

UNITED NATIONS



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JUL 16 1985

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1935th MEETING: 28 JUNE 1976

NEW YORK

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NOTE

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1935th MEETING

Held in New York, on Monday, 28 June 1976, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. Frederick R. WILLS (Guyana).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Benin, China, France, Guyana, Italy, Japan, Libyan Arab Republic, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1935)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. The question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights:
Report of the Committee established under General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX) (S/12090)

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights:

Report of the Committee established under General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX) (S/12090)¹

1. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken at the 1924th, 1928th, 1933rd and 1934th meetings, I shall now invite the Chairman and other members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the representatives of Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Yugoslavia to participate in the discussions without the right to vote.

At the invitation of the President, the delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and Mr. Al-Hout (Palestine Liberation Organization) took places at the Council table and Mr. Siddiq (Afghanistan), Mr. Rahal (Algeria), Mr. Al Saffar (Bahrain), Mr. Alarcón (Cuba), Mr. Ashtal (Democratic Yemen),

Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. Florin (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Bányász (Hungary), Mr. Jai-pal (India), Mr. Marpaung (Indonesia), Mr. Sharaf (Jordan), Mr. Boulom (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Mr. El Hassen (Mauritania), Mr. Zaimi (Morocco), Mr. Al-Said (Oman), Mr. Baroody (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Allaf (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Driss (Tunisia), Mr. Türkmen (Turkey), Mr. Humaidan (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. Petrić (Yugoslavia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

2. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members of the Council that, in addition, I have received letters from the representatives of Bulgaria, Guinea and Somalia containing requests to be invited to participate without the right to vote in the Council's discussion, in accordance with the provisions of Article 31 of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure. With the consent of the Council and in accordance with the usual practice, I therefore propose to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote.

3. In view of the limited number of places available at the Council table, I invite those representatives to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber, on the understanding that they will be invited to take a place at the Council table when it is their turn to speak.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Grozev (Bulgaria), Mr. Camara (Guinea) and Mr. Hussein (Somalia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

4. Mr. HOUNGAVOU (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation is most honoured to have the Council presided over by you, Mr. Minister. The People's Republic of Benin and the co-operative Republic of Guyana have made the same political choice: both are embarked on a socialist course and are in favour of peace and understanding among States. My delegation therefore wishes to express to you its deep appreciation for the masterly and impartial manner in which you have been guiding the debate since last Friday on this important question of the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

5. The underlying cause of the problem in the Middle East, in the opinion of the Revolutionary Military

Government of the People's Republic of Benin, is the fact that so far the Palestinian people have not been able to exercise their inalienable and legitimate rights. For the first time the Council is considering more specifically and concretely than before the rights of the Palestinian people, in the light of the report of the Committee established under General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX).

6. In the opinion of my delegation, the Committee has done remarkably impartial work and has submitted balanced and realistic conclusions: realistic, because they are based on the fewest possible demands, and balanced, because they specifically take into account the interests of all the parties concerned. The Committee has therefore carried out the delicate mission entrusted to it by the General Assembly, and so the Committee's report is an historic document. It represents the first step towards the attainment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

7. My delegation unreservedly supports the Committee's report and endorses all its recommendations. It is convinced and reaffirms that the exercise of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to a national identity and of their right to return to their homes represents the normal way to achieve a peaceful, just and lasting solution of the Middle East crisis. Not to consider the report from that angle would be political short-sightedness and partisanship. Furthermore, the Committee's report reveals the high quality of research undertaken so as to find minimum proposals acceptable to all those struggling for international peace and security. All the parties concerned should be able to accept those recommendations if they are really prompted by the political will to arrive at a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict.

8. The recommendations in the report serve the interests of all the parties concerned because they are based on the redress of grave injustices committed against the oppressed people of Palestine. The unanimous attitude of the Council should simply be to endorse the objective recommendations of the Committee at the end of this important debate. But on the basis of certain remarks it would appear that this minimum is not likely to be accepted because of the selfish calculations of certain Powers which have vested interests in the area.

9. The Palestinian people has on many occasions proclaimed its firm wish to have its fate settled peacefully, because, after all, no people wants violence, and no people wants to shed its blood in vain. That is why the representatives of the influential Powers on the Council should reflect seriously before they adopt a negative attitude to this report, an attitude of rejection which would be contrary to the legitimate interests of the oppressed people of Palestine and which might have serious consequences for the future evolution of the Middle East crisis.

10. In the course of recent months tragic events have occurred because of a persistent state of tension and have made us aware once again that the Middle East is and remains a dangerous powder keg which might go up in flames at any time. All those who wish peace to prevail in the Middle East—true peace which would foster the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people—should not lose sight of this reality. On the contrary, they should have the sense to recognize and respect the rights of the Palestinian people. By approving the recommendations in the report the Council will be working for peace and justice, and this will be a decisive stage on the road towards a negotiated and peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict.

11. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Security Council has on its agenda a question the solution of which is of great importance not only for the future of the Arab people of Palestine but also for the fate of international peace and security in the Middle East and throughout the world.

12. The detailed report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People demonstrates that that Committee, created by a decision of the General Assembly, has done a considerable amount of work, and has elaborated concrete, well-thought-out and carefully argued recommendations on the exercise of the lawful national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. The recommendations contained in the report represent a concrete programme for implementing the fundamental resolutions of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine.

13. The Security Council, for the first time, is treating comprehensively, as an independent political problem, the question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights. This represents a new and important stage in the Council's consideration of the key aspects of a Middle East settlement. Indeed, for the first time, the Council, with the direct participation of the representatives of the Palestinian people—the delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization—is discussing the Palestine problem in detail and comprehensively as one of the fundamental problems of a Middle East settlement. This important step on the part of the Council is a consequence of its earlier decisions on the Middle East problem and of the fundamental resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions, which stressed the political nature of the Palestine problem, confirmed the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and proclaimed the necessity of participation on an equal footing by the Palestine Liberation Organization, the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East.

14. The Soviet Union firmly believes that the exercise of its inalienable rights by the Arab people of

Palestine and the solution of the Palestine problem are key elements without which it will be impossible to bring about a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem or the elimination of the explosive source of tension in that area which poses a constant threat to international peace and security.

15. The delegation of the USSR believes it necessary in the discussion of this problem to recall the statement of 28 April by the Soviet Government on the Middle East, according to which:

“The Soviet Union... proceeds from the premise that the peoples of that area should be complete masters of their destiny, should receive an opportunity to live in conditions of independence, freedom and peace. That is precisely why the Soviet Union firmly supports a radical political settlement of the Middle East conflict and believes that this is attainable. The discussion in recent years of questions relating to the situation in the Middle East and the relevant decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly have determined the basis on which such a settlement can and must be achieved. This basis consists of three organically interconnected elements:

—First, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied as a result of Israel's aggression in 1967.

—Second, satisfaction of the legitimate national demands of the Arab people of Palestine, including their inalienable right to establish their own State.

—Third, international guarantees for the security and inviolability of the frontiers of all Middle Eastern States, and their right to independent existence and development.

These basic and interconnected problems of a Middle East settlement take due account of the legitimate rights of all parties directly concerned and create a just and realistic basis for settlement.”
[S/12063, annex, point 3.]

16. These principles have been confirmed and are now shared by the overwhelming majority of Member States—particularly by the socialist and non-aligned countries—and the whole of progressive world public opinion. This is something which was reflected in the resolutions of the twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions of the General Assembly, as well as in all the fundamental documents of the conferences and meetings of the non-aligned countries.

17. As has been revealed by this year's Council discussions of the Palestine problem and other aspects of the Middle East situation, only an all-embracing solution to the problem of the Middle East, including the question of the Palestinians, can lead to a lasting

peace in that area. Those debates have also confirmed that the majority of Council members are opposed to separate steps which divert attention from an over-all solution of this problem and quite often create additional obstacles to a settlement of the Middle East conflict.

18. The Council is discussing questions which are of vital importance for the future of the 3 million who have been suffering for so long and who, Palestinians, as a result of aggression carried out by Israel with the support of its imperialist protectors, have been reduced to the position of exiles, deprived of any opportunity to exercise their inalienable rights, including their right to self-determination and statehood. Such a flagrant, tragic situation must be ended.

19. The Palestinian people, like all other peoples of the world, is entitled to have full control over its own destiny and will undoubtedly achieve this in the end. It will be able to live in freedom, independence and peace. This right of theirs and of the other peoples of the world is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in the fundamental decisions of the Organization on the Middle East.

20. The Government of Israel, with the support of its protectors and partners, continues with stubborn recklessness its policy of aggression and territorial expansion at the expense of its Arab neighbours. It is stubbornly pursuing a course of creating Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories and is banking on including them within Israel. In this the leaders of Israel, with their typical Zionist racist cynicism, are disregarding the will of the Arabs and the decisions of the United Nations, which express the will of the world community. The failure of Israel to participate in this discussion in the Council is further evidence of the Israeli leaders' policy of disregarding the will of the peoples of the world and the decisions and demands of the United Nations, to which Israel, itself, is indebted for its very existence. In this regard, Israel is following the same policy as the white racists of South Africa, who are also disregarding the demands and decisions of the United Nations and are oppressing the black population and depriving it of its elementary human rights.

21. The Israeli leaders, and some of their protectors in the West, like to make high-flown speeches about human rights and the delights of bourgeois democracy, which has long been bankrupt. However, as has been shown by the recent discussions in the Council, they are all continuing to make persistent efforts to paralyse the Council and prevent it from taking effective measures to ensure respect for the elementary human rights and the inalienable national rights of the much tried Palestinian people and of the indigenous population of southern Africa, which has long been reduced to slavery. This is convincing proof of their imperialist, colonialist and racist approach to the problem of the rights of the Arab peoples of the Middle East and those of the black peoples of southern Africa.

22. The Soviet Union, guided by Leninist principles in its foreign policy, has provided and will continue to provide constant support in the struggle of the Arab peoples, in particular that of the Arab people of Palestine, for the restoration of their legitimate rights and the elimination of the consequences of Israeli aggression. Our country has made and will continue to make tireless efforts to achieve genuine improvements in the question of an all-embracing settlement of the problem in the Middle East on the basis of the decisions of the United Nations, which, as has already been pointed out, require, first, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied in 1967 and then the exercise of the inalienable national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. Recently, the Soviet Government made a number of important proposals which are directed at this objective. It has been stressing the necessity of a resumption of the work of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East with the equal participation of all the parties directly concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization as the legitimate and recognized representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

23. The report of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Brezhnev, to the Twenty-fifth Congress of the Party exhaustively, fully and with great clarity sets forth the consistent position of the Soviet Union in support of the struggle of the Arab peoples, including the Arab people of Palestine, for their inalienable rights and against Israeli aggression and expansion. Mr. Brezhnev stated:

“All these years, the Soviet Union has consistently supported the Arab people’s struggle to eliminate the consequences of the Israeli aggression. Our country helped—and effectively, as the October 1973 war showed—to build up the military potential of the countries opposing the aggressor, that is, Egypt, Syria and Iraq. We supported the Arab political struggle both within the United Nations and outside it.

“There is no war in the Middle East at present. But neither is there peace, let alone tranquillity. And who would venture to guarantee that hostilities do not erupt anew? This danger will persist as long as Israeli armies remain in the occupied territories. It will persist as long as the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians driven from their land are deprived of their legitimate rights and live in appalling conditions, and as long as the Arab people of Palestine are denied the possibility to create their national State.”

24. Between the Soviet people and the Arab people of Palestine, and between the Government of the Soviet Union and the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, increasing relations of friendship and fraternal co-operation have grown up. The Soviet Union has given the Arab people of Palestine

comprehensive assistance and support in their struggle for the exercise of their lawful inalienable rights.

25. The Soviet Union—and here its position coincides with that of many progressive Arab countries—believes that the most important condition for success in the struggle against imperialist Zionist aggression is the solidarity of the Arab States on an anti-imperialist basis, and the strengthening of their co-operation with their real friends, the socialist and non-aligned countries.

26. In the discussion of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, we should not overlook the events in Lebanon, which are the result of actions on the part of the forces of imperialism and zionism. In a TASS statement of 9 June there was an over-all assessment of these developments. The forces of imperialism and internal reaction, by instigating internecine strife in Lebanon, are striving to divert the attention of the Arabs from the liberation of the lands occupied by Israel and to strike a blow against the Palestine resistance movement and the patriotic forces in Lebanon. This is an attempt to pit the Arabs against each other and to delay a settlement of the Middle East crisis.

27. The report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People contains a number of concrete and constructive recommendations, which, if put into effect, will provide a solution for the key problem of the Middle East settlement, and by so doing would lead to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The recommendations confirm the important fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force contained in the Charter and stress the need for the complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli occupiers. They also provide for the total withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, and lay down a time-table for their withdrawal, which must be completed by 1 June 1977.

28. The Soviet delegation entirely supports the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty in its own country. We also support the earliest possible implementation of the unconditional right of all Palestinians to return immediately to their own homes and recover their lands and property, and we believe that the Council should take measures in accordance with the Charter to facilitate their exercise of that right.

29. We should like to express our gratitude to the members of that Committee and to its Chairman, Mr. Fall, for their valuable work in preparing the report and the recommendations it contains. In the light of those recommendations, the Council must take measures to halt the establishment of new settlements

by Israel, to eliminate the existing settlements in the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and to ensure that all the Arab property in the territories is returned intact to its owners.

30. One recommendation is of great importance for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, and that is the recommendation calling for the participation on an equal footing of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East held under the auspices of the United Nations. It reflects the broad recognition in the world and within the United Nations of the need for equal participation by the Palestine Liberation Organization in the work of the Geneva Peace Conference, just as the Palestine Liberation Organization now participates on an equal footing in the discussions on the Middle East in the United Nations and its major organs.

31. As is stressed in paragraph 60 of the Committee's report, the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians would "contribute decisively to a comprehensive and final settlement of the Middle East crisis". That is indeed so because exercise of those rights is an integral part of a solution of the overall political problem of the Middle East. The delegation of the Soviet Union also whole-heartedly supports the Committee's major conclusion, which is to be found in paragraph 59 of its report, namely, that "no solution in the Middle East can be envisaged which does not fully take into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people".

32. The Soviet delegation believes that the Council must take decisive, effective and immediate measures to implement the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and thus facilitate the earliest possible achievement of a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East. The Council must adopt a decision which confirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and endorses the Committee's recommendations regarding the exercise of those rights. Such a decision would bring the position of the Council fully into line with the position of the General Assembly. Such a decision would be a real contribution by the Council, as the major organ of the United Nations responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, to the elimination of a dangerous hotbed of war, which is the primary task of the Council and all its members. Such a decision would also be in keeping with the interests of all the States and peoples of that area and with the strengthening of universal peace. Anyone who, by abusing the right of veto, prevented the Council from taking such a decision would be assuming a serious international political responsibility.

33. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Guinea. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

34. Mr. CAMARA (Guinea) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, my delegation is most happy to congratulate you on your accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. The century-old links and the common destiny which unite my country, the Republic of Guinea, with Guyana, which you represent with dedication and competence, need hardly be recalled since they are so solid, friendly and fraternal.

35. The item on the agenda of the Council is of enormous interest to us. Indeed, in resolution 3376 (XXX), which established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the General Assembly designated Guinea and other Members to study this problem. Thus it was in the spirit of that resolution that my delegation asked to be allowed to speak in the present debate.

36. The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including self-determination and independence, have been clearly defined in General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX). The right of return signifies the exercise of the individual right of every Palestinian to return to his country of origin. In undertaking to respect the United Nations Charter when it was admitted to the international community, Israel at the same time subscribed to the integral implementation of this first aspect of the problem.

37. General Assembly resolutions 181 (II), 194 (III) and 273 (III), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the fourth Geneva Convention² also, bear witness to the fact that the Committee has remained faithful to the spirit of its mission.

38. The return of the Palestinians to their homes must be carried out in two phases, and the implementation of that absolute right is to follow a definite time-table. In the first phase, the Palestinians displaced in 1967, are to be authorized to return to the territories which have been under Israeli military occupation since 1967, in accordance with resolution 237 (1967) of the Council. The implementation of this first phase of the programme must be undertaken on certain conditions which are properly specified in the report. The second phase concerns the Palestinians displaced between 1948 and 1967, and should be carried out in co-operation with the parties concerned and in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations.

39. Persistent refusal to recognize the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes cannot but be detrimental to the restoration of peace in the Middle East. We believe that Palestinians who choose not to return should be paid equitable compensation.

40. In regard to self-determination, independence and national sovereignty, my delegation, fully shares the Committee's views and considers that the establishment of an independent Palestinian State is in

accordance with United Nations principles and remains a prior condition for the solution of the Middle East problem. It will be up to the Palestinians, once they are established in their country, to determine what kind of expression they wish to give to the national independence of Palestine. In this the Palestine Liberation Organization remains the only genuine spokesman and the only representative of its people.

41. The status of the City of Jerusalem is of particular concern to the Moslem population of Guinea. We agree that the administration of this city should consist of two main organs: (a) a 45-member legislative body in which the three main religious communities of the city—Moslem, Jewish and Christian—would be represented; and (b) an executive organ led by a United Nations commissioner appointed by the Secretary-General. My delegation appeals to Israel to refrain from any act or policy intended to alter the legal status of Jerusalem.

42. For the implementation of the programme proposed in the Committee's report, my delegation further voices to the Council its insistence on Israel's abandoning the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories and, what is more, on its proceeding unconditionally to withdraw those of its citizens who have been settled in these territories since 1967 in violation of article 49 of the fourth Geneva Convention and of the relevant resolutions adopted in the United Nations. The Council must consider all the actions and measures that might lead Israel to implement the terms of the programme that has been proposed, while leaving full responsibility to the General Assembly in the event of a total lack of co-operation on the part of Israel.

43. The establishment of an independent Palestinian State is not a question that be considered apart from the problem of the Middle East. The rights of the Palestinians can be exercised only within the framework of a complete settlement and the establishment of not only a lasting but also a definitive peace in the region.

44. The Security Council remains the only body where all parties are able to meet. My delegation firmly believes that if each State member of the Council were to make an effort, we would manage to extinguish this blazing fire which has caused such devastation in the region.

45. The solution of the problem of the Middle East and the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people lead us to draw the attention of the Council to the dangerous collaboration which exists between Tel Aviv and Pretoria. This axis, which seeks to extend itself so as to bring all the racist and Fascist régimes of the world to support each other militarily, is an imminent danger and a threat to world peace.

46. In requesting the Council to consider the Committee's responsibly and to assess it at its just value

for the benefit of the patient and suffering Arabs, my delegation thanks the members of the Council for their kind attention.

47. Mr. VINCI (Italy): Mr. President, I should like first of all to express to you the deep gratification of my delegation at your presence here. Mr. Minister, you could not better underline the attachment and dedication of your country to the principles and purposes of the United Nations than by personally presiding over our deliberations.

48. I should like to seize this opportunity also to express our satisfaction at the friendly relations and close collaboration we have developed with the delegation of Guyana, and particularly with Ambassador Jackson, who represents his country so honourably in our world Organization and who, during his presidency of the Council, has displayed outstanding qualities of impartiality and leadership.

49. I should like to associate myself with previous speakers in conveying to the United States delegation the most sincere condolences of my Government at the tragic loss in Beirut of Ambassador Meloy and his colleagues, a loss which has increased the tragic toll of officials of the United States State Department of State who have fallen while serving their country. The death of the two American diplomats is another sad chapter in the endless, senseless tragedy taking place in Lebanon, a country which occupies a special place in the history of the Mediterranean and of Italy in particular. We sincerely hope that the people of that highly civilized and friendly country will soon be able to reconcile the differences which divide them and reserve the territorial integrity, the national unity and the independence of the Lebanese State for the good of their country and for the good of the international community. Lebanon is an irreplaceable asset in our world.

50. I turn now to the item we are considering. My Government is convinced—and has so publicly stated on various occasions—that the solution of the Palestinian problem is crucial to the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. My delegation therefore welcomes the current debate on the item on our agenda, namely, the question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, in so far as it places this issue in the right perspective and contributes to the negotiation of an over-all settlement of the Middle East problem.

51. My delegation already had the occasion to recall on 30 March 1976³ the basic position of the Italian Government with regard to resolution 3376 (XXX), which set up the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. I do not think, therefore, that I need now to reiterate our views in this regard or to elaborate on them; the less so since they were along the lines of the statement which I made on 10 November 1975⁴ on behalf of the nine

members of the European Community and to which the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Richard, referred in his own statement [1934th meeting, para. 7].

52. Rather, I should like at this stage to assure the members of the Council, and the members of the Committee as well, that my delegation, while of course maintaining its position, has given very careful consideration to the Committee's report. We have also followed with great attention the very clear introduction of the report by the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Fall of Senegal, and the additional comments provided by the Committee's Rapporteur, our colleague from Malta, Mr. Gauci [1924th meeting]. We have, furthermore, listened with great interest to the other statements made in the Council, notably by those delegations which made valuable contributions to this document, which the Committee was able to produce so promptly thanks to the personal efforts of its members. We hope that all this documentation will be of some help in our labours with a view to achieving the objectives I indicated at the outset of my statement.

53. In this connexion, as we are coming close—I assume—to the end of our deliberations on this item, I should like to repeat, so that our position may be clear to all concerned; what I stated at the 1923rd meeting of the Council, on 28 May, when we adopted resolution 390 (1976) on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. I said then and I reaffirm now that Italy believes that the recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to establish their own independent State, is one of the three indispensable prerequisites that must be taken together for a final, just and lasting settlement of the Middle East crisis. The other two are: the withdrawal by Israel from all the territories occupied in June 1967; and the right of all States in the area to sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity within secure borders to be internationally recognized and guaranteed.

54. Having said that, I would reiterate the view that the only realistic way to deal with the Palestinian problem and satisfy the legitimate aspirations and national rights of the Palestinian people is within the established negotiating framework, which comprehends and takes into consideration all the aspects of the broader issue—namely, the Arab-Israeli conflict. That approach does not appear to have been taken sufficiently into consideration in the report submitted to us. I hasten to recognize that the point is made in paragraph 51 that

“Palestinian rights could not be achieved outside a comprehensive, just settlement that would include Israel's withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied in June 1967 and the establishment of a just and lasting peace.”

But nowhere else in the report or in the recommendations, some of which we could consider favourably if they were put in the right context, is this basic idea spelled out in clear, specific terms in order to make clear the territory on which the future Palestinian entity, to use the words in paragraph 71 of the report, should be established. To that effect it would perhaps be useful to follow—if not now, later—to the suggestion in paragraph 56, namely, that

“the members of the Council, assisted by the Secretary-General, either in closed session or through informal consultations, could search for those constructive moves which would contribute to an over-all settlement.”

That is a new practice, inaugurated by the Council last year in connexion with another item, when it produced some positive results.

55. To sum up our view on this point we feel that the Palestinian question has been singled out from the larger context of the whole problem and that the other essential components have been overlooked. We are left with the impression—which I hope will prove to be wrong—that the report, however well intentioned, is somehow detached from the only solid basis for the solution of the over-all problem, as laid down by the Council in resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). In those resolutions the framework and all the components of the problem are clearly established. What we need, and I feel there is general agreement on this point, is to supplement and bring up to date the provisions of resolution 242 (1967) concerning the Palestinian question.

56. In the light of the views I have expressed, I wonder what would best help to solve the problem, what would best help towards the speedy implementation of the rights of the Palestinian people.

57. To tell the truth, I believe that at this stage the best thing would be to speed up the resumption of the negotiating process, the success of which requires, in our opinion, that all components of the problem be duly taken into consideration; and this means not only the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people in the terms I described earlier, but also, as I have already said, the withdrawal of Israel from all the territories occupied in June 1967, and the right of all States in the area to sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity within secure borders to be internationally recognized and guaranteed.

58. May I now make a few further comments on the report itself.

59. I have already expressed our doubts about the usefulness of an exercise bound to concentrate on only one component out of the many which make up the complex Middle East crisis. For that reason, the report does not reflect the political realities in the area,

as envisaged in resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973); rather, it omits any consideration of the existence of a State Member of the United Nations, Israel, which of course is a recipient of all the rights and duties that are naturally inherent in such a status. That is a very serious point, as it raises a general principle involving the individual and collective responsibility of each State Member, regardless of the country considered. No committee, no body of the United Nations can envisage any measure which could directly or indirectly, willingly or unwillingly, hamper the basic right of a State Member to live in peace within secure and recognized frontiers.

60. We have noted with interest the reference made in the report to the necessity of establishing a system of international guarantees of the security and inviolability of the frontiers of all Middle East countries. On various occasions my Government, together with its partners in the European Community, has expressed its readiness to take part in such a system as may be desired.

61. As to the issue of the Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories, an issue raised in the report, I would assure the Council that my Government maintains its firm position of total disapproval of such a course, as I previously stated at the 1897th meeting of the Council.

62. I have already mentioned the keen interest with which my delegation has been studying the report of the Committee, despite our reservations about its origin. May I add that we have been doing so bearing clearly in mind above the whole of the human factor behind it—that is to say, the suffering of hundreds of thousands of people, people dispossessed of homes, of land, of work, of the enjoyment of their basic rights. And, since I am speaking of the plight of the Palestinian refugees, my delegation would welcome wholeheartedly a gesture from the Government of Israel making possible, to begin with, the return of those who left their villages during the 1967 war. We are also in favour of the employment in this respect of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), suitably financed and mandated, as recommended in paragraph 68 of the report.

63. To those people, on this occasion, I should like to express again here the sympathy of the Italian people and to assure them that, being well aware of the fact that their ordeal has been going on for far too long, the Italian Government, together with its European partners, will do its utmost to promote a solution of the problem of the Middle East on the lines repeatedly set by the United Nations, and particularly by the Security Council.

64. Since this is my last statement in the Council for this month I should like, with the Council's permission, to make a personal comment.

65. We are all aware by now that these past three weeks have been among the busiest in the history of the United Nations. Even if the Secretariat's records do not show it, we feel it. Our President, Ambassador Jackson, was the first one not to spare himself. What else could we do, then, but to follow his example and leadership? It was a hard physical, mental and nervous test for all. We have come out of it somehow, exhausted but satisfied, and we owe this satisfaction over a job well done to our President. Ambassador Jackson already had our respect, esteem and confidence; he has now won our full appreciation, praises and affection. I should like to say to him and to all our colleagues around the table "au revoir", not in this chamber or in other rooms at Headquarters, but outside, preferably in my residence. After a most active month we are all, including the next President, as human beings, entitled to a quiet month.

66. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

67. Mr. BOULOM (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from French*): Permit me first of all to associate myself with previous speakers in extending the profound condolences of my delegation to the delegation of the United States on the tragic death of Mr. Meloy, United States Ambassador in Lebanon, and his economic counsellor.

68. Mr. President, it is a great honour for me to address you on behalf of the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and to convey to you our warmest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council at a time when this august body has embarked upon the consideration of such an important and complex item as that of the question of Palestine. Your assumption of the presidency is a tribute to your country, the Republic of Guyana, which is pursuing a policy of peace, freedom and national independence within the non-aligned movement.

69. I should also like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of the Council for having been kind enough to permit me to participate in this debate.

70. The question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights is the item on the Council's agenda. The Lao delegation, a member of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, deems it necessary to address the Council on this subject.

71. For the last 29 years the United Nations has been trying to solve the distressing problem of Palestine by adopting more than 188 resolutions and decisions. In spite of all those efforts, the problem of Palestine is still unsolved. The Israelis obstinately continue to usurp the Arab territories of Palestine. They have

introduced into that area a new style of colonization which consists in Judaizing Jerusalem, establishing settlements and expropriating Arab property. The indigenous population has been subjected to oppression and tyranny. In a word, the Zionist aggressors have thus created insurmountable obstacles to the process of peace and are endangering international peace and security.

72. In the face of that challenge, the Palestinian people, under the enlightened leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the veritable nucleus of the Palestinian revolution, rose up to win back their fundamental national rights. The heroic struggle of the Palestinian people has had militant and spontaneous support from the Arab States, the socialist countries and all progressive peoples that prize peace and justice in the world.

73. My country's position with regard to the question of Palestine is one of principle based on the solidarity and the common front of the progressive peoples and Governments in the world striving for peace, justice and social progress. The Lao people has been anxiously following the struggle of the Palestinian people. This position of principle has been demonstrated by our voting in favour of all resolutions of the General Assembly on the Middle East in general and on Palestine in particular, notably resolutions 3375 (XXX), 3376 (XXX), and 3379 (XXX) declaring Zionism a form of racism. Furthermore, the Lao Government has decided to break off diplomatic relations with Israel, a decision which will take effect from 23 February 1976, thus eliminating the last remnant of a link contracted by the former régime with the racist régime in Tel Aviv. Finally, the people of Laos organized, from 12 to 19 May 1976, an international week of solidarity with the Palestinian people.

74. Today the Council is meeting once again to examine the weighty file on the Palestinian case. This time, however, the Council has before it what it did not have at previous meetings, namely, a concise document designed to bring about a solution of the Palestine problem. The report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is the fruit of the judicious efforts made by its members over a period of more than three months. In part two, the members of the Committee have most explicitly formulated recommendations which represent a programme of implementation to permit the Palestinian people fully to exercise its rights to self-determination, independence and national sovereignty in Palestine. Those recommendations were prepared on the basis of the relevant resolutions, in particular General Assembly resolutions 194 (III), 3236 (XXIX) and 3375 (XXX) and Council resolution 237 (1967), taking account of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people.

75. Although I have no wish to go into detail, I should none the less like to highlight a few of the fundamental

principles which my delegation considers indispensable to any settlement of the Middle East problem in general and the problem of Palestine in particular. First, the settlement of the Palestinian problem is a *conditio sine qua non* of any final and global solution to the Middle East problem. Secondly, no valid overall solution can be contemplated in the Middle East without the effective participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which is the only authentic representative of the Palestinian people. Thirdly, the evacuation of the Arab territories of Palestine by Israel is a precondition for a settlement of the Palestine problem. Fourthly, the Palestinian people can fully exercise their inalienable rights only in Palestine. Fifthly, the right of all the States in the region to live in peace within secure, recognized and guaranteed boundaries can be contemplated only after the establishment of an independent Palestinian entity in Palestine. As we are all aware, Israel is now undeniably overstepping its boundaries. Consequently, to recognize Israel's right to live in peace within secure, recognized and guaranteed frontiers would at the present stage be tantamount, *ipso facto*, to legitimizing the occupation of Arab territories by the Israeli aggressors. In this connexion, I should like to add that, in my view, there can be peaceful co-existence only when two or more peoples sincerely demonstrate their desire to live in harmony. On the other hand, it is impossible to contemplate peaceful co-existence between aggressor and victim, let alone between oppressor and oppressed.

76. It is high time for the United Nations, which was the source of the misfortunes of the Palestinian people, to find a just and equitable solution to the Palestine problem in order to avert a new devastating war in the Middle East.

77. In conclusion, the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic calls upon the Council to adopt a constructive attitude towards the recommendations made by the Committee in accordance with Article 36 of the Charter. Since at the present stage we are merely formulating recommendations, my delegation believes that the Council is entirely free to make improvements to them so that they may reflect the views of the international community as a whole.

78. Mr. SUNDBERG (Sweden): First of all, Mr. President, let me address on behalf of the Swedish delegation our particularly warm welcome to you here today. It is indeed a great honour for the Council to have in the Chair for this debate such a distinguished personality from a country which plays a central role in this Organization, as well as in the defence of the rights of the underprivileged in all parts of the world—a role to which the Permanent Representative of Guyana, Ambassador Jackson, and his delegation contribute with such outstanding distinction.

79. My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to offer its profound condolences to the delega-

tion of the United States on the death of the American Ambassador to Beirut and his colleagues on 16 June. That senseless killing has deeply shocked the Swedish Government and people.

80. The Swedish delegation has carefully studied the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. That report contains a number of interesting ideas and suggestions. We are grateful to the members of the Committee and to those others who have co-operated closely with it for the efforts they have devoted to the Committee's work. We are also grateful for a number of background documents produced within the Committee, which will be most valuable in our work, now and in the future.

81. Turning to the substance of the Committee's report, my delegation would like, first of all, to make a few observations on certain points, especially with regard to the recommendations of the Committee.

82. The Committee has penetrated to the different elements in the notion of "the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people"; it has thus taken as its point of departure a clear distinction between the rights of the Palestinian people and those of the individual Palestinians. The individual rights of the Palestinians to return to their homes have been given a prominent position in the Committee's recommendations. The Swedish delegation greets with satisfaction the fact that the question of return, which over the years has been dealt with in a number of United Nations resolutions and which is so important from a humanitarian point of view, is thus highlighted in the report.

83. It is in this perspective that Sweden has always supported the idea of a rapid implementation of Security Council resolution 237 (1967), as was stated by my delegation, for example in the debate on Palestine during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

84. It is further noteworthy that the Committee, in formulating its recommendations for a solution of the problem of the displaced Arab Palestinians, makes a clear distinction between Palestinians displaced as a consequence of the 1967 war and those displaced before the same war, just as it makes a corresponding distinction with regard to territorial and other questions when the rights of the Palestinian people are dealt with in the report.

85. The Committee links the right of return of the Palestinians to the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination by stating that the right to self-determination can only be exercised only if the occupied territories were evacuated and the displaced Palestinians returned.

86. It is when we come to the question of the implementation of the various principles enunciated in the

report within the framework of an over-all solution that my delegation finds the Committee's report to be seriously deficient. True, we entirely share the basic proposition in the report that the solution of the Palestinian question is a necessary prerequisite for a lasting peace in the Middle East. But, on the other hand, Sweden does not believe that it is possible to find a solution of the Palestinian question in isolation from other elements in the Middle East problem.

87. The only possible and durable solution is one that takes due account of the legitimate rights and aspirations of all the parties in the area. There is broad agreement that the Middle East problem must be settled by negotiation between the parties. Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) spell out in general terms how such a solution should be achieved. The question of Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories is one key problem in the Middle East complex. The modalities of withdrawal must be settled in negotiations between the parties. That means that, for instance, the question of a time-table for withdrawal can only be settled by agreement between the parties. Sweden considers that the situation that existed before the June war in 1967 must be the point of departure as the principle of the unacceptability of the acquisition of territory by force must be maintained.

88. As a solution of the Palestinian problem is based on an Israeli withdrawal, such a solution cannot be taken out of the negotiating context. It is obvious that the return of the Palestinians displaced as a result of the war of June 1967 can hardly be realized without the co-operation of the occupying Power as long as that occupation exists. As I mentioned earlier, Sweden supports a swift implementation of the provisions of resolution 237 (1967).

89. Another basic prerequisite for any solution of the Middle East problem is that the final borders eventually to be defined must be secure and recognized, thus ensuring the right of all States in the area to live in peace.

90. The third basic prerequisite for any settlement in the Middle East is the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people—the very object of this debate.

91. These are thus the basic elements around which a just and durable peace in the Middle East should be built. Some of them are already laid down in resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). The element which has been lacking hitherto—due consideration for the problems of the Palestinian people—stands out with increasing clarity as the key to the final solution.

92. The parties must now convincingly demonstrate their readiness to accept each other. Israel must recognize the legitimate national rights and interests of the Palestinian people, their right to a homeland; and the

Palestine Liberation Organization must accept the right of Israel to continued existence within secure and recognized borders. In so far as the deliberations in this Council and the forthcoming debates in the General Assembly could contribute to such a mutual acceptance, they could be said to assume a particular importance in the search for peace in the Middle East.

93. Sweden strongly supports the principle that a solution of the central elements of the Middle East problem must be found in negotiations between the parties concerned and cannot, without their agreement, be dictated by the Council. Any other principle would be against the principles set down in the Council's own decisions in resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

94. The Palestinian Arabs should be represented in all efforts to find solutions to the Palestinian question. This follows as a consequence of the recognition of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian Arabs. The Palestine Liberation Organization, as the most authoritative spokesman for the Palestinian Arabs, must thus necessarily be invited to participate in the international debates, for instance, in the General Assembly and in the Security Council. We believe that such participation should be based on the recognition of principles embodied in the Charter, among which is the right of all Member States to self-determination and territorial integrity.

95. The role of the United Nations must inevitably be a central one in any Middle East settlement. Also on this point, the Committee has put forward interesting ideas involving, *inter alia*, the possibilities of a temporary United Nations peace-keeping force.

96. It is also evident that an important role in the settlement of the tragic refugee problem will fall to UNRWA, in as much as that organization has been of central importance in this respect during the last decades. Absolute priority should be given to providing UNRWA with adequate resources for the fulfilment of its task. My country is traditionally one of the largest contributors to the Agency, and we have made an extra contribution this year to help in meeting the most urgent needs.

97. The task of the Council is now to stimulate the parties to come together in meaningful negotiations. All the Council's efforts should be directed towards that end. However, the debate on the rights of the Palestinian people is an important and useful one. The Committee can soon draw its conclusions from the Council's deliberations and prepare its report to the General Assembly at its forthcoming session, where there will be a further opportunity to discuss this problem.

98. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Bulgaria, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

99. Mr. GROZEV (Bulgaria) (*interpretation from Russian*): Mr. President, I should like to thank you and the other members of the Council for the opportunity afforded me to set forth the position of the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria on the question under consideration.

100. At the same time I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Minister, and the representative of Guyana, Mr. Jackson, whom we all respect. We are familiar with the energetic and sincere efforts of you both to bring about a just solution of the important international problems facing our Organization. New and striking evidence of this has been the tireless work of Mr. Jackson this month and your own now, as President of the Council for this month, as it discusses one of the most acute problems of the day. If any of these problems remain without a satisfactory solution, I am sure that the President of the Council is the person least of all to blame for this. We are fully convinced of your sincere intentions and desires. I should like to express the wish that your presidency will culminate in an appropriate and just solution by the Council of the question under consideration, the question of Palestine.

101. The problem of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination which has always been before our Organization has occupied a very important place in its work over the last two years. The discussions in the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions and in the Security Council, the relevant decisions adopted on this question and the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization on an equal footing, all demonstrate most cogently that the United Nations is fully aware of the importance of this problem. It is quite clear what path we should follow if we want to find a solution to this problem; it is one that is closely connected with international peace and security.

102. The fact that so far we have not been able to find a solution does not at all mean that the problem cannot be resolved. It simply means that it is extremely urgent now to proceed to a final settlement of the Palestine problem, and this is particularly closely, even organically, linked to the adoption of decisive measures for the final solution of the Middle East conflict.

103. Underlying this conflict is the aggressive nature of Israeli militarism and expansionism, as practised by Israel in the Arab territories occupied in 1967, and the entirely arbitrary flouting by Israel of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty and their right to return to their homes. The path to a solution of the conflict in the Middle East lies in the solution of these problems. Only then will there exist conditions required to guarantee the right to an independent existence for all countries and peoples of the area. Such a guarantee would be a new and important

contribution to the strengthening of universal peace and security.

104. At the recently concluded Eleventh Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party, Comrade Todor Zhivkov, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party and Chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, made the following statement:

"Thanks to the imperialists and their accomplices in the Middle East, a hotbed of war is still smouldering. The danger of a new conflagration in that area will not be eliminated until Israeli troops evacuate the Arab territories occupied in 1967, until the Arab people of Palestine has the opportunity to establish its own State, and until conditions are created which will permit all States and peoples of that part of the world to live in peace and security. A just and lasting solution to the Middle East problem can be achieved only at the Geneva Conference with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the only legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine."

105. The Bulgarian delegation would like to take this opportunity to welcome the delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization and to express its great satisfaction at the constructive contribution made by that organization to the work of the General Assembly and the Security Council in the discussion of the Middle East problem. The Palestine Liberation Organization is the only legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine, a fact which has already been recognized at the twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions of the General Assembly. This is further evidence of the final recognition by the United Nations of the political essence of the Palestine problem, in spite of attempts by Israel and its protectors to reduce the problem to a mere refugee problem. Today everyone understands that without the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization in a comprehensive solution to the Middle East crisis it will be impossible to establish either a just or a lasting peace in that area.

106. The political maturity of the Palestine Liberation Organization has once again been manifested in the course of recent events in Lebanon. The active assistance provided by the Palestine Liberation Organization in the evacuation of foreign nationals from Beirut, its categorical condemnation of the murder of the United States Ambassador to Lebanon and his Economic Counsellor, and the measures taken by the Palestine Liberation Organization in that regard, are evidence of the noble purposes of that organization and a confirmation of its international authority.

107. We hope that the Lebanese crisis, that tragedy which goes beyond the confines of purely domestic issues and which threatens to become an international conflict, will be solved very soon. We must put

an end to the bloodshed in Lebanon as soon as possible. A solution to the crisis in Lebanon would doubtless facilitate a comprehensive and final solution of the Middle East conflict.

108. I should like to take this opportunity to express to the United States delegation the sincere condolences of the Bulgarian delegation on the senseless murder of American diplomats in Beirut.

109. The rights of the Palestinian people are recognized by everyone except Israel and its protectors, who are attempting in this they to defer a final settlement of the Palestinian problem, thus postponing a settlement of the Middle East crisis as a whole. They are using all possible ways and means of holding up a lasting settlement of the conflict. Half measures and partial agreements which totally disregard the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and attempts to foment division between Arab countries are all efforts by the imperialist forces in Israel designed solely to divert attention from the essence of the conflict.

110. The discussion of the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in the Security Council once again shows the great significance of this matter. The report of the Committee unanimously focuses attention on the imperative need to restore the lawful rights of the Palestinian people in order to bring about a solution of the Middle East crisis. Therefore, among the basic considerations and guiding principles of the report we find the following in paragraph 59:

"The question of Palestine is at the heart of the Middle East problem and, consequently, the Committee stresses its belief that no solution in the Middle East can be envisaged which does not fully take into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people."

The concrete proposals put forward by the Committee place in clear and precise perspective the ways and means of restoring the lawful rights of the Palestinian people, its right to self-determination, independence and sovereignty and the right of Palestinians to return to their homes.

111. The Bulgarian delegation has studied the report of the Committee with attention. It supports the recommendations in the report, which, believes, give a correct and realistic assessment of the actual state of affairs in the Middle East, the prospects for the exercise by the Palestinian people of their national rights and the role the United Nations would be called upon to play in this regard. We congratulate the Chairman and members of the Committee on their excellent work, and we express our conviction that the Council has an opportunity to formulate its own new and concrete plan of action on the basis of the recommendations in the report.

112. In its statement on the situation in the Middle East of 11 May 1976 in support of the new initiative of the Soviet Union for a political settlement of the crisis in the Middle East [S/12062], the Bulgarian Government expressed its firm conviction that

“The Government of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria is deeply convinced that a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict can be achieved only by solving the three problems, linked organically with each other, viz:

—Withdrawal of the Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied as a result of the aggression of Israel in 1967;

—Fulfilling the legitimate national demands of the Arab people of Palestine to create a State of their own;

—International guarantees for the security and inviolability of frontiers of all States in the Middle East, for their right to independent existence and development.

The Government of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria has always maintained the stand that a successful solution to these fundamental problems could be reached at the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties directly interested, including the Palestine Liberation Organization.” [S/12080, annex.]

113. The solution to the Middle East problem, including the question of Palestine, depends primarily

on the Arab peoples themselves. Now more than ever it is essential to strengthen unity and not to yield to provocative and divisive actions on the part of the Zionists and the imperialists, who are striving to pit the Arab countries against each other while they themselves gleefully rub their hands and pursue their own nefarious goals.

114. In so far as the socialist countries, including my own country the People’s Republic of Bulgaria, are concerned, we have always been and will remain on the side of the Arab peoples in their just struggle for the liberation of the territories occupied by Israel and for the restoration of all the lawful rights of the people of Palestine and for the establishment of lasting peace and understanding among all countries and peoples of the Middle East.

115. Mr. SHERER (United States of America): I should like to express the appreciation and gratitude of my delegation to the representatives of Italy the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Sweden and Bulgaria for their expressions of condolence with regard to the deaths of Ambassador Meloy and his two colleagues in Beirut on 16 June.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

Notes

¹ For the report, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35*.

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, p. 287.

³ A/AC.183/L.21, p. 3.

⁴ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2399th meeting.

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