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President: Mr. Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA
(Algeria).

AGENDA ITEM 108

Question of Palestine (continued)

1. Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): The question of Palestine occupies one of the key positions in the range of problems relating to the political settlement in the Middle East. Now it is clear to everyone that a solid peace in that region can be achieved only with the total liberation by Israel of the Arab territories occupied by it in 1967 and with the ensuring of the lawful national rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

2. Almost 27 years have elapsed since the time when the domination of imperialism over Palestine ceased, and yet the Arab people of Palestine is still deprived of the opportunity to exercise its inalienable and recognized right to freedom and self-determination and to be master in its own house. The responsibility for all this rests wholly and fully upon Israel and those international imperialist and Zionist forces which are protecting Israel and supporting its aggressive policy against the Arab peoples.

3. It would seem that Israel, which owes its very existence to the United Nations, should have strictly and systematically complied with the provisions of the Charter and the decisions of the United Nations. However, it has chosen the way of expansion and aggression against the Arab States, the way of the violation of the Charter and the non-compliance with United Nations decisions.

4. For a while those sinister plans were concealed. Moreover, the founders of the State of Israel were making peaceful, hypocritical, pacifying statements. Thus, in speaking at the first special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on 12 May 1947, the representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, Ben Gurion, who subsequently became Prime Minister of Israel, stated:

"A Jewish-Arab partnership, based on equality and mutual assistance, will help to bring about the regeneration of the entire Middle East. We Jews understand and deeply sympathize with the urge of the Arab people for unity, independence, and progress . . . The Jewish nation in its own country

must become a free and independent State with a membership in the United Nations. It is eager to co-operate with its free Arab neighbours to promote economic development, social progress and real independence of all the Semitic countries in the Middle East."

5. All too soon it became clear that those were only hypocritical words. In fact, the ruling circles of Israel embarked upon their course of aggression and have proceeded to expand their territory at the expense of the Arab States and have expelled Palestinian Arabs from the land of their birth. By force of arms, Israel has taken over the whole of the territory of Arab Palestine. In addition to that, in the course of the June aggression of 1967, Israel occupied 20 per cent of Egypt's territory and 15 per cent of Syria's territory. The Israeli hawks are openly continuing to speak of the realization of the idea of the chief Zionist ideologist Herzl and other Zionist agents concerning the establishment of a so-called "greater Israel" from the Nile to the Euphrates.

6. Two million Palestine Arabs have been expelled from their homes as a result of the Israeli-Arab war of 1948-1949, the Israeli aggression against Egypt in 1956 and the aggression of Israel against the three Arab States in June 1967. That is the "partnership" and "co-operation" with Arabs and the understanding of Israeli rulers who are carrying out in their policies the theory of racial superiority of "God's chosen people" and the practice of genocide in relation to the Arab people of Palestine.

7. It is difficult to describe all those atrocities which were committed and continue to be committed against the Arab people of Palestine and other Arab countries by the Israeli authorities. Numerous facts in this respect are contained in the official documents of the United Nations and in the statements of the representatives of Arab and other countries at sessions of the General Assembly and at meetings of the Security Council.

8. The Israeli military are committing systematic terrorist attacks upon the camps of Palestine refugees expelled from their country, who are now living in the southern part of Lebanon. As a result of this, in the current year alone, hundreds of peaceful persons have died. During the period 1967-1974, Israeli troops destroyed 19,000 houses belonging to Palestinians on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza region, which is equal to 380 settlements. This is a well-thought-out and planned Zionist policy of denying the Palestinian people their right to self-determination and independent existence.

9. Lawlessness and bloody terror on the part of Israeli troops in occupied Arab territory inevitably brings to mind the monstrous atrocities of the Hitlerite executioners. In this connexion, we would wish to

remind the representatives of Israel of the fact that the Charter of the Nürnberg Tribunal, which was approved by General Assembly resolution 95 (I) on 11 December 1946, provides for severe international punishment for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

10. It is relevant to recall here the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third session [*resolution 2391 (XXIII)*]. Israel is practising the policy of the fait accompli, relying on the fact that in time the evil deeds of the aggressors will be forgotten and the fruits of aggression will be confirmed. But neither the Arab countries nor the world community are prepared to reconcile themselves to aggression and its consequences.

11. Today, the situation in the Middle East is again alarming. Israel is spending for military purposes 45 per cent of its national income, as well as the multi-billion hand-outs of imperialist and Zionist circles of a number of countries, hand-outs that, in the last analysis, are being paid for by the taxpayers of the States concerned. Israel is extracting 65 per cent of the income of its population in the form of taxes and throwing it into the crucible of war and aggression. In a period of less than a year the cost of living for the Israeli population has increased by more than 50 per cent. All this is being done in total neglect of the needs of the Israeli population and for the financing of military attacks upon Lebanon and the preparation of a renewed war against the Syrian Arab Republic, Egypt and other Arab countries.

12. It is entirely natural that the aggressive foreign and reactionary internal policy of the rulers of Tel Aviv is bringing about open dissatisfaction and resistance on the part of the people of Israel, and this is illustrated by the recent events taking place there, which have been published even in pro-Zionist papers. However, the rebuff that Israel is receiving, the growing unity of the Arab countries, the support of their just cause and struggle by the Soviet Union and other countries of the Socialist community, and by all freedom-loving States and peoples of the world have led Israel into unprecedented international isolation. All this should be a stern warning and clear-cut object lesson to the Israeli hawks and supporters of military adventures.

13. We all remember those days when, during military operations in the Middle East in October 1973, the Security Council adopted resolution 338 (1973), which called upon the parties concerned "to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts". That decision was confirmed in subsequent resolutions of the Security Council.

14. Thus the problem was posed of the immediate political settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. The Geneva Peace Conference began to concern itself with this problem. However, certain elements attempted to replace this by half measures, "ersatz plans" and discussions behind closed doors. It goes without saying that the separation of forces in the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights is useful only as the very first measure but it can in no way replace the need for a total political settlement. These are but

first steps in the liquidation of the hotbed of war. The Israeli invaders, however, continue to retain the Arab lands taken over by them, and even try to develop those lands. Relying on the support of certain well-known forces in the West, the rulers of Israel are trying in every way to avoid a resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference and are even stating for the whole world to hear that they will never return to the frontiers of 1967 and will not recognize the lawful rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

15. Of course, the people of the Arab countries and the Arab people of Palestine cannot reconcile themselves to such an anomalous situation and are continuing to wage a courageous struggle for their national rights, and that just and lawful struggle is finding increasing support throughout the world.

16. The Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] is also waging that struggle. It was recognized as the only lawful representative of the Arab people of Palestine by the Sixth Arab Summit Conference at Algiers in November 1973 and the Second Islamic Conference of Kings and Heads of State and Government at Lahore in February 1974. The international authority of the PLO was illustrated by the adoption on 14 October this year by the General Assembly, by an overwhelming majority of votes, of resolution 3210 (XXIX), of which the Byelorussian SSR was a sponsor, inviting the representatives of the PLO to take part in the deliberations on the question of Palestine. We are pleased to extend a welcome to the delegation of the PLO and we extend our hand in friendship, co-operation and solidarity.

17. During the years of the Great Patriotic War our people became familiar with all the terrors of occupation by the Hitlerite invaders. In the Byelorussian SSR every fourth citizen perished. Our glorious patriot partisans who waged a heroic struggle against the foreign enslavers were called terrorists by the S.S. Now the fighters for the rights of the Arab people of Palestine are being called terrorists by the Zionists. Such terminology is being used by the foreign invaders and occupiers in order to cover up their own bloody crimes against the population of the occupied lands. But this cannot remove the guilt from the war criminals or halt the sacred struggle of the patriots against the evil enemy for the freedom and happiness of their people. We understand and appreciate the feelings and aspirations of the Arab people of Palestine, waging a struggle for the liberation of its country.

18. In 1972, a delegation of the PLO visited the Byelorussian SSR. It was headed by the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, Yasser Arafat. The representatives of the Palestine people on our soil received a friendly and brotherly welcome. The Palestine guests were able to realize that there was full support and sympathy on the part of our people for the just struggle of the Arab people against Israeli aggression and for the attainment by the Palestinian people of its lawful rights.

19. Whatever efforts the official representatives of Israel might be tempted to make in striving to slander the PLO and its leaders, they will not succeed. Sooner or later—and the sooner the better for Israel itself—they will have to recognize the lawful national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. It is ludicrous to hear accusations of terrorism on the part of those who, in

the lofty forum of the United Nations, utter terrorist speeches designed for Zionist throngs, those who have raised aggression and terror to the level of state policy in their relations with the Arab countries.

20. For the first time in many years, the United Nations is discussing the question of Palestine in terms of guaranteeing the lawful national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. This fact itself is significant. It indicates that there is growing support throughout the world for the just aspirations of the Palestinian people, together with the demand for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and the implementation by Israel of the Security Council resolutions providing for a political settlement in the Middle East.

21. Like the other States of the Socialist community, the Byelorussian SSR insistently and consistently speaks out in favour of the implementation of United Nations decisions on the Middle East and for the liberation of all Arab territories seized by Israel, for the fulfilment of the lawful right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination, including the right to its own statehood. This must be done forthwith if we wish to see a stable and just peace established in the Middle East. Only within the context of such a peace is it possible to ensure the security of all the States in the Middle East, both the Arab States and Israel.

22. That is why the Byelorussian SSR is in favour of the speedy and effective resumption of the work of the Geneva Peace Conference, with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the representatives of the Arab people of Palestine.

23. The Byelorussian people, like all the peoples of the Soviet Union, steadfastly supports the just and lawful struggle of the Arab people, including the Arab people of Palestine, against imperialist aggression and diktat and for a stable and just peace in the Middle East.

24. Mr. SEPETU (United Republic of Tanzania): The decision taken by this world body by its resolution 3210 (XXIX) of 14 October 1974 to invite the PLO, the representatives of the Palestinian people, to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine in plenary meetings will go down in the annals of history as a milestone and a significant step towards the determination of the United Nations to live up to its Charter. Thus it has been possible after a long period of denial to have amongst us the authentic representatives of the Palestinian people headed by their leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO and Commander-in-Chief of the Palestinian revolution. The Tanzanian delegation seizes this opportunity to pay a tribute to the great leader of the Palestinian people for his very illuminating address before this Assembly. Indeed, his address has given the international community a more vivid and direct insight into the problem, which has existed for decades and which for decades has been avoided by this Organization.

25. It is particularly significant that our Assembly is currently considering this question. We all know of the tense situation prevailing in the Middle East, and we must all by now be aware of the causes of that tension. Addressing this Assembly on 1 October, the

Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania declared:

"... my Government believes and is convinced that no peace can come to the area unless it is based on certain fundamental principles. These include acceptance by Israel of the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of Arab lands by force and the need to find a just, fair and lasting solution to the Palestinian problem. To ignore these two elements will be to run away from reality, and any arrangements made without proper cognizance of these principles will produce just another shaky peace." [2250th meeting, para. 169.]

26. By discussing the Palestinian question and attempting to find a solution that will redress the injustice done to the Palestinians, the United Nations will be tackling one of the two basic causes of the conflict, indeed the very root cause of the confrontation.

27. The essence of the question now before us involves the most cardinal of the principles enunciated in the Charter of our Organization. On the one hand, it involves the natural and inalienable rights of a people; on the other hand, it involves the substance of peace and security in the Middle East in particular and for the world at large. These aspects, those of fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of the human person and the maintenance of international peace and security, form the backbone of the principles upon which this Organization was founded. And indeed, to my delegation, the principles of the acquisition and enjoyment of inalienable rights by peoples and of peace and security are fundamental. It is in this conviction that Tanzania has consistently expressed solidarity with the people of Palestine in the efforts to attain their legitimate and inalienable rights.

28. It is the view of my delegation that the international community must no longer bury its head in the sand disregarding the grievances and frustrations of the dispossessed Palestinians while hoping that the storm of the Palestinian people's struggle will pass it by. Neither must the Organization seek, as has been the case in the past, to deal with the peripheral issues, the outward symptoms, and ignore or avoid the real substance of the matter—the plight of the people of Palestine. To do so would be to twist the facts of history and ignore our responsibilities. For the question of Palestine is fundamentally a question of justice, freedom and peace. The arduous and bitter history of the Middle East, devolving as it has into the question of Palestine, shows clearly that it is precisely these elements that are lacking, denied or breached.

29. The initial act of the nascent United Nations which gave rise to the current problem—I refer here to General Assembly resolution 181 (II)—had sought in the relevant articles of its plan to guarantee

"... to all persons equal and non-discriminatory rights in civil, political, economic and religious matters and the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion, language, speech and publication, education, assembly and association." [Resolution 181 (II), *Plan of Partition with Economic Union, part I, sect. B, para. 10 (d).*]

30. It is interesting to observe that the basic aspects of the passage I have quoted above were drawn from, among other things, the report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry of 1946, which stated, *inter alia*:

"In order to dispose, once and for all, of the exclusive claims of Jews and Arabs to Palestine, we regard it as essential that a clear statement of the following principles should be made:

"I. That Jew shall not dominate Arab and Arab shall not dominate Jew in Palestine. II. That Palestine shall be neither a Jewish state nor an Arab state. III. That the form of government ultimately to be established shall, under International Guarantees, fully protect and preserve the interests in the Holy Land of Christendom and of the Moslem and Jewish faiths.

"Thus Palestine must ultimately become a State which guards the rights and interests of Moslems, Jews and Christians alike; and accords to the inhabitants, as a whole, the fullest measure of self-government, consistent with the three paramount principles set forth above."

31. Those general principles would seem at a glance to have meant the democratization of Palestine, the safeguarding of the interests of all and the advancement of the cause of peace.

32. Reality has since proved, however, that, far from safeguarding freedom or furthering the interests of peace and justice, that act of this Organization has been subverted and turned into the major cause of injustice, the denial of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and a constant threat to peace and security in the Middle East as a whole and for the world at large.

33. Immediately upon the emergence of the State of Israel, authorities of that State began a systematic programme which, in effect, ensured the removal of the people of Palestine from the mainstream as regards deciding the destiny of their motherland. This was achieved both through the denial of the fundamental human rights of the Palestinian people in areas under Israeli occupation and through acts of terror, intimidation and expulsion.

34. In *The Palestine Problem: Retrospect and Prospect*, Stephen B. L. Penrose, President of the American University of Beirut, in 1954 stated:

"On both sides dreadful deeds were committed but, in the main, the Zionists made better use of the terrorist tactics which they learned only too well at the hands of Nazi taskmasters. There is no question but that frightful massacres such as that which took place at Deir Yassin in April, 1948, were perpetrated for the major purpose of frightening the Arab population and causing them to take flight . . . Terror is contagious, and it built up the tremendous migration which has led to the results which may be witnessed in the refugee camps."

35. With this background in view, and considering the terror methods perpetrated against the Palestinians, it is the height of cynicism and hypocrisy to hear the representatives of the Israeli authorities

arguing that they will have nothing to do with the PLO on the alleged grounds of its being a terror organization.

36. The very forces that have denied the Palestinian people its legitimate rights have sought to propagate the lie that the Palestinian people went into exile of its own choosing. At best, such propaganda can be considered a pitiful insult to human intelligence and conscience. At worst, it can only signify the extreme brutality and persecution that would force a national people to seek succour in the arms of the dire existence of exile. Be that as it may, facts and not propaganda, experience and not histrionics have shown that the Palestinian people was forced out of its motherland, was denied its natural rights, to make room for foreign settlers.

37. The dangers and injustice inherent in the policy of the massive denial of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and its forced exile was recognized by the international community as early as 1948, for the General Assembly, in paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), *inter alia*, significantly states:

"Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date . . ."

38. It is a matter of record that Israel not only refused to comply with that resolve of the United Nations, but persisted in the persecution, intimidation and repression of the Palestinian people. Thus, a report from the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine, dated 18 September 1950, observes that the Palestinian people forced from their lands were

" . . . required to sign a statement agreeing to go to Gaza, never to return to Israel, and abandoning all property rights. . . ."

39. It is thus clear that the mass dislocation of the Palestinian people from its lands forms the signature of the policy to deprive it of its legitimate rights in its motherland. Consequently, the Palestinian people has been turned into the only people on earth whose every member is a refugee, or is living under a hostile alien military occupation, or else is subjugated and denied fundamental human rights in its motherland.

40. The fact that we are today discussing the question of Palestine bears testimony to Israeli defiance of the relevant United Nations resolutions recognizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. It is also a reflection of our concern—the universal concern—for "promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion". That concern, contrary to the emotionalism of the detractors, flows from the basic tenets of our Charter. So Israeli intransigence, as signified by the refusal to accede to the resolutions of the United Nations, has wider and more dangerous ramifications.

41. It is a matter of record that Israeli intransigence in the past 25 years has been punctuated by acts of aggression against independent Arab States, and to this day remains a constant threat to international peace and security. It was in recognition of this—the impracticability of the acquisition by the Palestinian people of its legitimate rights and peace—that the General

Assembly, in paragraph 2 of resolution 2672 C (XXV), declared:

"... that full respect for the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine is an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

Indeed, concerned at both the breach of peace and security, and the denial of peoples' rights, the Organization of African Unity and the Conference of Non-Aligned Countries have launched several appeals, albeit in vain, and have made consistent efforts.

42. It was only a few days ago that it was shown in this very Assembly that Israel not only refuses to recognize the rights of the Palestinian people in its motherland, but seeks to confuse the issue by attempting to transfer those rights to other sovereign lands. Furthermore, it is in the tragic commitment to this dangerous policy that Israel has been at pains also to discredit and to deny the very existence of the representative organ of the Palestinian people's struggle for the acquisition of its legitimate rights.

43. Such a stand by the Israeli authorities is not only unrealistic but wholly ludicrous. The PLO, like the Palestinian people, cannot simply be wished away. And despite the verbal terrorism of the Israeli spokesmen, the representativeness of the PLO is a reality which can be ignored only by those who prefer to act like ostriches. One does not have to listen to Palestinian representatives to recognize the legitimacy and popularity of the PLO. Indeed, even those news media which have demonstrated an impeccable pro-Israeli bias have informed the world of the support which the PLO enjoys among the Palestinians. For example, *The New York Times* of 14 November, reporting on the events in Nablus, had this to say:

"The shopkeepers of this Israeli-occupied Arab town staged a general strike, and hundreds of school-children demonstrated in the main square this morning in a display of support for Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization."

The same article underscores the obtaining reality by stating later on:

"Significantly, even the more conservative ethnic Palestinians... now seem to accept the PLO as the genuine representative of the West Bank. This applied to Mr. Canan, who is one of the town's wealthiest businessmen, and to others interviewed today, including a doctor, a former officer in the Jordanian Arab Legion and a prosperous lawyer."

44. We were also told by the same newspaper, in its issue of 19 November, as well as by American radio and television, of the demonstrations by the Palestinians in East Jerusalem. The fact that these manifestations of support for the PLO have incurred the wrath and violence of the occupation forces does not deny the validity of these popular manifestations; it only demonstrates the brutalities of the occupying Power—the brutalities with which those of us who have been victims of colonialism are quite familiar.

45. Clearly, therefore, the struggle of the people of Palestine for the acquisition of its legitimate rights is no figment of the imagination, as the suppressors of the Palestinian people wish it to be. It is a real struggle with acknowledged leadership. It is a struggle that in

its essential elements also furthers the basic principles of our Charter.

46. When we sought this debate, it was, as it remains, our singular hope that our collective effort would be to ensure the acquisition and enjoyment by the Palestinian people of their legitimate and inalienable rights. Those rights have been specifically endorsed by various resolutions of the Assembly and the Security Council. It was, and still is, our hope that on this momentous issue all concerned will be constructive and positive.

47. We believe that the time has come for the Assembly to face the issue squarely and not allow itself to be distracted by emotionalism or the barrage of a vituperative onslaught. Our basic resolve must be to uphold the fundamental principles of the Charter to ensure the exercise by the people of Palestine of their legitimate and inalienable rights, and, in so doing, to move towards the establishment of peace and security in the Middle East and the safeguarding of the interests of all.

48. Mr. SCALI (United States of America): The question of Palestine, as the speakers who have preceded me have amply demonstrated, has commanded more attention from the United Nations than almost any other single issue. The United Nations has not resolved the basic conflict in the Middle East, but it has limited the terrible consequences of this dispute. As we once again confront this issue, it is fitting that we remind ourselves of the long and honourable history of the United Nations' efforts to maintain the peace. We should also pay tribute to those who serve in the United Nations peace forces in the area and to those who provide humanitarian assistance to the victims of war.

49. We must not forget the thousands of human beings who have suffered and who continue to suffer from this conflict.

50. Those who seek a genuine resolution of the Middle East problem must keep ever in mind the continuing plight of people who have left their homes because of that conflict and have been unable to return. Continuing efforts by the international community to alleviate the hardships of those people are essential, but those efforts alone are not a solution. Only a just and lasting solution of the Arab-Israeli dispute can halt the killing, stop the suffering, and heal the wounds. The goal of this Organization must be to seek ways to promote movement to that end while avoiding any measure which might make such movement more difficult.

51. Last year's outbreak of war in the Middle East demonstrated for the fourth time in a quarter of a century that military force alone cannot resolve the issues that divide Arab and Israeli. It must be clear by now that more violence cannot bring peace. It will only intensify hatreds, complicate differences, and add to the sum of human misery.

52. The sole alternative to the sterile pursuit of change through violence is negotiation. That path is less dramatic, but in the end it is far more likely to produce acceptable change. The great achievement of the past year has been that the parties to the conflict have at last accepted that alternative, and that they have for the first time begun to make it work. A landmark in this effort, and in Arab-Israeli relations, is set forth in

Security Council resolution 338 (1973), in which the Security Council for the first time called for immediate negotiations

“... between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace . . .”

53. The acceptance by the parties of the negotiating process set in motion by resolution 338 (1973) led to the convening of the Geneva Peace Conference, and to the subsequent, successful efforts to negotiate separate disengagement agreements between the forces of Egypt and Israel,⁵ and the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel.⁶ In each of these Agreements on Disengagement, the parties reaffirmed their acceptance of the principle of a step-by-step negotiated settlement. They did so by agreeing to include as the final paragraph of each accord the statement that the Agreement was not regarded as a final peace agreement; that it constituted a first step toward a final, just and durable peace according to the provisions of Security Council resolution 338 (1973) and within the framework of the Geneva Conference.

54. The consequences of a possible breakdown in this negotiating process cannot be overemphasized. War has ravaged the Middle East four times in 26 years because people did not believe that constructive dialogue between the parties was possible. A fifth war would threaten the security of every country and produce no permanent gains for any.

55. The primary objective of the United States Government, therefore, has been to maintain the momentum of the negotiating process. Mr. Kissinger recently returned from a visit to the Middle East, where he explored with every leader he consulted in the area the vital question of how to continue building on the progress already achieved. The answer to that paramount question still hangs in the balance.

56. If the negotiating process is to continue, each party must remain committed to negotiations. Each must be prepared to accept a negotiated peace with the others and each must be prepared to see decisions on how to proceed evolve through understandings among the parties. That is how the Geneva Conference was convened, under the co-chairmanship of the Soviet Union and the United States. That is why, when the parties agreed to attend the Conference, they also agreed that the role of other participants would be discussed at the Conference.

57. The foundation of such steps towards peace is the acceptance by all parties of the principles of resolution 338 (1973)—to engage in the give and take of negotiation with the objective of achieving a permanent peace settlement among them on a basis that all parties can accept. If any of the parties rejects that governing principle or questions the right to exist of any of the parties to the negotiation, our best hopes for negotiation and for peace are lost. Certainly, it must be understood by all that Israel has a right to exist as a sovereign, independent State within secure and recognized boundaries.

58. In the course of this debate there have been speakers who have sought to equate terror with revolution, who profess to see no difference between the slaughter of the innocents and a struggle for national liberation. There are those who wish to compare the

American Revolution and the many other wars of liberation of the past 200 years with indiscriminate terrorism.

59. If there were instances during the American Revolution where innocent people suffered, there was no instance where the revolutionary leadership boasted of or condoned such crimes. There were no victims, on either side, of a deliberate policy of terror. Those who molded our nation and fought for our freedom never succumbed to the easy excuse that the end justifies the means.

60. We hope that all Member nations will reaffirm their support for a negotiated settlement in the Middle East, and their support for Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). We know that those resolutions are the basis on which progress has so far been possible. We believe they remain the best hope for continued progress. To seek to alter them not only risks dangerous delays but could destroy prospects for peace in the foreseeable future.

61. Certainly we can all accept the fact that the negotiations can take place only when the parties are willing to negotiate. My Government is convinced—and the successes of the past year strengthen our conviction—that the only way to keep the parties committed to negotiations is to move forward through a series of agreements, each substantial enough to represent significant progress, yet each limited enough for Governments and peoples to assimilate and accept. Each of these steps helps attitudes to evolve, creates new confidence and establishes new situations in which still further steps can be taken. With this approach, the parties have over the past year succeeded in taking the first substantial steps in decades towards reconciling their differences.

62. It is my Government's firm conviction that the way to move towards a situation more responsive to Palestinian interests is not through new resolutions or dramatic parliamentary manoeuvres, but by weaving the Palestinian interests into the give and take of the negotiating process. Through this evolutionary process, Palestinian interests can be better reflected in the new situations which are created.

63. The United States Government thus believes that the most important contribution this Assembly can now make towards resolving the issue before us is to help establish an international climate in which the parties will be encouraged to maintain the momentum towards peace. We are equally convinced that the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people can be promoted in this negotiating process, and that these negotiations will lead to a just and lasting peace for all the peoples in the Middle East.

64. Mr. DE PINÍÉS (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The traditional and firm links uniting us to each and every one of the Arab countries and the primacy that Spain attaches to the values of justice and respect for the dignity of the human being, as the backbone of international conduct, are the fundamental reasons that lead my delegation to participate in this debate.

65. We see with satisfaction that the question of Palestine, which for so many years was considered as the question of the Palestine refugees, has just been recognized by the General Assembly as a matter

not of charity, not of aid to some refugees and not as a need to alleviate some dramatic miseries, but rather in its true political dimension as a problem of national identity.

66. This twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly is witnessing the beginning of an historic process moving towards a global solution of the problem of Palestine. In this connexion, my delegation has listened with the utmost interest to the statement made by the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO and sees with satisfaction in this Assembly the presence of that organization's delegation.

67. Throughout the years since the cessation of the British Mandate over Palestine, the Spanish Government has, on all occasions and at all levels, and at times when the international community had as yet not become aware of the political character of the problem, asserted the thesis that the conflict in that vital region of the Middle East could not be resolved without a just solution to the problem of the Palestine people, expelled from its land in a sad series of wars and other calamities which befell it.

68. My delegation also approaches this problem mindful of the right of the Arab countries to recover their territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

69. In 1969 and 1970, when Spain was a member of the Security Council, we called attention to the non-implementation of resolution 242 (1967) and denounced the attempt to give official recognition to efforts to keep certain portions of Arab territories under Israeli military occupation. How can it be required—we asked at that time—that the parties victims of aggression be compelled to give up territories occupied by force and by the violence of arms? How can it be required that provisional resolutions of a cease-fire be turned into long-term situations, with the intention of making them final solutions? My delegation then believed and continues to believe now that one of the principal causes of the situation that we all deplore has been non-compliance with Security Council resolution 242 (1967). As we said at that time, it is impossible to continue to perpetuate the occupation of territory by force of arms. The longer compliance with decisions of the principal organs is delayed, the weaker this Organization becomes, and international peace and security are thereby threatened.

70. In this connexion, my delegation must mention and particularly emphasize its constant concern over the illegal occupation of the Holy City of Jerusalem, city of the monotheistic religions, a city which has been totally occupied since 1967 and subjected to a Judaization which we denounced at the time and which distorts its Muslim and Christian character.

71. With reference to other matters, the Spanish delegation would like to reiterate on this occasion its firm belief that if a just and global solution for the problem of Palestine is not found, the entire region of the Middle East and the Mediterranean—in whose peace we, as a coastal State, are profoundly interested—will continue in a state of war, either latent or rampant, and there might even be an amplification of the war to unthinkable dimensions.

72. By means of many diplomatic contacts at various levels, Spain has stressed the need that the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people be taken into account

and be safeguarded. Numerous statements in the general debate have referred to this. Allow me to quote the address made by the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs on 2 October last from this rostrum:

“... The ancient and permanent friendship of Spain with the Arab world makes us wish for a just and lasting solution to the problem of the Middle East. The agreements which put an end to the fighting in October 1973 give reason to believe that this hope will be fulfilled. Accordingly, the Government of Spain considers that it is of the utmost importance that the negotiations on the restoration of peace in that region be successful.

“What is needed is the total cessation of war operations and every kind of violence, withdrawal from the territories occupied by force, scrupulous respect for the oft-repeated resolutions of United Nations organs, a quest for just and permanent solutions as regards legitimate interests and, first and foremost, recognition and implementation of the human and political rights of the people of Palestine. The task is great and the entire international community must be associated in it. For its part, Spain supports the consideration of the Palestine question in all its aspects at the present session of the Assembly.” [2253rd meeting, paras. 193-194.]

73. Recent Spanish statements in the General Assembly and in UNESCO, as well as those made in other organizations such as ICAO, demonstrate the firmness of our position.

74. During the period in which the Palestinian question was being considered in the United Nations as a simple question of refugees, within the irrelevant framework of charity and welfare, the Spanish Government supported resolutions that asked for the return of the refugees.

75. Also, the Spanish Government has been contributing sizable amounts to alleviate, in so far as possible, the suffering of those men, women and children who for nearly 30 years have been expelled from their land.

76. We have also welcomed in Spanish universities many young Palestinians through special measures adopted for their benefit.

77. Once the purely humanitarian aspect of this problem has been solved, my Government would like to contribute in so far as it can to a constructive solution of the political problem. This calls for the self-determination of the Palestinian people and the restoration of its human and political rights and, therefore, it is imperative that Israel withdraw rapidly from the territories occupied since 1967. In an era of airborne divisions and missiles, to pretend that because a hill is controlled, an entire valley can be controlled, is a strategy which is out of date today. In that tormented region, what is needed is a political solution to the problem, based on the above-mentioned points and backed by an international guarantee.

78. The Spanish Government has been observing with particular interest efforts by the Arab countries to establish a national Palestinian authority. We believe that it has been made perfectly clear to the world that within the great Arab nation there is a people, the Palestinian people, which like all the others has the

right to a national existence, to its own home and to the free determination of its future. This is a reality which the international community must take into account from now on and which has been growing in importance throughout this debate. All legitimate interests, all human rights and all political realities must be met, however difficult it may appear to determine them fairly and however many efforts may be necessary to implement the measures adopted.

79. For all these reasons, and in conclusion, my delegation believes that no real and comprehensive settlement of the Palestine problem can bypass the PLO, which, I repeat, is already among us here, representing its people.

80. Mr. RAHAL (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): By its mere presence in this hall, the delegation of the PLO has restored to our Assembly the dignity that it had lost since the day when, on 29 November 1947, it adopted the tragic decision to divide a country and to doom its people to a misfortune it continues to endure. Befouled by so many lies and so much hypocrisy, by so much arrogance and stupidity, this rostrum recovers its respectability only when we hear expressed before it once more the noblest sentiments animating mankind and the aspirations to justice and freedom that are the hallmark of the modern world. The rostrum of the United Nations has rarely been better honoured than in receiving the head of the PLO, Mr. Yasser Arafat, who came to make the voice of his people heard, not in order to accuse or to complain, not to threaten or to insult, but to say that the people of Palestine has not consented to die, that it has not renounced its rights, that it has not exhausted all of its means to defend them, but that it is ready to turn to the future and to contribute to the building of a peace that will respect its dignity, its personality and its national prerogatives.

81. We have heard that voice. It could, without surprising us, have been acrimonious; it could quite rightly have been a voice of resentment and mistrust. But on the contrary, forgetting the injustices, the abandonments, the betrayals, the scorn and wretchedness of the past, it has been a voice of courage and hope, of faith in the future and of regained confidence in the belated wisdom of our Organization.

82. The same day, we also had the opportunity to listen to the hysterical excesses of the representative of Israel, who, in his customary fashion, made it possible for those who had not yet been willing to understand it, to acquaint themselves better with the Zionist conception of peace, freedom and the dignity of peoples. His frenzied outburst, aimed at concealing the ugliness of the facts by violence of language, had no other purpose than to disturb the calm of our debates and to distract the Assembly from the fundamental problem to which it should be addressing its entire attention.

83. However, the whole world is aware of the importance of this debate, because for the first time since 1947, the General Assembly finds itself faced with the situation that it itself had created. It has today an opportunity to appraise the consequences of its decision for partition, and is perhaps in a better position than ever before to play a role in peace-making and rapprochement, which would certainly be much more in keeping with its mission than its actions that resulted

in the dispersion of a people and the provocation of a crisis that it has not been able to master. By deciding to include in its work the representatives of the Palestinian people, the Assembly has revealed an obvious desire to go to the root of things and to come to grips with the real facts. We are convinced that the Assembly will know how to treat the raving insolence of the representative of Israel as it deserves to be treated.

84. Much time, no doubt, was needed to convince the international community—or at least a part of that community—of the true nature of what has come to be known as the "Middle East crisis". The wars that have followed each other in that region and that have only served to reinforce antagonisms, fan the flames of hatred and give rise to new difficulties, have shown that the real problem is not, as has been claimed, that of the security of Israel or the tracing of its borders. To come closer to the truth, there should at least have been a recognition that it is in fact the security of the Arab countries that has been continuously threatened and that it has always been their borders that have been violated. But the essential element of the crisis, the element underlying the entire situation, is the far more serious and tragic problem resulting from the present situation of the Palestinian people; that of the satisfaction of their legitimate claims and the determination of their future.

85. One could indeed be surprised that it has taken some people so much time to become aware of this aspect of the situation and one would be justified in regretting this fact most deeply. The obstinacy shown in considering the Palestine problem only from the humanitarian aspect of assistance to the refugees has caused us to waste many years in a search for a settlement of the situation in the Middle East; and this loss of time has served only to render the situation more complex and painful. By recognizing at this time that the Palestine problem is the key element in the Middle East crisis and by admitting that consideration of the national rights of the Palestinian people is a paramount requirement for any solution to the crisis, the Assembly has passed through an important stage, and that makes it possible now to contemplate, with reasonable chances for success, the possibility of a valid settlement that takes into account the full range of factors involved in the problem.

86. After the 27 years that the question of the Middle East has been before this Assembly, it could be assumed that the facts of the situation are well known, despite the distortions and untruths that Zionist propaganda has brought into the situation and that have perhaps had sufficient time to be corrected. It is certainly not necessary to go back into history to establish the legitimacy of the rights of the Palestinian people. It will be sufficient for us to go back to 1947 in order to see how those rights have been dealt with and how valid the Palestinian claims have been in the eyes of justice and international law.

87. The decision on the partition of Palestine, adopted by the Assembly on 29 November 1947 [resolution 181 (II)], was not based on the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination. While that decision may have satisfied that portion of the population represented by the Jewish minority, it was obviously contrary to the wishes of the overwhelming majority. By adopting the resolution leading to the par-

tition of Palestine, in spite of everything, and under circumstances familiar to all, the Assembly ignored the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, and thus opened the first chapter in that people's well-founded and perfectly justified claims.

88. I do not wish to dwell on the other irregularities of that decision, or on the illegality of the role the Assembly arrogated to itself, or on the invalidity of the documents on which it based its decision. Yet although it constituted a flagrant injustice against the Palestinian people and an unforgiveable attack on its sovereignty, that resolution has not even been respected by the Jewish side, because the Zionist State, which was hastily proclaimed on the morrow of the end of the British Mandate, had nothing in common, in terms of territory, population or political structure, with the Jewish State provided for in the decision on partition. This fact further strengthens the validity of the challenge by the Palestinian people, whose right to self-determination remains unfulfilled.

89. The policy pursued by Israel to compel the Palestinians to abandon their country has aggravated the problem by adding to the harm done to the Palestinian people as a whole the damage inflicted individually on each Palestinian: to his human dignity, his basic freedoms and his personal heritage. The Palestinians, thus reduced to the status of refugees, have now had to present claims of another order, equally well-founded, which, while pointing, of course, to Israel's responsibility, also involve the responsibility of the international community, and, more specifically, that of our Organization.

90. The General Assembly, and even the Security Council, have on numerous occasions had to examine that specific problem—to which, I would recall, the Palestinian problem was finally reduced. There have been endless resolutions, session after session, calling attention to the rights of the Palestinian refugees, and urging Israel to implement the decisions adopted concerning them. Everyone knows, without my having to dwell on it, the contempt with which Israel has always greeted the decisions of this Organization. The rights of the Palestinian refugees, just like their national rights, have thus remained mere references, to be recalled periodically in ineffectual documents.

91. No one can think that the heavy responsibilities assumed by the United Nations respecting the injustices committed against the Palestinians are the result of any deliberate ill will or inadmissible bad faith. The actual provisions of the Palestine Plan of Partition reveal a certain ingenuousness on the part of the General Assembly, which, quite obviously, was not very well informed about the aims and intentions of the Zionist leaders. Indeed, the Jewish State provided for in that Plan, while encompassing the richest part and the greater portion of Palestine, was to include a majority population of Palestinian Arabs, both Muslim and Christian. It must be admitted that this showed considerable ignorance of Zionist ambitions.

92. Need I recall that, when the first Zionist leaders began to contemplate the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine, they did not consider for a moment the fact that the region was already populated, and that the fate of the inhabitants should, after all, be considered? That criminal failure is best illustrated

by the slogan adopted at the time by the Zionist movement in its claim for Palestine: "A land without a people for a people without a land".

93. The second generation of Zionist leaders has had a better understanding of the situation, becoming aware of the presence of an indigenous population at the time they launched their policy of the colonization and settlement of Palestine by Jews. But this problem was never of great concern to the Zionist leaders, as can be seen from the following short dialogue reported by Lillienthal. In response to the question by Professor Einstein, "What will happen to the Arabs if Palestine is given to the Jews?", Weizmann merely replied: "What Arabs? They are hardly of any consequence." And Weizmann was among those most aware of the gravity of the Arab problem.

94. But the attitude of the Zionist leaders, and the policy they have continuously pursued, can be easily understood by reference to the basic premise and the primary aim of Zionist ideology, the establishment of a State essentially, if not exclusively, Jewish in character. The extortions, massacres and atrocities committed by the Zionist terrorist groups were designed for no other purpose than to cause the indigenous population to flee, and to ensure that the territory would be populated entirely by Jews. The first laws of Israel were designed to confirm this policy, and accentuate and protect the Jewish nature of Israel.

95. There is no doubt at all to us that the Zionist State that made its appearance upon the land of Palestine did not correspond in any sense with what might have been imagined by those who were the zealous advocates of partition or even by those who so hastily saluted and recognized the birth of a Jewish State. It was indeed difficult to think in 1947 that a people that had suffered more than any other from racial discrimination and had scarcely got over the cruel and criminal attempt at extermination that had been carried out against it was in turn to inflict the same misfortunes and apply the same methods to a population that it had, in addition to everything else, despoiled of its territory.

96. However, it seems that the facts and their true nature became progressively more apparent in their starkness and horror from the very first moments of the existence of Israel. In this connexion, it is necessary to recall that the admission of Israel as a Member of the United Nations was no simple matter either and that it had brought about the awakening of a number of consciences once the deed was done. A first application for admission by Israel⁷ was rejected by the Security Council on 17 December 1948.⁸ When Israel renewed its application on 24 February 1949,⁹ the General Assembly invited it first to clarify its attitude towards the implementation of its resolutions of 29 November 1947 [*resolution 181 (II)*] and 11 December 1948 [*resolution 194 (III)*]. Those resolutions laid down, among other things, I would recall, the obligations of Israel in regard to frontiers, respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Arabs of Palestine, the return of the refugees to their homes and the status of Jerusalem. The admission of Israel to the United Nations [*resolution 273 (III)* of 11 May 1949] was decided upon only after the guarantees and assurances given by its representative.

who was Abba Eban at the time, before the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee concerning the implementation of those resolutions.¹⁰

97. What happened to those commitments? The Assembly knows full well what happened to them. In the final analysis, Israel has never complied with a single resolution of the Organization, whether it came from the Assembly or from the Security Council, not even the one that was designed to give it birth. The racist, aggressive and expansionist character of Israel has repeatedly been confirmed since, drawing the whole Middle East region into an unprecedented cycle of violence and introducing this rule of fire and sword which is so little in keeping with the peaceful ways of its original inhabitants.

98. The problem of the Middle East arises essentially in terms of the rights of the Palestinian people: human rights and fundamental freedoms for every Palestinian, national rights, the right to self-determination and the right to sovereignty for the Palestinians as a people. When I say "rights", as far as I am concerned, I am not referring to any undefined or undefinable interests about which the representative of the United States spoke to us at great length a short time ago. Those rights are now recognized by the international community and they have been reaffirmed in numerous resolutions of our Organization. However, as we have seen, these rights have been disregarded or deliberately ignored, first by the General Assembly and then by the Zionist leaders of Israel, who are still blocking their implementation. From the very outset of the crisis the rights of the people of Palestine and Zionist pretensions have been pitted one against the other in a struggle without quarter, which to this day has given the advantage to might over right and to the *fait accompli* over justice. No peace can be established on such a premise, and the failure of all attempts at settlement so far does not leave room for any illusions on this matter.

99. The representatives of the Palestinian people have come here to tell us firmly, but without hatred or animosity, that while they intend to continue to defend by all means the rights that no one can wrest from them, they are also open to the language of others and are ready to take their rights and aspirations into account as well. Such readiness must be regarded as an unhopèd-for chance to change the state of mind and the course of events at long last in regard to this region which has forgotten the language of peace. However, this chance must be taken in time by those to whom it is offered, and our Assembly must give it the encouraging welcome that it deserves.

100. The only preliminary to any genuine progress in the search for a lasting settlement is the renouncing of arguments based on bad faith. Those who doubt the authentic representative character of the PLO wish to turn their back on reality and are clumsily covering over their refusal to face up to a solution that does not base itself exclusively upon force and violence.

101. The demonstrations by the Arab people at Jerusalem and in Transjordan, in spite of the brutal repression of the Zionist police and army, show, in the most irrefutable manner possible, that the PLO has the total support of the Palestinians, including those who find themselves in the zones occupied by Israel. Those demonstrations are also a measure of

the enthusiasm with which the Palestinian people have welcomed the decision of the General Assembly to discuss its problem and hear its representatives.

102. Our debate has awakened great hopes not only in the refugee camps, where the people at last perceive the end of the long night into which they were plunged, but also throughout the world, which is so dangerously threatened by a crisis that was becoming hopelessly beyond solution in its interminable prolongation. The General Assembly can at least see to it that this hope is not in vain.

103. Mr. AL-SAFFAR (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Circumstances have willed it that this month of November be characterized by three important events in the history of the Palestinian people. On 2 November 1917, the notorious Balfour Declaration was issued, and that was one of the main reasons which brought about the problem of Palestine. On 29 November 1947, the resolution of the General Assembly on the partition of Palestine was adopted, which led to the exile of the Palestinian people from their lands, thus depriving them of a life of dignity on their lands and in their territory. On 13 November 1974, the Palestinian case was reopened in this Organization, enabling the Palestinian people to speak in the person of Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO.

104. The difference between this present historic event which we are witnessing and the two past ones is striking indeed. On the occasion of the first event, Lord Balfour, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Great Britain, granted the Zionists the right to establish a Jewish national State on the land of Palestine. He did so in flagrant contradiction of the principles of international and of human rights.

105. As far as the second event is concerned, that of the resolution on the partition of Palestine, which was approved by 33 Member States at the time, that event was the beginning of what has come to be known in the United Nations over the past years as the Palestine problem. The number of sponsors of the draft resolution to invite the PLO, as the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate as one of the main parties in the debate concerning the item on Palestine was 70. That same draft resolution was adopted with the votes of 105 Member States. This was the third event.

106. In fact, most of the States which voted for the resolution concerning partition in 1947 did not do so of their own free will. They supported this historic error because of the material and moral pressure exerted on them by the great Powers at the time. Had it not been for the pressure to which they were subjected, the resolution would not have been adopted. The documents of the United Nations regarding that particular period do not lack sufficient evidence of this fact. That is the truth concerning the resolution on partition adopted in 1947, which was the main reason for the present tragedy suffered by the Palestinian people.

107. Today this Organization is called upon, more than ever, to correct this historic mistake which was made by some of its Members. It is also called upon to put things right by recognizing the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, as in the case of other

peoples, and to recognize their legitimate rights in pursuance of the resolutions of the United Nations and the principles of the Charter.

108. The Bahraini delegation heartily welcomes the participation of the PLO in the debates on the question of Palestine in the Organization and we pay a tribute to the historic resolution adopted by the General Assembly to invite the PLO, as the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly [*resolution 3210 (XXIX)*].

109. The Zionists claim that the PLO is a terrorist organization and have stated that Israel is not prepared to consider it the representative of the Palestinian people. I shall not reiterate here the terrorism perpetrated by the Zionists against the Palestinian people and the neighbouring Arab countries over the past 26 years. There is no greater proof of the legitimacy of the representation of the Palestinian people by the PLO—I say there is no greater proof—than the invitation extended by the United Nations to the PLO to participate in the debate concerning the Palestinian question, an invitation supported by an overwhelming majority.

110. Another proof is the number of demonstrations supporting this decision which have taken place in the occupied territories and in several other parts of Palestine, despite the tyranny and despite the terrorism perpetrated by Israel in those territories.

111. Undoubtedly, the participation of the PLO in our deliberations will help to make clear many of the aspects and the dimensions of the problem of the struggling Palestinian people and the circumstances which surround their cause, circumstances created by the Zionist occupation of Palestine over the past 26 years. It is regrettable indeed that this occupation and the intense propaganda campaign launched by the Zionists prevented us from hearing the voice of the Palestinian people—the voice of those who are the principal party and of those who, at the same time, were the first victims.

112. The discussion of the Palestine problem anew in this Organization and the invitation to the representatives of the PLO to participate in the discussion of their own cause is a victory not only for justice but also for this Organization and its noble principles. This fact has made it very clear that the Powers that in the past had dominated this Organization and influenced the adoption of resolutions are no longer able to do so. Now that the number of Member States supporting peace and justice has increased following this victory, the Zionist leaders have lost their senses and have launched a campaign in an attempt to convince world public opinion that the PLO is not the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

113. In this very city, which is host to the United Nations, the Zionists mobilized their supporters to burn the flag of the United Nations under the eyes of Abba Eban, Moshe Dayan and other officials in this country, thus challenging the sanctity and the entity of this Organization.

114. The Palestinian problem is not a matter of differences between the Jews and the Arabs, nor is it a conflict concerning the borders between Israel and neighbouring Arab countries, as some seem to believe under the influence of Zionist propaganda, which has

blinded their eyes to the truth. We are dealing with the cause of the Palestinian people, who have been exiled from their land and forced to live a life of wretchedness and poverty, while others from other countries have occupied their territory and their homes. We are dealing with the cause of a people that has been deprived of its right to self-determination, the cause of an Arab people that has lived for over a quarter of a century suffering from tyranny and hideous racial discrimination. It is the cause of those whose land has been usurped and occupied by aliens who came to live in the homes they had built and to usurp the fruit of the seeds they had sown and to deprive them of their heritage. These invaders came from Europe to dominate the land of Palestine by tyranny and by the force of arms, aided and abetted by the forces of evil in the world ever since they arrived in Palestine, just as aliens are being aided and abetted in doing the same thing in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia.

115. When the Zionists established themselves in the land of Palestine, they launched a propaganda based on falsehood, attempting to distort historical facts, relying upon the information media controlled by world Zionism in more than one country. They were believed by many and succeeded in firmly establishing Zionist plans aimed at dominating Palestine and other parts of the Middle East. The Zionists, through their false propaganda, attempted to destroy the personality and the entity of the Palestinian people, describing them as nomadic Bedouins ignorant of civilization, and they attempted to convince the world that the settlement of Palestine by European Jews would help spread civilization in that dark corner of the Middle East. Yet the history of Palestine and the archaeological discoveries in that country have proved to the world that the Palestinian people are an ancient and noble people and that the roots of their civilization are to be found in the dawn of history.

116. The item being discussed by the General Assembly today concerns first and foremost the right of the Palestinian people to their own homeland. But it does not concern only their return to the homes from which they were exiled in 1948, and that is why we must not limit our discussion of the Palestine problem to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Arab territories occupied as a result of the 1967 aggression, nor must we limit it to the return of the Palestine refugees exiled as a result of that aggression. The 1967 war was one of a series of Israeli aggressions against the Arab countries. It was the result of Israel's expansionist policy, aided and abetted by many Western colonial States. The extensive military and other support extended to Israel by those States has enabled Israel to pursue its arrogant policy and its determination to dominate the Arab territories, to follow a policy of expansionism and tyranny. Israel has persisted in its aggression against the neighbouring Arab countries; it has persisted in its tyranny and racial discrimination in the areas occupied by it. It still pursues its military preparation in order to continue its aggression against the Arab countries.

117. The war in October 1973 was the result of Israeli arrogance and insistence on keeping areas that it occupied by force. Many of the Western colonial States continue to support Israel by providing it with lethal weapons and by supporting it in this Organ-

ization and in other international forums. This is a fact which has allowed tension to continue in the Middle East, thus threatening international peace and security. Those colonial States have continued to support, and support fully, Israel, thus encouraging it to pursue its expansionist policy and to refuse to implement the resolutions adopted by this Organization concerning the Palestine cause and the Middle East problem.

118. Those countries, and I mean the Western colonial countries, are called upon today to reconsider their policy concerning the cause of the Palestinian people and to participate in a positive manner within the framework of this Organization towards finding a just and permanent solution to the problem of the Middle East.

119. We cannot disregard the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and their right to return to their homeland. The harm done to the Palestinian people over the past 25 years as a result of disregarding these rights must come to an end. One of the main steps should be to put an end to this occupation and to this Zionist tyranny in Palestine and to put an end to the threat of war in the Middle East. By so doing the United Nations will be able to prove to the entire world that it indeed is worthy of the responsibility it has taken upon itself in pursuance of its Charter.

120. Sir Laurence McINTYRE (Australia): It is more than 27 years since the General Assembly first turned its attention to the question of Palestine. In the two years following the adoption in 1947 of its first decision on the subject the Assembly tried and failed to create two independent States within the boundaries of the former British Mandate. The recognition of the State of Israel and its admission to the United Nations was solemnly endorsed by this Organization and Israel took its place as a member of the international community, albeit without boundaries agreed upon under a proper peace settlement.

121. From then onward the word Palestine almost disappeared from our lexicon for more than 20 years, except as a convenient way of identifying the Arab refugees displaced from the beginning of the hostilities of 1948. The question of Palestine became in turn the question of the Middle East, with all the unhappy consequences that still remain with us, until the re-emergence only a few years ago in decisions of the General Assembly of the concept of self-determination for the Palestinians, that is, the Arab people of the former British Mandate of Palestine. This is what we are discussing here.

122. There is an element of irony in the fact that the General Assembly once again finds itself in its position of 27 years ago—considering the possible establishment of two independent States within the area that constituted the former British Mandate of Palestine. We must only hope that whatever we may decide here will not merely prolong and exacerbate the intractable situation with which the United Nations and all of us individually have had to cope in the Middle East for a quarter of a century, with all its constantly recurring crises and all its agonies for the countries and peoples of the region. We must hope that it will help to open the way for that just and lasting settlement that we have all longed for and sought by one means or another, a settlement that will give an assurance of the

kind of peace that will enable all those talented people of the Middle East to live and work together in harmony among themselves and with the rest of the international community.

123. So there is not much point in going back over the past and reviewing whatever errors and omissions there may have been in the last 25 years on the part of any of the parties concerned. What we now have to consider is the reality of the present; and we have to consider it in the light of the great and pressing need for a final settlement in the Middle East.

124. This is why my delegation has listened with more than ordinary interest to this debate. We have listened to the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, Mr. Arafat, and we have heard that the PLO, as supported by the heads of State of all Arab Governments, represents the Palestinians and all their aspirations. Whatever reservations we may have about methods employed in asserting those rights to self-determination and a recognized place in their original homelands, there is clearly a new and vigorous spirit, a new sense of destiny, among the leaders of the displaced Palestinians, a new confidence in their right to self-determination and independence within a Palestine State of their own.

125. My delegation has taken note of all this and we say that if the Palestinians want to create a State of their own alongside Israel we will accept this. It is in harmony with what the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs said on the subject in his statement to this Assembly on 7 October last [2259th meeting, para. 123], when he recognized the concern of all Arab States, along with the rest of us, that the Palestinian Arab people should have proper treatment, permanent homes and secure hopes for the future. It accords also with the Australian Government's attachment to the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination and independence if that is what they desire.

126. My Government is also firmly attached to a second principle: that of respect for the sovereignty and independence of States and the duty of all States to do nothing to threaten or undermine the right of any other State to exist and to enter into normal and peaceful relations with its neighbours. As applied to the Middle East this means that we believe in the right of all States in the region, and I include Israel, to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. In the course of the same address to the General Assembly to which I referred earlier, the Australian Foreign Minister affirmed that:

"The existence of the State of Israel has to be accepted; that State has to have assurance that as a permanent condition of life it will be secure and accepted by its neighbours." [*Ibid.*]

127. In other words, my delegation still believes in the fundamental rightness and fairness of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) as reaffirmed by resolution 338 (1973). And this leads in turn to a third principle to which the Australian Government is strongly attached—the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes. Australia still looks, as it always has looked, to the parties that have to find a way of living together in the Middle East to find that way themselves, peacefully, by negotiation, whether through the machinery of the Geneva Peace Conference or among themselves.

We strongly urge all the parties concerned to turn to negotiation. When a new State alongside Israel in the former Palestine emerges from a negotiated agreement among those parties, Australia will be prepared to accept it and to deal with it on a basis of equality. But we believe that any attempt to impose on the region a solution which does not accord with the provisions of resolution 242 (1967) will hinder rather than help the search for a just and permanent settlement.

128. It is on the foregoing principles that my delegation will base its attitude to any definitive proposals that may be put before the Assembly under this item.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

NOTES

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, First Special Session, Main Committees, Plenary Meetings*, 55th meeting, p. 275.

² *Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry*, Cmd. 6808 (London, HM Stationery Office, 1946), p. 3, recommendation No. 3.

³ Stephen B. L. Penrose, *The Palestine Problem: Retrospect and Prospect* (New York, American Friends of the Middle East, Inc., 1954), p. 12.

⁴ *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifth Year, Supplement for September through December 1950*, document S/1797, para. 5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Twenty-ninth Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1974, document S/11198, annex.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Supplement for April, May and June 1974, document S/11302/Add.1, annex.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Third Year, Supplement for December 1948, document S/1093.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Third Year, No. 130, 386th meeting.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Fourth Year, Supplement for March 1949, document S/1267.

¹⁰ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Part II, Ad Hoc Political Committee*, 46th, 47th, 48th, 50th and 51st meetings.