorned and bullied. These are stubborn facts which weigh with ever-increasing heaviness on the conscience of all nations that love justice and peace.

26. More than one body in our Organization has considered the problem of Palestine, whose grave consequences can be seen in the crisis in the Middle East which has existed now for nearly a quarter of a century. In spite of the many efforts of the Organization, the status and the fate of the Palestinian people have not been settled, for reasons which we shall refrain from mentioning now but which we shall elaborate on in our statement in the debate on the subject itself.

27. Contrary to the hopes which some continue to harbour, the Arab people of Palestine, with a grim determination worthy of its stoic virtue, has become organized, has reaffirmed its identity, has consolidated its unity and has appointed its own genuine representatives in order to make the international community share the anguish of its plight and support its reasons for hoping for a future with more justice, dignity and happiness.

28. While we praise the efforts of the United Nations to provide relief and health services, education and training for Palestinians, Dahomey continues to believe that, while political considerations earlier led the United Nations to confine its attention primarily to the humanitarian aspects of the problem, the determination of the international community today not to depart from the fundamental principles of the Charter means that we must go beyond the considerations that have thus far obscured the problems in the Organization, and that the United Nations can no longer evade the true nature of the problem if it is to find the proper remedy.

29. To Dahomey, the fundamental cause of the Palestinian problem and, consequently, of the crisis in the Middle East is a purely colonial situation, which the international community has a duty to put an end to once and for all. This cause is aggravated by expansionist designs, the grave consequences of which must, as a matter of greatest urgency, be eliminated in all their forms.

30. The responsible and awakened Palestinian people can no longer be pacified by bread and circuses. First and foremost, they must be guaranteed the exercise of their rights as provided for in the Charter and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Palestinians must be able to recover their lands and their property, which have been confiscated. The Palestinians must be allowed to live on the land of their ancestors and to acquire the political power of their choice.

31. In this new approach to the problem, the Assembly has a duty to carry out a thorough and far-reaching debate of this problem with the participation of all parties concerned, in particular the Palestinians, who have not yet had an opportunity to be seated in our midst. The participation of Palestinians in this debate is essential. By inviting the genuine representatives of the Palestinian people to address our august Assembly, we shall be in a position to identify all the aspects of the problem and, with full knowledge of all relevant facts, to begin work on a serious, lasting and effective solution to the problem.

32. Draft resolution A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2, submitted to us for approval, of which my delegation is a sponsor, does meet this requirement. That is why we venture to hope that the desire for justice by which we must all be guided will prompt the Assembly to adopt this draft resolution unanimously or, at the very least, by an overwhelming majority. In so doing, we shall make it possible for the Organization to see to it that the force of law in Palestine will finally triumph over the law of force.

33. Mr. ABDEL-MEGUID (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It is something of a paradox to speak here now to ask that a people should exercise its rights, more than 29 years after the birth of the United Nations, considering that this people had its own identity and its international personality long before the birth of this Organization, whose first objective is to make every effort to banish the scourge of war and to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and of self-determination of peoples.

34. In fact, in the context of these noble principles, the situation of the Palestinian people has been steadily deteriorating, and for 25 years the problem of this people has remained unsolved. It was inevitable that this problem, remaining unsolved, should continue to be an open sore in a sensitive region of great significance to international peace and security.

35. Need I refer to the four wars which have broken out in the region since the emergence of this problem? Need I recall the untold sufferings inflicted, and their harmful effects on the progress and development of the region?

36. The situation becomes even more illogical when we review the history of the problem here in the United Nations. In fact, since 1953, the Organization has removed the question of Palestine from the agenda of the General Assembly and replaced it by another item devoted to an institution called UNRWA.

37. The international community has not attempted to resolve the problem of this people in its entirety despite the wars and crises that have erupted in the region. As a result, many ask what is the reason for this chronic tension and what solutions would be appropriate to the restoration of peace in the Middle East. That question arises every time there is a crisis. Even so, I do not think that through out all those years the world community can have failed to understand that the real reason is that the central problem itself has not been resolved and that the only way to restore permanent peace is to resolve justly the problem of this people.

38. During these years, international political elements have compelled the Organization to continue to examine the consequences of the problem without actually studying its very meaning and without the presence of the main party directly interested—the Palestinian people itself.

39. The irony of fate has even compelled the leaders of Israel to deny the existence of the Palestinian people, whom they characterize as a band of terrorists.

40. Today, that people comes to the Organization to submit its problem on its own behalf, because that people has the right to self-determination. It is not making excessive demands when it asks to be allowed to exercise that right, recognized by all doctrines of human values, which emanates from the United Nations Charter itself and which has, by the way, been supported by many resolutions of this Organization. Therefore, the Palestinian people confronts the world community with its responsibilities and specifically presents it with two precise options: either to accept that people and hear its views, attempting to find a just solution to its problem, or to refuse that option and compel it to lose confidence in the United Nations and in all the noble values and principles upon which the Organization is founded.

41. As we see it, the choice is clear. Either we shoulder our responsibility and invite the representatives of that people, as essential participants, to attempt to find a sincere, just and durable solution to the problem, thus rectifying the error committed in our failure to examine the basis of the problem in recent years; or we follow an ostrich-like policy and ignore the realities and thus perpetuate the vicious circle of useless searches for a solution to the problem,

ignoring the existence of the major party, which has been deprived of its rights. Thus we shall try to find a solution or we shall leave the situation to deteriorate until consequences of incalculable seriousness arise.

42. It is clear that in its essence the question of Palestine differs from any other political question that has been examined by the United Nations. As regards this problem, the United Nations is assuming an historic political and juridical responsibility. The question has unique and distinct characteristics unlike those of any other problem. It is the problem of a whole people with an identity of its own that was ready for independence.

43. There have been the persistent Israeli attempts to transform intentionally that people, which was exercising all its national and inalienable rights, into a people composed of refugees reduced to an existence in camps and forced to live on international contributions, a people deprived of all its rights and of all hopes for the future.

44. Confronted with that situation, we cannot draw parallels. We cannot talk of formalities. We must avoid any exaggerations. We must avoid sterile dialectics or claims without foundation, because they only cause our efforts to be wasted and hinder any attempts being made in the region to restore peace. We want those efforts to be founded on justice—and justice, as we see it, can be envisaged only if this people, which had legitimate rights, has those rights restored to it.

45. That is why Egypt feels that granting the representatives of the Palestinian people the opportunity to participate in the discussion on this question and to present that people's legitimate claims will be a positive step by the United Nations to consolidate efforts towards peace, and not one that will hinder those efforts, as Israel claims.

46. The opportunity presented to us today is one which will enable the Organization effectively and sincerely to contribute to a solution of this problem and thereby to the consolidation of a just peace in the region, the history of which shows that it becomes more explosive and dangerous every time the problem is left without a just solution.

47. When the PLO is invited to participate in the examination of the Palestinian question it will not thereby gain more recognition, or confirm its existence. It is already recognized by two regional organizations, which include more than 60 Members of the United Nations—OAU and the League of Arab States. The PLO is also recognized by the non-aligned countries, as well as by the group of Islamic countries; a large number of other peace-loving countries have recognized it, not to mention certain great Powers bearing major international responsibility for world peace.

48. The PLO now takes its place as observer at a number of international conferences held under United Nations auspices, including, quite recently, the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. The organization also participates in the deliberations of a number of specialized agencies. I need only mention ICAO and UNESCO. The PLO, whenever it has achieved major international recognition, has based this on its legitimate representation of the masses of the Palestinian people whose will was embodied in the

popular organizations that have selected the PLO to be the leader of this struggling people.

49. Logic compels us to invite the PLO here to set forth its point of view from this rostrum because the composition of the Organization has become increasingly large in the past 25 years. The Organization includes more than 80 new Members, which have the right to hear the viewpoint of the representatives of the Palestinian people itself, to hear them express their aspirations, their desires and their claims to exercise their rights like all other peoples.

50. The Arab Republic of Egypt, as a sponsor of the draft resolution, together with over 70 other States, wanted to express its unshakeable faith in the importance and necessity of inviting the PLO to participate in the discussion of the question of Palestine. We are confident that the United Nations, by including this question on the agenda as a separate item, wants thereby to implement the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people. Egypt accords major importance to this problem and it is proud, as always, of having supported all just causes. Egypt is convinced that any position we take with respect to this situation will be reflected in history, and that is how political relations in the world of tomorrow will be developed.

51. The General Assembly, we are sure, will meet the desires of the countries that are sponsors of the draft resolution by inviting the PLO to participate in the discussion of this question. Considering that it is the principal party directly concerned, we are convinced that the participation of the PLO will serve effectively and realistically to consolidate the efforts deployed to strengthen peace.

52. In conclusion, I should like to quote a declaration made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt when he spoke before the General Assembly on 1 October:

"The Palestinian people are capable of seizing their own rights and of imposing their will, but it would be better to give their movement international legitimacy instead of imposing upon them the task of struggling outside that framework of legitimacy. By virtue of their long history of dealing with situations and facing reality objectively without evasiveness, the Palestinian people are qualified to assume this task. They realize that the glorious war of 6 October has opened up new horizons for the Arabs and has for the first time afforded an opportunity to reach a just and permanent peace in the area that would make it possible for its people to devote their attention to development and to the task of economic and social transformation which is needed to make their future secure." [2250th meeting, para. 45.]

53. Mr. SALIM (United Republic of Tanzania): For years many Members of this Organization, with increasing majorities, have sought to alleviate the sufferings of a people denied their natural homeland or voice. For years the United Nations has been called upon to come to grips with the explosive situation in the Middle East. And in the years since the founding of the Organization, that explosive situation in the Middle East has four times erupted into open war.

54. While after every war there has followed a period of uneasy cease-fire, peace has consistently eluded the area. The current "no-war, no-peace" situation in the Middle East testifies to this dismal picture. We do not want to sound like prophets of doom and gloom, but we are convinced that tensions and confrontations will continue to reign in the Middle East unless the root cause of the conflict is justly resolved. There can be no doubt in our mind that the continued deprivation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people is what constitutes one of the greatest impediments in the resolution of the conflict.

55. Following the crushing of the Nazi tyranny that laid millions of lives to waste and turned whole peoples into refugees, the international community was determined to express into reality humanity's aspirations for peace and mankind's goal of equity, justice and respect of fundamental human rights. It was in this spirit that an act of this Organization gave birth to the State of Israel by the partition of Palestine. The tragic consequences of that act have since proved to be a central issue directly governing all aspects of peace and security in the immediate area of the Middle East and tends to threaten the normal human intercourse of the world at large.

56. The articles of the decision of this Organization had stipulated unambiguously that the provisional administration of the State created by that decision must make a declaration guaranteeing, among other things, the natural rights of the Arab people of Palestine. The history of this question leaves no doubt whatsoever that the authorities of the State of Israel have since used that act of the United Nations, which gave birth to the State of Israel, as a spring-board for expansion. The legacy has since been tension and war, and insecurity and war again.

57. There can be no argument or doubt whatever that the Organization is motivated, and committed by principle, to achieve peace and justice for humanity. In this respect, in fact in every respect, there can be no genuine peace, no lasting peace, without justice.

58. The most tragic of the unintended effects of the emergence of the State of Israel has been the plight of the people of Palestine. It has become normal, in the annals of human history, for the international community to deal with the sufferings of hundreds, sometimes thousands, of human beings turned into refugees by natural disasters or by incidental human failings. There have been many instances where this Organization and related international organizations and agencies have acted not only to alleviate but, indeed, to redress the hardships befallen to human beings who had become refugees. In fact, for many years this Organization has sought to treat the plight of the people of Palestine solely as a question of giving assistance to refugees. But the central issue in the plight of the Palestinian people is not how much assistance, or how much charity the international community can or should lend to that people. The cardinal issue here is the recognition of the natural and inalienable rights denied the people of Palestine by the conscious acts of a State for the emergence of which this Organization is responsible. As I have stated earlier, it has always been the endeavour of the international community to lend necessary assistance to alleviate the sufferings of any people. How-

ever, by failing to face the central issue in the plight of the Palestinian people, by inaction or by side-stepping the cardinal factor, the United Nations will remain culpable in the sufferings and hardships visited upon the people of Palestine, conveniently labelled refugees to shelter the root cause from international exposure.

59. In resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, the General Assembly requested a declaration—to which I had referred earlier—whose stipulations should be:

“ . . . [recognized] as fundamental laws of the State and no law, regulation or official action shall conflict or interfere with these stipulations, nor shall any law, regulation or official action prevail over them.” [Resolution 181 (II), *Plan of Partition with Economic Union, part I, section C.*]

The essence was to seek to guarantee the natural and inalienable rights of the people of Palestine, not as refugees living in miserable camps, not as permanent exiles, but as a people in their homeland.

60. Contemporary history has shown that not only were those guarantees never achieved, but on the contrary it has been the systematic effort of the State of Israel to deny the very existence of the Palestinian national people or to exclude those of the Palestinian people within the geographic boundaries of Israel from the mainstream of deciding the destiny of their nation. This anachronistic situation has, *inter alia*, been the root cause of the recurring conflagrations in that area commonly referred to as the Middle East.

61. In recognition of the preceding aspects of the plight of the Palestinian people, this Organization has by its resolutions reaffirmed the right of the people of Palestine to self-determination. By its commitment to the establishment of peace and the acquisition of and respect for basic human rights and justice, the international community, acting as a body or through the efforts of individual States, sought to bring about an agreement among the parties involved in matters relating to and arising from the problem of the people of Palestine. It is the contention and belief of the Tanzanian Government that any effort that precludes direct participation by the representatives of the people of Palestine would be a non-starter and, by that token, guaranteed to fail. There have been those who have sought to deny the existence of the Palestinian people. My delegation considers this a fanciful delusion that has been shattered by reality. It is the recognition of this fact that has led all peoples desiring and seeking genuine peace and justice for the people of Palestine, for all the peoples of the Middle East, and for the nations of the world, to recognize the PLO as the authentic representative of the Palestinian people.

62. This Assembly, committed to the efforts of achieving peace and justice, has for the first time included the problem of Palestine on its agenda, for consideration by the plenary Assembly. As this Organization has affirmed the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, as the Assembly of this Organization has sought from the very start to guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people, this Assembly must of necessity, in taking up the question of Palestine, invite the representatives of the people of

Palestine to participate in the discussions scheduled in plenary meetings.

63. History teaches that no people can be made to forget iniquities committed against them. No amount of intimidation, political cajoling or blackmail can stifle the determination of a people to fight for its rights. The Palestinians are no exception. Through the PLO they have begun to assert themselves in a more concrete manner. Those who refuse to see this reality are simply indulging in an exercise in self-delusion. The United Nations cannot work for peace and justice and ignore this reality. That is why we find it only natural and logical for the representatives of the PLO to take part in the discussions on the item to which they are one of the principal parties, and we commend our draft resolution contained in document A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2 to this Assembly in the knowledge that the Organization is seriously interested in the solution of the question of Palestine.

64. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): This year the General Assembly has taken a historic decision. That decision will not fail to enhance the prestige of our Organization, whose essential role is daily confirmed, which is to defend the right of peoples to self-determination, independence and sovereignty and to safeguard international peace and security.

65. The inscription of the question of Palestine on the agenda of the twenty-ninth session is a just decision with vast implications. By considering for the first time in more than a quarter of a century the fundamental aspect of this problem, that of the national and international identity of a people, the General Assembly is proclaiming its determination to shoulder its responsibility for settling this question in which the Organization, directly after it was created, played a basic, if not a decisive, part. Did it not take responsibility for the partition of Palestine in 1947? It cannot ignore this real problem much longer without running a grave risk to its authority. The destiny of the Palestinian people is at the root of all the complications in the Middle East and unless a solution to it is found, nothing can be settled and no real peace established in the region.

66. Fortunately, thinking has changed a good deal now, but it has been at the price of appalling tragedies and grievous confrontations, and could not have been achieved without the heroic resistance of the Palestinians. But now we are returning to the provisions of the Charter, which consecrate the principle of the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination. Now there is a great determination to repair one of the greatest injustices that mankind has ever known, of which the Palestinian people as a whole have been victims, for they have been dispossessed of their land, driven from their ancestral home, reduced to the condition of a wandering people, refugees in our world. Having considered this question in the spirit of resolution 3089 D (XXVIII) of 7 December 1973, the General Assembly has determined that the time has come to create the conditions necessary for the “full . . . realization of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine, particularly its right to self-determination”.

67. But how can we move in that direction if we refuse to hear the Palestinian people? How can we

move in that direction if we continue to debar its representatives from appropriate gatherings and from discussions concerning its very existence?

68. Here I wish to quote from a statement by the President of the Tunisian Republic, Habib Bourguiba, whose position has been known for a very long time. President Bourguiba declared from this very rostrum, on 20 May 1968:

“... and whatever that solution may be, it can only be conceived with the participation and with the agreement of the principal party concerned: the Palestinian people.”¹

President Bourguiba, a few days earlier in Washington, on 15 May 1968, said that it is now the Palestinian people that has assumed, and will continue to assume in greater measure, responsibility for its struggle to recover its rights and for the kind of compromise which may put an end to its struggle. He stressed that this people was becoming increasingly strong, and he urged the leaders of the world to take this into account, for if they failed to do so they would be acting on the basis of obsolete plans.

69. That has always been the position of Tunisia, in accordance with values we have always held and principles for which we have always fought. I wish to remind you of the statement which we made in the Security Council on 17 April 1973, in which we stressed the fact that it was necessary to consider the Palestinian problem by bearing in mind two elements:

“... Before demanding of the Palestinians that they respect international law, the international community should, first of all, take action so that international law respects the Palestinian people.”²

And, secondly, we said that the representatives of the Palestinian people should be heard.

70. The Tunisian delegation is convinced that the Assembly will decide to hear the representative of the PLO. The result will be that this debate will be more businesslike and more useful because the PLO, which has shown that it is the genuine representative of the Palestinian people, will be able, as it has been in the past, to face its enormous responsibilities and will certainly make a major positive contribution to our work.

71. The PLO is well known. It is, in brief, a national liberation movement very much like the movements that we have seen fighting in former colonial territories, some of which are continuing to fight today. It is a movement resisting the colonizer, the oppressor and the occupier. It is a fully structured, political organization, which has earned its credentials by conducting, for the past 10 years, the heroic fight of the Palestinian people against terror and repression and to recover the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to their homeland. That organization has been pursuing a national and political struggle that is a credit to people everywhere. And if Palestinian patriots at times answer violence with violence, I would ask you: are they to be blamed? Are they aggressors or victims of aggression? Moreover, have they been given any choice as to the means to be used in the struggle? For these banished people have been ignored, they have been scorned and driven from their lands, so that they have had no

choice but to react and organize to defend themselves against a vast enterprise designed to liquidate them as a nation and as individuals. Moreover, is it not a fact that the PLO has displayed a sense of responsibility which all delegations here should welcome? Has that organization not expressed its disapproval of many violent actions which it felt it could not condone? When we heard one speaker portray the leaders of the PLO as assassins or terrorists, and denounce them with undue vehemence, we said that we profoundly regretted such negative and emotional rhetoric. Such language is hardly, after all, likely to divert the attention of the Assembly from terrorism that has been elevated to the rank of State policy. In any case, it is not the best way to set people's minds at rest and to contribute to the creation of conditions for an equitable solution and a just and lasting peace.

72. The recent glorious history of your country, Mr. President, bears witness to this. All those who blindly and irresponsibly have been called terrorists and killers have shown themselves to be heroic fighters, members of resistance movements who sacrificed themselves in the cause of liberty, conscientious and forward-looking politicians, worthy spokesmen, dispassionate and understanding. Need I say any more about the national liberation movements which some have tried in vain to discredit and to liquidate? Need I give a list of distinguished statesmen, many of whom are still leading our countries, who were called common murderers during their heroic struggle by those who advocate colonialism and oppression? I will only mention a few examples, such as the Front de libération nationale algérien, within which President Houari Boumédiène and you yourself, Sir, fought for the independence of Algeria. I might also mention Jomo Kenyatta, who successfully emerged unscathed from a terrible and interminable repression and who, happily, still presides over the destiny of Kenya. In my country, the Néo-Destour was mistaken by its adversaries for a band of *fellaghas*. Is it not true that President Bourguiba was thrown into prison on a number of occasions, a victim of contemptible charges, and did he not miraculously escape the scaffold in 1938? After difficult times, warm relations marked by friendship and co-operation were established between Tunisia and France. That objective was one which President Bourguiba and the Tunisian people had always pursued.

73. Other resistance movements in Europe have also been called terrorist movements in the recent past. Examples are the French resistance movement directed by General de Gaulle, and the Yugoslav resistance movement directed by President Tito. Which régime called them those names and what eventually happened to that régime is well known. Inevitably, all those liberation forces eventually won the day and triumphed over acts of repression and psychological campaigns, for they embodied the honour of their people, and in most cases they met with the most sympathetic response in the very countries that were fighting against them. Major Powers have in many cases come to their senses and have become involved in the general process of decolonization with which we are now familiar, and they have done so with the participation of organizations which at one time were persecuted. That is true of Portugal, which is now carrying out admirable work in the area of

decolonization in full co-operation with African liberation movements, although the former Portuguese régime completely ignored those movements.

74. It would be vain to try today to discredit the PLO or to challenge its representativeness. That organization has succeeded in becoming identified with the Palestinian people as a whole, it has embodied their aspirations and it has made its voice heard throughout the world; its authority and its prestige have gone far beyond the region. It is now recognized by the overwhelming majority of States. Now that it has established itself, and in view of its representativeness and experience, it is a matter of urgency that that organization be invited to state its views to us and that it be officially and closely involved in efforts designed to settle the question of Palestine. The organization fully represents a people whose land was the subject of a decision of the General Assembly 27 years ago and it is only natural that it should be heard here.

75. Africa is particularly concerned with the situation in the Middle East and with the plight of the Palestinian people, which has been deprived of its homeland and its legitimate rights. The current President of OAU, General Mohamed Siad Barre, President of the Supreme Revolutionary Council of the Somali Democratic Republic, devoted significant passages in his statement to the General Assembly on 9 October to those problems, in particular the problem of the question of Palestine. I should like to quote from one passage which concerns specifically the problem under consideration today:

"The Organization of African Unity recognized long ago that the issue of the Palestinian people is a matter meriting special emphasis, and that is why the Palestine Liberation Organization was given observer status in that Organization." [2262nd meeting, para. 93.]

76. The Heads of State and Government of OAU, meeting at Mogadiscio, from 12 to 15 June 1974, adopted a resolution on the Middle East, which states, *inter alia*:

"... a just and lasting peace in the Middle East must be based on the following fundamental principles:

"(a) The total withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab territories occupied since June 1967 to the lines of 4 June 1967;

"(b) The liberation of the Arab city of Jerusalem;"

and, in particular,

"(c) The exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination and the recognition of their legitimate rights."

77. A more specific point concerning our consideration of the Palestinian problem in these early stages is that the resolution proclaims the complete support of OAU for the struggle of the PLO, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and for its heroic struggle against Zionism and racism. Africa, then, stands with all the forces of justice throughout the entire world in an effort to bring about the triumph of a people that has suffered too much. The time has come for the international community to do justice to that people. This would be a precedent, a welcome

event, ushering in a new era in the history of the Palestinian problem, which has been developing very dangerously and tragically, I should say, since November 1947, outside the framework of the United Nations. It would be an act of justice to the Palestinian people, who have been scorned and ignored. It would be primarily an essential contribution to the search for a peaceful, just and lasting settlement in the area and it would also be an important contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security there. The adoption of draft resolution A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2, which we heartily commend to the Assembly, would mark a fortunate turning-point in the history of the Middle East and the history of the Organization.

78. Mr. DATCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): The recent decision of the General Assembly to include in the agenda for this session the item entitled "Question of Palestine" and to submit it for debate in plenary meeting is a source of deep satisfaction to Romania. As is well known, my country has been firmly and consistently in favour of a solution to the conflict in the Middle East through the peaceful means of negotiation. In the decision of the General Assembly we see edifying proof of the determination of the international community to take new steps towards a commitment on the part of the United Nations to explore all possibilities for a political settlement of this conflict.

79. I asked to speak today in order to present briefly the reasons which, as we see it, convincingly favour the adoption of the draft resolution before us, submitted by 72 States, including Romania. The invitation to representatives of the PLO to participate in our debate seems to us to be the next logical, natural step, which is urgently necessary. International practice shows that it is impossible to elaborate just and lasting solutions without direct participation by all interested parties. This requirement, which Romania resolutely supports, has, by the way, been reflected also in the general debate at the present session of the General Assembly. The effective and consistent application of this principle objectively in the present case requires the participation in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly of the PLO, which is the legitimate spokesman for the Palestinian people and a valid interlocutor, one directly interested in finding solutions in conformity with the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and qualified to do so.

80. The PLO has the right to represent the Palestinian people, as has been frequently recognized in many international forums under the aegis of the United Nations and, in particular, the World Population Conference, which took place at Bucharest in August this year. Permit me now to express the conviction of my delegation that the time has come for the United Nations to be able to make a substantial contribution to the search for a settlement of the question of the Palestinian people, to the benefit of that people, as a result of the conditions that have been created for a frank and fruitful exchange of ideas. That is why it is more necessary than ever to give evidence of wisdom and of a spirit of innovation and to abandon certain prejudices that have been formed over the years.

81. A decision of the General Assembly to invite the PLO as the principal interested party to participate in the debate on the question of Palestine would mark

an even more resolute commitment on the part of the United Nations to engage in the elaboration of uniformly acceptable political solutions capable of ensuring the integrity, the peace and the security of all peoples in that zone. The achievement of these major objectives and the avoidance of armed conflicts and loss of human life will without any doubt lead to an enhancement of the role and prestige of the Organization. We are living through times of particular historic importance during which we are called upon to decipher, with full responsibility, the meaning of the facts and the profound implications of our acts both for the present and for the future. The Romanian delegation feels that therefore it is necessary to have the representatives of the PLO present at the plenary meetings of the General Assembly during the debate on the question of Palestine and it appeals to other delegations to vote in favour of the draft resolution now before us.

82. Mr. RAHAL (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): The request for the inclusion of the item "Question of Palestine" in the agenda for this session did not give rise to lengthy debate, and approval was given without any opposition. That allows us to assume that there is general agreement within this Assembly on the importance of the question and the necessity of discussing it, but also, and perhaps most important, on the fact that the problem is within the responsibility of the General Assembly.

83. I shall not now become involved in an exposition of the views of my delegation on the question of Palestine itself, since at present we are only studying draft resolution A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2, of which Algeria is a sponsor, which calls for the participation in our forthcoming debate on the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. It does not seem that the proposal, which has already been supported by a very large number of delegations, needs any lengthy pleading in its favour. The speakers who have preceded me have already expounded on the relevant arguments. I shall therefore limit myself to the following considerations.

84. No one in this hall would wish the debate on the question of Palestine to result only in a revival of passions, an unleashing of antagonisms and the introduction of a new element of tension into a crisis that is already complex and explosive. The question of Palestine has been brought before the Assembly because it must be examined in any search for a true settlement. That is why we have supported in the General Committee and here in the Assembly the inclusion of this item in the agenda for our deliberations. To achieve that objective, such examination must as far as possible remain outside the subjective and emotional context that has always surrounded the problems of the Middle East. It must seek to isolate the real and fundamental elements of the crisis. That clearly calls for an effort by all at moderation and objectivity, which alone will make it possible to leave the well-trodden paths, to get rid of the empty slogans and to face the situation with courage and sincerity.

85. How can we imagine that a debate of such importance, one designed to be as constructive as this is, could proceed without the participation of the Palestinians themselves, since it, in fact, is concerned with their situation and their future, their rights and their

claims? No one could rightly claim to take their place to express their point of view and defend their opinions.

86. While that seems to be generally admitted, certain persons cast doubts on the representative status of the PLO and ask, some in good faith and some not, to what extent that organization is entitled to speak for the Palestinian people. This is not a new problem. Almost all liberation movements have had to face it when, at one stage or another of their struggle, the possibility of negotiation has presented itself and the question has arisen of finding what is called valid spokesmen. It has often taken a good deal of time and has uselessly prolonged suffering and confrontation for liberation movements ultimately to be accepted and recognized as the authentic representatives of their peoples.

87. Certainly, representative status is not the result of a mandate conferred by means of a vote, as the customary provisions of ordinary law require. Liberation movements certainly have more to do than that. They have other preoccupations and obligations than that of organizing a poll in order to demonstrate the validity of their mandate. The representative status of liberation movements hence is won in the very struggle they wage and is a result of the support they receive from their people—without which, clearly, they would not be able to survive for long. It is that representative status which the PLO claims, and which ought to be accorded to it, just as it has been accorded to other liberation movements.

88. If the Palestinian people is to be a party to our debates it must be through their best-qualified representatives. And who could be better qualified in this respect than those who are leading it in its struggle? We feel that only on that basis can the debate on the question of Palestine assume the character of frankness and honesty, without which it would lose the greater part of its interest.

89. Mr. TEKOAH (Israel): The independence and sovereign equality of Member States are the cornerstones of the United Nations. The draft resolution before us proposes to reward a relentless campaign against the very existence of an independent Member State. The United Nations has proclaimed its support for the liberty of all peoples. The draft resolution submitted by the Arab delegations and their supporters gives succour to an organization which strives to deny the Jewish people its right to national liberty and self-determination.

90. The declared purpose of the United Nations is to save mankind from the scourge of war, but today it is being asked to extend its facilities to those who live by war and violence waged against the fundamental precepts of the United Nations Charter. For years the United Nations has tried to combat international terrorism. Now it is called upon to welcome those who have turned the premeditated murder of innocent children, women and men into a profession.

91. The fact that draft resolution A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2 is in violation of the Charter, of the rules of procedure and of all precedents is obvious to everyone. However, it is also a fact that most votes on issues concerning the Middle East are cast not on the merits of proposals, not on the basis of what is right and what is wrong, what is legal and what is contrary

to law; the mechanical majority is always one-sided and, therefore, the parliamentary outcome of the vote about to be taken is a foregone conclusion. However, it is essential that the meaning and the repercussions of not opposing this draft resolution be clear to us all.

92. The so-called Palestine Liberation Organization did not emerge from within the Palestinian community. It was the first summit meeting of Arab Governments held at Cairo in January 1964 that decided to establish an organization under the cover of which terror-warfare would be pursued and intensified against Israel. They named it the PLO and assigned its leadership to the infamous Ahmed Shukairi. Under the umbrella of that organization were brought all the existing terrorist groups, such as El Fatah—established by the Intelligence Branch of the Syrian Army in the late 1950s—and the other terror organizations formed since then. Though one group has recently withdrawn from the Executive Council of the PLO, none has left the organization as such.

93. There was no pretence at the time of its establishment that the PLO was in any way representative of Palestinians. There is no room for such pretence today. The organization has never been anything other than a mere instrument of those who have been conducting a campaign of savage atrocities, aimed explicitly at the destruction of Israel. It represents only itself, namely, the approximately 10,000 murderers trained and paid for the slaughter of innocent human beings. To equate them with the Palestinian community is to do a grave injustice to the latter.

94. Surely if peace is to be attained in the Middle East, the Palestinians must not be identified with those who wage war against peace and revel in barbaric bloodshed.

95. The Covenant of the PLO adopted in May 1964, as amended in 1968, stipulates, *inter alia*:

“Article 19

“... the establishment of Israel is fundamentally null and void ...

“Article 20

“The claim of a historical or spiritual tie between Jews and Palestine does not tally with historical realities ... The Jews are not one people with an independent personality.

“Article 22

“... the liberation of Palestine will liquidate the Zionist and imperialist presence in Palestine.

“Article 9

“Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine and is therefore a strategy and not tactics.”

Also, according to the Covenant, only Jews who lived in Palestine in 1917—I repeat, in 1917—would be allowed to remain.

96. The official PLO information publications and the statements of its leaders are even more explicit. For example, the El Fatah manual, No. 8, entitled “The Liberation of the Occupied Lands and the Struggle Against Direct Imperialism”, declares:

“Liberation action is not only the removal of an armed imperialist base, but, more important—the destruction of a society. [Our] armed violence will be expressed in many ways. In addition to the destruction of the military force of the Zionist occupying State, it will also be turned toward the destruction of the means of life of the Zionist society in all its forms—industrial, agricultural and financial. The armed violence must seek to destroy the military, political, economic, financial and ideological institutions of the Zionist occupying State, so as to prevent all possibility of the growth of a new Zionist society.

“The aim of the Palestinian liberation war is not only to inflict a military defeat but also to destroy the Zionist character of the occupied land, whether it is human or social.”

97. In recent years this objective has sometimes been presented, for obvious propaganda reasons, under the guise of the slogan of a “democratic de-Zionized Palestine” in which Muslims, Christians and Jews would live, allegedly, in harmony and peace.

98. Appearing on French television on 31 May 1974, Yassir Arafat, head of the PLO and its largest component grouping El Fatah—Black September, explained that the establishment of the so-called “democratic State in which Muslims, Christians and Jews will coexist” is merely “a civilized slogan”.

99. In fact, there are such supposedly democratic Arab States—for instance Yemen and Algeria—from which the entire Jewish populations were fortunate to escape to Israel. Another example is Syria, and the entire world knows full well the plight in which its ancient Jewish community finds itself today and has been throughout the centuries.

100. The joint communiqué issued on 15 June 1974 by Yassir Arafat and President Qaddafi, following Arafat’s visit to Libya, stated:

“The Libyan revolution ... supports the Palestine revolution ... until all the Palestinian soil is liberated and the Arab struggle achieves its aim of establishing Arabism and freedom in Palestine.”

101. In a speech he made in Tripoli two days earlier, on 13 June 1974, Arafat announced:

“We shall drench with our blood every inch of our land. As this Arab land”—Libya—“has been freed from American defilement, so our Palestine land is being freed from Zionist defilement.”

102. The objective is therefore clear, under whatever propaganda slogan it appears.

103. Zuhier Muhsin, a member of the PLO Executive and head of its military department, said on 26 September 1974: “Israel will not remain, in any of its parts, not even in Tel Aviv”.

104. Arafat himself declared recently in Cairo: “Our progress will stop only in Tel Aviv, when we will create our Palestinian Democratic State”.

105. Speaking on 7 December 1973 at the Beirut Arab University, Naif Hawatmeh, another PLO leader, who is sometimes presented as, supposedly, especially moderate, stated that he “supports the

liquidation of the State of Israel and the uprooting of the Zionist entity”.

106. On 23 April 1974, Ahmed Jibril, leader of another PLO murder group, proclaimed at a rally in Kuwait:

“The struggle between us and Israel is one of existence. It is either we or they. We will not allow American or Soviet Jews to remain in Palestine. We will scatter anew the Jews who came from Arab lands.”

107. At its most recent meeting, held at Cairo on 8 June 1974, the PLO National Council confirmed these objectives and decided that the establishment of the authority of the PLO in every area wrested from Israel would be only a step toward the elimination of the Jewish State.

108. The propaganda speeches and conversations in these halls, which for tactical purposes sometimes try to mask these facts, cannot conceal the truth.

109. These then are the goals of the PLO: to liquidate the Jewish State; to destroy, uproot and scatter its people; to deprive them of their independence, sovereignty, self-determination and equality with other nations. The annals of the United Nations know of no objective more sinister and more flagrantly opposed to the purposes and principles of the Charter.

110. This is a fundamental difference between the PLO and national liberation movements. The PLO is an anti-liberation organization. It seeks to deprive the Jewish people of its liberty. Liberation movements strive to free subject peoples from the yoke of colonialism. The PLO, however, ignores the existence of an independent Palestinian State of Jordan and rejects the premise that if there are Palestinian needs which have not yet been fully satisfied, they could be dealt with in negotiations between Israel and that Palestinian Arab State. Israel, on its part, holds, as stated in the General Assembly on 3 October 1974 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Yigal Allon [2255th meeting, para. 247], that the question of Palestinian identity can and should be resolved in the context of the settlement of the dispute with its neighbour to the east.

111. In the pursuit of its objectives, the PLO employs the most despicable of methods witnessed by mankind in recent decades—the deliberate murder of guiltless civilians. This is not the accidental loss of civilian lives that occurs in warfare against military targets, but wilful, cold-blooded, carefully prepared, bestial assaults on innocent and defenceless children, women and men.

112. This is the type of atrocity that General Burns, the former Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, condemned as “a war crime”, and “as essentially of the same character . . . as the offences for which the Nazi leaders had been tried in Nuremberg”.

113. This is the kind of savage outrage which the venerable René Cassin, a Nobel prize winner and the international community's greatest authority on human rights, described as follows:

“Arab warfare by terror is a loathsome, criminal policy. It violates the cease-fire. It undermines the peace-making efforts. It is directed against the

Israelis and harms the Arabs. Its victims are innocent civilians. It is inspired by unmitigated Nazi-like hatred toward the remnants of a people victimized by the Nazis in history's most horrifying genocide.”

114. It is the perpetrators of these crimes that the United Nations is asked to honour. The international community has tried for years to put an end to this scourge of savagery. Now it is called upon to bow to it in utter humiliation.

115. Still fresh in the minds and hearts of all civilized men is the sacred memory of the children massacred on ambushed school buses, of athletes slaughtered at the Olympic Games, of high-school pupils murdered on an outing, of diplomats killed in embassies, of civil aircraft hijacked and blown up in the air and on the ground, of passengers at air terminals mercilessly butchered. It is the criminals responsible for such abominable crimes that the General Assembly is about to invite into its midst. Yassir Arafat, who heads the PLO, continues to serve also as head of the El Fatah—Black September murder group. This is the gang which has officially and publicly claimed responsibility for such outrages as the killing of the Israeli sportsmen at Munich, the massacre of Israeli children and women at Nahariya and the slaughter of American and Belgian diplomats at Khartoum. Yassir Arafat personally commanded, by radio from Beirut, the entire Khartoum operation.

116. It was after the Munich killings that the Secretary-General of the United Nations asked the General Assembly to decide on effective measures against terrorism.

117. Now, Arafat and his henchmen are to be greeted by the United Nations. Could there be a disgrace more appalling for the international community? Could there be a stigma more degrading for the United Nations than to become a forum open to the bearers of barbarism? Throughout the years there have been some General Assembly resolutions which proved useless or unhelpful. Rarely has there been one more ignominious and ludicrous than the draft resolution which alleges that the representatives of a people are not its elected representatives, not its internationally recognized Government which speaks for the vast majority of the Palestinians in the world, but a bunch of international criminals pursued by the police of tens of countries.

118. The Governments supporting it demonstrate an unparalleled disregard for international law and morality. Those who are against it can be proud at not having abandoned the ideals for the achievement and protection of which the United Nations was founded. The stand adopted by these Governments creates a chance, though admittedly not a considerable one, to limit the pernicious consequences of the draft resolution. What are these consequences?

119. First, the draft resolution makes a mockery of the United Nations and of its Charter.

120. Secondly, the draft resolution would be a source of encouragement to international terrorism. Many a Government represented in this chamber faces severe tests in coping with acts of terror perpetrated by local or foreign terrorist groups. These groups will undoubtedly read the draft resolution as a sign of acquiescence and permissiveness on the part of the United

Nations and of the Governments that make the adoption of the draft resolution possible. This, of course, applies equally to the PLO itself, which has subjected numerous countries outside the Middle East to its criminal and sanguinary operations.

121. Thirdly, the draft resolution threatens the diplomatic process towards a solution of the Middle East conflict. It creates an obstacle on the road to agreement between Israel and the Arab States. The latter and their supporters will have only themselves to blame for the consequences of this development.

122. Fourthly, by promoting the draft resolution, Arab Governments—and this includes the parties to the current peace-making endeavours—have raised grave doubts regarding their ultimate intentions towards Israel. This will not remain unnoticed by Israel.

123. Fifthly, Governments which permit the adoption of the draft resolution clearly demonstrate that the tenets of the Charter and fundamental principles of international law and morality are of no import to them. It is evident that they thereby divest themselves of the right to speak in the name of these tenets and principles, at least with regard to the situation in the Middle East. Their views on these matters will be treated accordingly.

124. These are thus the connotations and foreseeable repercussions of the draft resolution. None of them is positive. All of them are damaging.

125. It is equally important to indicate what the draft resolution will not bring about.

126. It will obviously not bring about any change in Israel's position towards the PLO. Votes and resolutions in the United Nations do not modify the nature of the PLO. It has been and it remains an association of murder squads unrepresentative of Palestinians.

127. The draft resolution will not affect Israel's defence against the atrocities that are being perpetrated by the PLO. The Government of Israel will protect its citizens from the nefarious crimes of the PLO. It will continue to take all the necessary measures to put an end to these crimes. It will continue to strike at the PLO terrorists and at their bases.

128. The draft resolution will not weaken Israel's resolve to pursue agreement and peace with the Arab States and will strengthen the understanding of Israel's need for secure boundaries.

129. Israel regrets the negative repercussions of the draft resolution, but Israel itself will remain steadfast in its positions and policies. In accordance with the United Nations Charter, the draft resolution is arbitrary, illegal and not binding, and Israel will regard it as such. Israel will go on searching for peace with the Arab States, while strengthening itself to ward off their aggression, should it be renewed. Israel will continue to build and develop the land and to invigorate its society. It will not permit the barbarism of the PLO to disturb these endeavours. As to the question of how the draft resolution would affect the United Nations and its international standing, as well as Governments which make possible the passage of the draft resolution, that is another matter. As the Bible says: "Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not burn?"

130. Mr. ALARCÓN (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is not, of course, the intention of the sponsors of draft resolution A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2 or of this Assembly on this occasion to discuss the substance of the question of Palestine. As has been pointed out this morning, that question will be considered by the Assembly on a subsequent occasion. Today, the General Assembly has before it a draft resolution the purpose of which is to ensure that the discussion in the plenary Assembly on the question of Palestine will take place in the most equitable conditions as regards its principles and in the most appropriate conditions for its orderly and productive conduct.

131. My delegation believes that all the statements we have heard this morning bear out the need for the General Assembly to consider this item under the equitable and appropriate conditions that would be ensured by adoption of the draft resolution. The statements made this morning, and I include that made by the speaker who preceded me, indicate that it is necessary for the legitimate representatives of the Palestine people—those whom about 100 States consider to be representative, not those whom the oppressors deem appropriate—to take part in the discussion.

132. All non-aligned countries, the African countries and many others, have made it perfectly clear that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine. Those States have also firmly upheld the view that the serious situation in the Middle East, a crisis considered in this Assembly year after year, will not be resolved in an appropriate manner until the question of Palestine itself is settled—until, specifically, the Palestine people is guaranteed the exercise of its national rights.

133. This year, the General Assembly, for the first time in many years, has decided to take that approach. It has decided that the question of Palestine should be considered as a separate item. In our judgement, then, we shall not only be considering a question of paramount importance in the very origin of which the General Assembly and the Organization itself were directly involved; what we shall perhaps also be doing is laying the necessary groundwork for an improved consideration of the entire problem of the Middle East.

134. The logical and inevitable conclusion of this universal view that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that only settlement of the question of Palestine will lead to settlement of the crisis in the Middle East is that the General Assembly, in accordance with the suggestion of more than 70 delegations, adopt draft resolution A/L.736 and Add.1 and 2.

135. As we have stated on other occasions in this Assembly, it is our belief that national liberation movements, including the PLO, have the right to represent their peoples before the international community. We believe that they can speak with the greatest authority on those issues affecting their national destinies. For that reason we believe it is entirely necessary that we invite the PLO to attend our deliberations.

136. But the United Nations has an even greater duty towards the PLO, for the Organization has

hardly been innocent in the tragedy of that people over more than the past two decades. Today's world is not the world of 1947. The membership of the Organization is no longer the membership of those days. At this stage, the majority of the membership of this Organization cannot be won over by the worn-out language of colonialists and imperialists, who have always tried to discredit those fighting for their independence and the rights that have been violated. They have often been called assassins and terrorists, and other similar epithets have been used. Because it has been described in that way, the PLO has become identified with other national liberation movements throughout the world, all of which have in this hall had to endure similar descriptions by the representatives of the South African régime or those of the former Portuguese empire. It is equally true, however, that the most notable change that has occurred in this Organization since the Palestine people first began to endure the plight that afflicts it at this moment in its history has been the fact that the membership of the Organization has changed considerably. Today, we have here the representatives of many States that for many years tried to assert their rights and for many years were systematically called assassins or terrorists.

137. It is precisely because this Organization has developed to the point of now having a majority of Members that were insulted in this way in the past that it will no longer take orders from those who for

centuries oppressed and exploited the peoples of the third world.

138. The terrorism this Organization has been condemning, is condemning, and indeed has a duty to condemn in the future, is the official, systematic State terrorism applied to an entire people, who have been driven from their land, deprived of their national rights, persecuted and harassed. But the people of Palestine have not been prevented from providing us with one of the most shining examples of how oppressed peoples cannot in the end be deprived of their rights, of how national liberation movements will continue to forge ahead until they have won the very last of their national rights.

139. In their fight they shall have the support of the overwhelming majority of the Members of this Organization.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

NOTES

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1658th meeting, para. 15.

² See *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-eighth Year*, 1708th meeting, para. 93.