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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/ . . .) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements of the Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

1937th MEETING

Held in New York, on Tuesday, 29 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/1937)

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 11.15 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 and 1933rd to 1936th 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, Bulgaria, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Egypt, the German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yugoslavia to participate in the Council's 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. Grozev (Bulgaria), Mr. Alarcón (Cuba), Mr. Rossides (Cyprus),

Mr. Ashtal (Democratic Yemen), Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt), Mr. Florin (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Camara (Guinea), Mr. Bányász (Hungary), Mr. Jaipal (India), Mr. Marpaung (Indonesia), Mr. Al-Shaikhly (Iraq), Mr. Sharaf (Jordan), Mr. Boulom (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Mr. El Hassen (Mauritania), Mr. Zaimi (Morocco), Mr. Al-Said (Oman), Mr. Jaroszek (Poland), Mr. Baroody (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Hussen (Somalia), Mr. Allaf (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Driss (Tunisia), Mr. Türkmen (Turkey), Mr. Humaidan (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. Petric (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 I have just received a letter from the representative of Czechoslovakia, in which he asks to be invited to participate in the discussion. Accordingly, I propose, in accordance with the usual practice and with the consent of the Council, to invite the representative of Czechoslovakia to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, under the provisions of Article 31 of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

3. In view of the limited number of places available at the Council table, I invite the representative of Czechoslovakia to take the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber, on the understanding that he will be invited to take a place at the Council table when it is his turn to speak.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Šmid (Czechoslovakia) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber.

4. Mr. DATCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of Romania is profoundly happy at seeing this important debate of the Security Council being held under the exalted leadership of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guyana, a State with which my country has close ties of friendship and cooperation. Your presence as President, Mr. Minister, suggests both the particular importance of the problem we are now considering and the primary responsibility of the Council for establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Your tireless, devoted efforts, as well as those of Ambassador Jackson, which we hope will be crowned with success, once again emphasize the deep attachment of independent and non-aligned Guyana to peace and to the building of a better and juster world.

5. My delegation, like those which preceded it, wishes to extend to the representative of the United States our most heartfelt, and sorrowful condolences upon the tragic death of the American Ambassador in Beirut, Francis Meloy, and his colleagues.

6. The events of the last few years have strikingly brought out the fact that the Palestine question is a key element in the Middle East situation. The very wording of the Council's agenda item reflects an awareness on the part of Member States of the importance of the problem and the urgency with which it must be settled. The Palestinian component, which has been ignored and avoided for too long, is finally occupying its proper place in the concern of the United Nations for a political settlement of the Middle East conflict. The urgency of such a settlement is increased by an awareness of the fact that there is no rational alternative. The perpetuation of the situation of conflict now prevailing could lead to new military confrontations which would entail for all the combatants vast material destruction and loss of human life and would gravely jeopardize international peace and security. There are, therefore, strong reasons for the parties concerned to act resolutely with a view to achieving, as soon as possible, an over-all settlement of all the problems connected with the present situation in the Middle East.

7. The position of my country in regard to the solution of the Middle East problems was reaffirmed two days ago by President Nicolae Ceaușescu, who declared:

"It is a matter of profound anxiety for us that the situation in the Middle East continues unresolved. Romania has constantly pronounced itself in favour of a political solution of the Middle East conflict. It is in favour of Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied as a result of the 1967 war. It is for a solution of the problem of the Palestinian people, including the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, and it is for the establishment of a just and lasting peace which will guarantee the integrity and sovereignty of all States in the region."

Stressing that the situation in the Middle East has become more complicated as a result of the tragic events in Lebanon, President Ceaușescu stated:

"Romania realizes that it is necessary to halt fighting in that country as soon as possible; that adequate arrangements should be made among the political and social forces in Lebanon which would guarantee the integrity and sovereignty of that country, and its independent economic and social development. Such a solution of the problems of Lebanon should exclude any foreign intervention in the internal affairs of that country. Basically, the attainment of a lasting peace in the Middle East will have a positive influence on the independent economic and social development of all States."

8. In the course of the last few years, the international community has had to realize that it is essential to create the conditions which are required to enable the Palestinian people freely to exercise its right to self-determination. The General Assembly gave expression to this requirement by defining this right and establishing the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The report containing the considerations and recommendations of the Committee is now before the Security Council, which, because of its special role in the establishment of peace in the Middle East, has a duty to deal with them with the highest sense of responsibility.

9. As a member of the Committee Romania participated in the consensus which was achieved on the Committee's report. In our opinion, its considerations and recommendations, which reflect the spirit of realism and of moderation in which the meetings of the Committee were held, should be viewed as a positive contribution to the efforts made on a more general level in the United Nations to achieve the peaceful settlement of the Middle East situation.

10. The Committee took care that its recommendations should be based on United Nations resolutions, including those of the Security Council, on the problems of the Middle East and the Palestinian question. In its first recommendation, for example, regarding the return to their homes of the Palestinians displaced as a result of the June 1967 war, the Committee proposes that the Council should request the immediate and unconditional implementation of its resolution 237 (1967). The recommendation on the withdrawal by Israeli forces from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967 is also based on a relevant Council resolution regarding the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war.

11. I should also like to emphasize the significance of the recommendation of the Committee regarding the broadening and strengthening of the role of the United Nations and its organs in the search for an equitable solution of the question of Palestine and in the implementation of such a solution. This suggestion is in perfect accord with a conviction widely shared at the United Nations that the world Organization—and, above all, the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General—should play an even larger role in all efforts to resolve the Palestinian problem and to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The United Nations should make a greater contribution to the resumption and acceleration of peace negotiations; it should undertake peace-keeping operations and should effectively guarantee the peace arrangements to be negotiated under its auspices by the parties directly concerned.

12. In this context, paragraph 55 of the report is noteworthy since it stresses the need for the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization on an

equal footing with the other participants in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations.

13. Considering that the work of the Security Council also represents an effort to establish peace in the Middle East, the Committee makes the suggestion in paragraph 56 that the parties concerned, evincing a genuine desire to negotiate, should make use of this unique circumstance to meet and draw up constructive measures towards a settlement.

14. In reviewing the Committee's report, the Council is called upon to make its own contribution to the formulation of a programme the implementation of which would lead to an equitable solution of the Palestinian question and, accordingly, to the peaceful settlement of the problems of the Middle East. The adoption by the Council of decisions likely to facilitate the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights would therefore constitute an important and necessary complement to its past resolutions on the Middle East. Efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in that region could thus be pursued on a more adequate and realistic basis, and that in turn would pave the way for the success of those efforts.

15. It is true that it will not be possible for all the Committee's recommendations to be implemented at once. The implementation of those recommendations will require time and persevering, unflagging efforts. But we deem it extremely important that the Council has started to discuss the question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable national rights and, in particular, its right to self-determination, since this means that the existence of those rights is now an undeniable fact. We are convinced of the need for the Council, in its efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, to take duly into account the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Committee's report.

16. Romania is determined to support, how and in the future, every constructive effort in that direction and to make its contribution to the peaceful solution of all the problems of the Middle East.

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

18. Mr. ALLAF (Syrian Arab Republic): Mr. President, permit me first of all to say how honoured my delegation is to address the Council today, during this important debate, under your presidency. Your presence here, at the head of the Council, while it is engaging in this vital debate, is only one more example of the constructive and pioneering role your country, Guyana, is playing in the cause of international peace and security. I have in the past had the good fortune to acquaint myself with the constructive role being

played by your country, having worked with your brilliant Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Jackson. I hope that under your presidency the debate on this important question will come to a most successful conclusion.

19. Allow me on this occasion also to extend to the delegation of the United States the sincere condolences of my delegation on the senseless murder of Ambassador Meloy and two of his colleagues during the recent tragic events in Lebanon.

20. General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX) is unique in the annals of the United Nations. It is a resolution the sole objective of which is the implementation of other resolutions. The task of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People established under that resolution is also unique. That Committee was not entrusted with any discussion, debate or analysis or with reaching a verdict on a given subject. It was entrusted only with the task of recommending a programme of implementation for an already defined and recognized set of rights of and for the Palestinian people. The recommendations of the Committee, based completely, as they are, on previously adopted resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council, should therefore raise no difficulty or objection from any side, except inasmuch as they might be alleged to depart from those resolutions.

21. The need which prompted the General Assembly to establish a special committee in order to recommend methods for the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people is in itself symbolic of the reasons for the continuation of the Palestinian tragedy for nearly three decades now. The tragedy of the Palestinian people continues not because its rights are not recognized or defined but simply because they are not implemented. As a matter of fact, this is the whole story of the Middle East conflict, of which the Palestinian question is only the cause and origin: defiance, disobedience and non-implementation. The basic elements for a just and lasting settlement are known to everyone, and widely supported, but, again, not implemented. The solution is there, but the responsible party lacks the will to put it into effect. That is why in my statement of 15 March before the Committee I said:

"Thus your task is, at the same time, easy and difficult, simple and complicated. It is easy and simple because the rights of the Palestinian people are already defined and recognized. You do not need to debate them, to debate their justification or their legitimacy. This is in fact what the United Nations itself has indeed been doing"—or trying to do—"during the last 28 years."

"Yet your task is also difficult and complicated because the United Nations has been unable all these long years to implement its own resolutions

or to make the usurper of the Palestinian national and human rights cease its aggression and heed the repeated wishes and directives of the international family.'¹²

22. Difficult or not difficult, that task was completed by the Committee in the most honourable and admirable manner. Under the able and wise chairmanship of Ambassador Fall of Senegal, the representatives of 20 countries from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern and Western Europe laboured for nearly three months to carry out their important task. The Syrian Arab Republic participated actively as an observer in the work of the Committee and, with the permission of the Committee's Chairman and its members, delivered a comprehensive statement on 15 March of which I have just quoted a passage.

23. In that statement the views of the Syrian Arab Republic on the causes of the Palestinian tragedy were fully explained. I do not intend to go now into the details of that tragedy, unprecedented in history, that befell the people of Palestine and that uprooted 3.5 million people, rendering them homeless, denying them their most elementary human rights and wounding them in the very heart of their national dignity. Where else has an innocent, peaceful and tolerant indigenous people been gradually, creepingly, outnumbered, overwhelmed and, finally, expelled from its own land by the very immigrants to whom it had offered refuge from persecution and tyranny? Where else has an aggressive entity proclaimed openly and shamelessly that religion is the only basis for building a State and that only those who belong to a particular religion have a right to become citizens, even if they never before set foot on that land, while the real indigenous inhabitants who lived there for centuries—they, their fathers and ancestors—are denied the right to live and exist only because they happen to follow a different faith?

24. The United Nations was only two years old when the last chapter of the Zionist conspiracy against the people of Palestine culminated in the adoption in 1947, under the pressure of world Zionism and imperialist Powers, of the partition plan that dismembered Arab Palestine into an Arab State, a Jewish State and the internationalized City of Jerusalem. Of course, the Zionists accepted the plan right away. Why should they reject half, or more than half, of a territory which had never really belonged to them? As for the Arabs, was it at all surprising that they should reject the dismemberment of their country? What nation would agree to part with even the slightest part of its homeland?

25. In partitioning Palestine, the United Nations violated the principle of self-determination enshrined in its Charter, even before the ink had dried on the San Francisco document. Among the 33 countries who voted for the partition plan, there were only one Asian State and two African countries, one of which

was the racist régime of South Africa. This is how the fate of the Palestinian people was decided—in its absence and against its will and aspirations.

26. Yet, Israel was not satisfied with the 56 per cent offered to it by the partition plan. Through a continuation of aggression, expansion, usurpation and annexation, the Zionist entity kept expanding year after year, waging in between three successive wars of aggression in 1948, 1956 and 1967 until it managed to occupy the whole Palestinian territory as well as large portions of Syrian and Egyptian territory.

27. More than nine years have elapsed now and the Zionist aggressors continue to occupy Arab land and to violate the rights of the Palestinian people which they expelled from its homeland more than 28 years ago. Nearly 200 resolutions have been adopted during these years by the General Assembly and the Security Council alone on the Palestinian question and the Middle East conflict, most of which remain a dead letter, especially those containing any elements of human or political rights for the Palestinian people.

28. How much longer does the people of Palestine have to wait in order to have its rights restored? Probably, the newly born Palestinian child of the late 1940s, who at the time of the first Palestinian exodus in 1948 might have been carried to the relative safety of the refugee camps in the arms of his terror stricken mother, is now a 20-year-old youth—most likely a Palestinian freedom fighter—counting his days and the hours until he can return to his liberated land. But how much longer has he to wait? How much more death, destruction, misery and agony has the region to go through before Israel realizes that the Arab people will never surrender an inch of their territory to the aggressor or accept the usurpation of the simplest right of the Palestinian people?

29. The Arab people does not have any illusions about the real intentions of Israel. No people can permit itself the luxury of false hopes when faced as we are every day with further proofs of Zionist expansion and aggressive designs. How many more settlements does Israel have to establish in our occupied territories for the world to realize at last that Israel does not really intend to withdraw from the territories it has occupied by force and aggression, that every word the Zionists utter about negotiations and peaceful settlement is merely a calculated manoeuvre in order to gain time to perpetuate the occupation of Arab territories and to face the Arab people and the world with a *fait accompli*?

30. I say this because of the concern repeatedly expressed from undoubtedly well-meaning quarters about the possible negative effect of any text or measure which seeks the mere implementation of United Nations resolutions on the so-called established forum for negotiations—meaning, of course, the Geneva Conference.

31. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) are quoted also on every occasion by those well-meaning representatives as the two resolutions which marked the beginning, as well as the end, of history. Nothing ever existed before them and nothing else will ever exist now that these two sacred instruments of marvellous wisdom and striking clarity have been adopted. To see the aura of holiness and sanctity with which certain countries—and even Israel—surround these two resolutions, one is tempted to think that the faithful advocates of these two super-resolutions have long ago implemented, them, or secured their implementation by others, and that what they are at present concerned about is only to avoid any disruption or hindrance of the smooth functioning of their vital provisions. Nothing is farther from reality. Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), in spite of their many shortcomings, have never been implemented by Israel and Israel has never been pressured by its supporters to implement them.

32. In spite of the fact that the mandate of the Committee was confined, under paragraph 4 of resolution 3376 (XXX), to the elaboration of a programme of implementation designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise the rights recognized and enumerated in resolution 3236 (XXIX), the Committee nevertheless took into account in formulating its recommendations all relevant resolutions, including, among others, General Assembly resolutions 181 (II), 194 (III), 273 (III), 3236 (XXIX), 3375 (XXX) and 3376 (XXX), as well as Security Council resolutions 237 (1967), 298 (1971) and 381 (1975). The two pet resolutions—242 (1967) and 338 (1973)—were not ignored either. Their call for negotiations and for secure and recognized boundaries for all States in the region is clearly envisaged in paragraph 34 of the Committee's report. Subparagraph (c) of paragraph 52 also speaks of "Appropriate arrangements... to guarantee... the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all the States in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries", as one of the fundamental principles for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Lastly, in paragraph 72 (g), the United Nations, in co-operation with the States directly involved, including the Palestinian entity, is requested to make further arrangements for, among other things, "the resolution of outstanding problems and the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region, in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions". It is obvious that the term "all relevant United Nations resolutions" covers not only resolutions such as General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX) or 3375 (XXX) or 3376 (XXX), but also all Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973)—or perhaps those who claim the contrary do not regard the two latter resolutions as relevant.

33. Of course, we do not accept an interpretation of resolution 242 (1967) or 338 (1973) that is contrary to the principles of the Charter or the principles on

which those very two resolutions were based. For example, the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war does not, in our view, allow for any ambiguity, intentional or not, about Israel's absolute obligation to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories, whether one refers to them as "territories", "the territories" or "all the territories". If the acquisition of territory by war is inadmissible, then each and every inch of territory thus occupied has been illegally acquired and must be returned. If a thief robs you of a million dollars, you do not say to him: "Dollars stolen during the recent robbery must be returned". In any case, however you put it, you want to recover all the money that has been stolen from you; you do not want to leave any tip for the thief as a reward for his act of aggression.

34. As for the concept of secure and recognized boundaries, I should like to quote from my statement before the Council on 26 January, at the conclusion of the important debate on the Middle East problem including the Palestinian question. I said:

"The concept of security cannot be related to any element of geographical or strategic position or situation, because the term 'secure boundaries' would then be nothing more than a veiled invitation to expansion and annexation. ... Boundaries can be secure only if they are recognized. They can be recognized only if they are legal and not imposed by the force of aggression." [1879th meeting, para. 183.]

35. The Committee's recommendations, based as they are on numerous United Nations resolutions—as is stated in paragraph 65 of the report—cannot be validly objected to by any party, if that party is really sincere about its proclaimed search for a just and lasting solution of the Middle East conflict. For enabling the people of Palestine to enjoy its national inalienable rights is, as affirmed by the Committee as well as by the overwhelming majority of countries, a condition *sine qua non* for the establishment of a lasting and just peace in the region.

36. It is most significant that Israel, which always claims that it seeks discussions and negotiations with the Arabs for a peaceful settlement, chooses to boycott meetings of the Council every time a substantive and meaningful discussion is undertaken by the organ with the primary responsibility for international peace and security. It did that during the important debate last January on the Middle East problem including the Palestinian question. It is doing so now while the Council is engaged in a serious consideration of how to ensure the Palestinian rights as a prerequisite to a just and peaceful settlement.

37. In spite of certain reservations, which relate to emphasis or procedure rather than to substance, my delegation finds the Committee's recommendations, coming as they do from a body established by the

General Assembly, most fair and reasonable. The Palestinian people is entitled, exactly like any other people, to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. The Palestinians are entitled also to return to their homes and property, whether they were dispersed in 1948 or in 1967. The Palestinian people's right to self-determination cannot be implemented unless Israel, first, withdraws from the Palestinian territory it has occupied by force, contrary to the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations and, secondly, permits the refugees and the displaced Palestinians who were uprooted or expelled or fled during and after the hostilities of 1948 and 1967 to return to their homes and property.

38. The Palestinian people was deprived of its right to national independence and sovereignty in its homeland, Palestine. To enable the people of Palestine to regain its national independence and sovereignty, it is indispensable to liberate its territory from alien occupation and to end the exodus of the Palestinian refugees. It is up to the people of Palestine, in the exercise of its right to self-determination, to decide when and how its national independence should be expressed within an independent entity of its own and in its territory, Palestine. No other party has the right to dictate to the Palestinian people the form, status or system of its entity; nor can such a third party claim the authority to permit or to prevent the establishment of the Palestinian independent entity in accordance with the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations.

39. Another element of the principle of equal sovereignty of the Palestinian people is its absolute right to choose its own representatives and authority. The Palestine Liberation Organization has been recognized by the Palestinian people, the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity and the overwhelming majority of all nations as the legitimate representative of the people of Palestine. That fact has been fully taken into account in the Committee's recommendations.

40. Among those recommendations, in the opinion of my delegation, that in paragraph 72 (a), which refers to the necessity of securing the evacuation of the Arab territories according to a specific time-table is the most important. The deadline for that evacuation was to be 1 June 1977. That date would mark the accomplishment of 10 years of Israeli occupation of Arab territories. Unless the international community would like on that date next year to celebrate the first decade of Israeli occupation of Arab territories, the Council should act quickly in order to endorse and guarantee the implementation of the Committee's recommendations.

41. The situation in Palestine and the Middle East has never been so dangerous or so inflammable. It is about time the Security Council, and in particular its permanent members, undertook some action to end

the nightmare with which the region has been living for three decades. The Council must endorse and guarantee the implementation of the proposed programme, possibly through action in accordance with the relevant chapters of the Charter. If any obstruction should be raised by the Council itself owing to the abuse of the right of veto by one or more of its permanent members, then the Committee should recommend in its subsequent report that the General Assembly itself should carry out its responsibilities in accordance with the Charter and existing precedents.

42. The Syrian Arab Republic is committed to a just settlement which takes into consideration, first and above all, the attainment of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and the total liberation of the occupied Arab territories. Only then would it be possible to establish a just and lasting peace, that much awaited and desired just and lasting peace, in the region where all countries and peoples should live together in security, development and prosperity.

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

44. Mr. ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen): Mr. President, it is highly symbolic that the question of Palestine, in its entirety, is now being discussed under your wise and energetic leadership. Guyana is today struggling to consolidate its independence and to fight against the manifestations of neo-colonialism. Palestine has merely changed hands under colonialism and a whole people is now living under Zionist bondage. Your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, as well as that of Ambassador Jackson, is not only a tribute to your country but is also a source of inspiration for the Palestinian and African peoples to continue their determined struggle against colonialism, Zionism and *apartheid*.

45. It has been said that, in its protracted struggle against the Zionist colonization of Palestine, the Palestinian people has many targets but one aim. That aim is the establishment of an independent and secular Palestinian State in Palestine—a State in which every Palestinian will enjoy political, cultural and social rights, without regard to religion, race or ethnic or social origin. That is the only viable proposition that can finally bring peace and prosperity to the Middle East.

46. The targets are many and they include international recognition of and support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty in Palestine; international recognition of and support for the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole representative and vanguard of the entire Palestinian people; the consolidation of the independent policy and political and military integrity of the Palestine Liberation

Organization and of its resistance to any kind of tutelage or trusteeship, whether regional or international; the struggle against all sorts of political propositions, especially the imperialist-oriented propositions, or solutions which may in any way prejudice, deter or distract the Palestinian people from the attainment of its final aim; and the diligent military vigilance of the Palestine Liberation Organization to engage in a protracted popular military and political resistance in order to achieve the right to self-determination and sovereignty in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

47. In this multifaceted struggle the Palestine Liberation Organization has registered a number of victories, thanks to the perseverance and courage of the Palestinian people, the continued support of the Arab masses, the progressive Powers and the socialist countries, and the entire anti-colonial world public opinion. For too long, the Palestinian people waited and longed for freedom and independence, but the world community, and notably the Security Council, treated its case with indifference and apathy. The United Nations, which initially baptized the partition of Palestine, managed only to establish a relief agency to deal with the consequences of the forcible displacement of the Palestinian people. In its resolution 242 (1967), the Council relegated the whole question of Palestine to the status of a refugee problem, albeit without that name. The Zionists all but denied the very existence of a Palestinian people.

48. Today, hardly anyone can be ignorant of the fact that the Palestine question is at the root of the evolving conflicts in the Middle East. Even the Zionists' patrons and arms suppliers now recognize that the Palestine question is not a refugee problem, much less a humanitarian one. No one can deny that it is a political issue that continually endangers international peace and security as long as it is left without a just solution. That is why the Security Council is called upon to deal with the Palestine question as a whole. It is a rare occasion when this Council debates not the consequences and manifestations of the Zionist occupation of Palestine, or the problems of human rights in the occupied territories, but rather the self-determination of the Palestinian people. It is also a rare occasion for this Council today to be seized of the whole question of Palestine, not in the wake of a major war, or under the imminent shadow of another major war. The Council is therefore called upon to pronounce itself on the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people—a report which reflects the unanimous opinion of the Committee.

49. In the course of this debate, it was said that the Committee's report was biased and that resolution 242 (1967) remained the only framework within which a solution for the Palestine question could be found. Let us now question the first of these contentions.

General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX), which defined the mandate of the Committee, was adopted by a substantial majority. The right of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and property, and their right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty have been reaffirmed by the General Assembly over and over again. Can we then say that the overwhelming majority of the General Assembly is biased? If so, then the majority of Member States are biased in favour of the principles of self-determination and justice—principles which are upheld by the Charter and resolution 1514 (XV). As to the second contention, those who invoke resolution 242 (1967) as a total political prescription for all aspects of the conflict in the Middle East are well aware that that resolution does not even refer to the Palestinian people as such. It merely reflects the balance of power in the Middle East at that given time, after the 1967 war. The fact that even the authors of that resolution now talk about the need to incorporate the Palestinian issue in resolution 242 (1967) indicates how biased it is against the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to national independence. It also indicates that resolution 242 (1967) cannot be a basis for the settlement of the conflict in the Middle East.

50. The Security Council is entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. That mandate cannot be fulfilled by adopting resolutions that do not take into account the principles and purposes of the Charter or the resolutions of the General Assembly and its organs. Furthermore, in carrying out its duties the Council acts on behalf of the Member States. It therefore has the duty to reflect the unanimous opinion of the General Assembly. The report of the Committee, whose Chairman I should like to congratulate warmly, contains useful ideas which should be seriously considered by the Council.

51. The cessation of armed conflict in the Middle East does not constitute peace. The danger of war, which may have serious international repercussions, is still looming. A durable peace can only be based on justice. The Palestinian people has been the victim of a grave injustice for a long time. Peace in the Middle East will remain elusive as long as the national rights of the Palestinian people are ignored. It is both a challenge and an opportunity for the Council to deal with the problem at the core of the conflict in the Middle East. The Committee's report provides a reasonable basis for the achievement of a just and durable peace in our area, in so far as the national rights of the Palestinian people are concerned.

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

53. Mr. HUSSEN (Somalia): Mr. President, allow me to begin my statement by telling you how pleased we are by your presence among us here today as you

direct the deliberations of this Council. It is indeed an honour for me to participate on behalf of my delegation in a Security Council debate over which the Foreign Minister of Guyana is presiding. Your country has always been known for its strict non-alignment and for its staunch support for, and identification with, the struggles of all oppressed peoples and for their inalienable right to regain their self-determination, independence and human dignity. I am confident that, with your exceptional qualities of leadership and your dedication to the cause of justice and humanity, you will successfully lead the Council to the formulation of a positive and constructive course of action. On behalf of my delegation, I wish you good luck in your formidable task. For our part, my delegation wishes you to rest assured of our unqualified support and co-operation. Allow me also to thank you and the members of the Council for having given my delegation the opportunity to address the Council on the item before it today.

54. But before I turn to the question at hand, let me also extend, on behalf of my delegation, our deep and profound condolences to the United States delegation on the tragic deaths of Mr. Meloy, the American Ambassador, his Economic Counsellor and their driver in Beirut on 16 June.

55. My delegation requested to be allowed to participate in this debate because we believe that in the interest of a stable and secure world there must be, *inter alia*, a just and lasting peace in the Middle East; that in order to establish justice, peace and stability in that region, a just solution must be found for the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, independence and nationhood; and that such a solution cannot possibly be found so long as Israel, in its well-known arrogant defiance of the will of the international community, and in contravention of the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, continues to occupy Arab territories and persists in its refusal to allow the Palestinian people to return to their ancestral homeland.

56. Since 1947, the Palestinian question has been with us in one form or another and the United Nations has been seized of it, directly or indirectly. But it was only in 1974 that the General Assembly, in its resolution 3236 (XXIX), adopted its strongest and most unequivocal reaffirmation of the Palestinian people's rights. In that resolution, the Assembly strongly reaffirmed and recognized the following inalienable rights of the Palestinian people: the right to self-determination without external interference; the right to national independence and sovereignty—and most important of all—the right to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted.

57. This was the first time that the United Nations addressed itself in a substantive manner to one of the questions that are the real core of the problem in the

Middle East. Nevertheless, it would have been a futile effort, like so many others before it, had the General Assembly not adopted its historic resolution 3376 (XXX). It was in this resolution that the Assembly decided to establish the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. In paragraph 4 of that resolution, the Committee is requested to conduct a comprehensive study of the question with a view to recommending "a programme of implementation" that would enable the Palestinian people to exercise those rights which have been recognized and reaffirmed in paragraphs 1 and 2 of resolution 3236 (XXIX). That requested programme of implementation has already been submitted to the Secretary-General and is now before the Council as Part Two of the Committee's report.

58. As we have mentioned earlier, this report constitutes, in our opinion, the first substantive study of the question to be conducted by an organ of the United Nations. As such, it is a highly commendable work and a viable first step in the right direction, for which the Committee merits our express appreciation. Although it did not, unfortunately, meet with the total satisfaction of some of the most concerned delegations, it undoubtedly contains a good number of basic points as a programme that can pave the way for a final and just settlement of the question of the Palestinian people and, ultimately, of the problem of the Middle East.

59. We agree with the Committee on the strong emphasis it placed on certain indisputable basic elements that are, in our view, crucial. In explanation of these basic elements, since I cannot state them more clearly than the Committee itself, allow me to quote from the report. In paragraph 18 the Committee states:

"It was emphasized that the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination could be exercised only in Palestine. Consequently, the exercise of the individual right of the Palestinian to return to his homeland was a *conditio sine qua non* for the exercise by this people of its rights to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty."

60. It is obvious, of course, that the right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty cannot possibly be exercised if Palestine continues to remain under the illegal Israeli occupation. The importance of understanding and appreciating this basic factor is further elucidated in paragraphs 33, 34 and 35.

61. My delegation has no desire to enter into a detailed analysis of the report at this stage. Rather, ours is an attempt aimed at demonstrating the Committee's firm grasp of the basic elements that are crucial to the implementation of any programme which is designed to enable the people of Palestine to exercise their inalienable rights. We wish, therefore, to

express our gratitude and commendation to the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Fall, and to all its other members for their objectivity, impartiality and diligence.

62. It should be further noted that for the first time we have been offered a concrete proposal in our quest for a just solution of the major problem involved in the Middle East situation. We are, today, in a position to test the action or inaction of the Council in this vital and urgent matter.

63. My delegation urges the Council to rise to the occasion and to follow in the footsteps of the General Assembly by reaffirming the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to national independence and the right to return to their homes and property from which they were forcibly uprooted and displaced.

64. It is a fact of human nature that whenever a group of people is denied its basic right to determine its own future for itself, when a group of people is deprived of all human dignity, circumstances inevitably lead to confrontation and violence. The situation in South Africa, where, as a result of the constant frustration of the natural aspirations of human beings, pent-up emotions continually erupt in violence and war, is a perfect example of this fact.

65. It is the duty of the United Nations—and, above all, of the Security Council as its highest executive organ—to avoid the repetition of such a drama. The Arab people in the Middle East, and the Palestinians in particular, have suffered immeasurable injustice throughout the years. So far, the Council has not taken adequate measures to alleviate their plight.

66. As has been very aptly said before during the earlier part of this debate, Israel, like the Pretoria régime, has no right to keep the entire world on the brink of war for ever. It is, therefore, incumbent on the Council in the interests of peace, humanity and justice not to postpone the solution of this problem any longer. It is high time that the injustices done the Palestinian people were redressed.

67. There is very little chance for a lasting peace or for security in that area so long as the Palestinian question remains unresolved and the Arab territories remain under foreign occupation. My delegation is hopeful, therefore, that the Council will act in the discharge of its responsibility and make serious efforts to take concrete measures to restore to the Palestinian people their inalienable right to self-determination and national independence and their right to return to their homeland.

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

69. Mr. AL-SHAIKHLY (Iraq): Mr. President, permit me first to thank you and the members of the Council for allowing my delegation to participate in this highly important debate. It is a source of great satisfaction for us that this debate should be held under the wise and enlightened guidance of yourself and your distinguished colleague Ambassador Jackson. Guyana is an outstanding representative of the progressive and liberal forces of the great Latin American continent and an admirable defender of the principles of the non-aligned movement. We look forward with great pleasure and expectation to your forthcoming visit to our country. It will be an honour and a privilege for us to welcome you in Baghdad, and we are sure that your visit will greatly contribute to the consolidation of the friendly ties that already exist between our two countries.

70. I should like to pay a tribute to the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Ambassador Fall of Senegal, for the lucid and brilliant manner in which he presented the report of the Committee to the Council [1924th meeting]. I should also like to express our appreciation to the Rapporteur and to all the members of the Committee for the genuine concern they have demonstrated for the fate and future of the Palestinian people.

71. The members of the Council are aware of the historical development of the events that led to the expulsion of the indigenous people of Palestine and the emergence of the Palestine question. Today we note with satisfaction the equitable steps adopted during the last few years to recognize the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. The resolutions adopted on this subject by the United Nations and by other international bodies indicate that the world at large has begun to reassess its position with regard to the great agony and ordeal of the Palestinian people. In this connexion I should like to recall General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX), and 3376 (XXX) by which the Committee was established.

72. Naturally, the Committee's report, which is the subject of the present debate, does not represent the views of the Arab Governments concerning the rights of the Palestinian people. It does, however, provide for a minimum that the United Nations should undertake in order to rectify the incomparable and great injustice which the United Nations has itself inflicted upon the innocent people of Palestine. The recommendations of the Committee could constitute a preliminary step towards the implementation of the resolutions concerning the rights of the Palestinian people, which would in turn enable them eventually to exercise their rights in full measure.

73. The Committee's report nevertheless puts the Security Council to the test; it must show whether it is in fact able and willing to implement the decisions

of the United Nations. It has already been pointed out that this is the first time that the Council has dealt with the rights of the Palestinian people. This debate and the development of the question of Palestine within and outside the United Nations confirm the position my delegation has always maintained regarding resolution 242 (1967). One of the drawbacks of that resolution—indeed the great injustice of it—was the fact that it totally ignored the existence of the Palestinians as a people, dismissing them merely as nameless refugees. This debate confirms the fact that the rights of the Palestinian people are the focus and the main cause of the whole situation in the Middle East. The debate also provides the Council with an opportunity to approach the problem on a more just, realistic and balanced basis than the one upon which resolution 242 (1967) was founded.

74. There appears to be almost unanimous acceptance of the fact that there will be no peace in the region unless there is total and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied territories, unconditional return of the refugees, and, finally, exercise by the people of Palestine of their right to self-determination in their homeland. There is also unanimous agreement on the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force. It is very strange and disturbing that constant reference is being made to the armistice lines of 1967 as the basis for a peaceful solution in the Middle East. Those who advocate return to the 1967 lines should be reminded that those lines too were imposed by force and with a view to the acquisition of more territory than was allocated to the Zionists by the resolution recommending the partition of Palestine. Where are the boundaries of the Zionist entity? To this day, its leaders refuse to draw the map of their expansionist dreams. They proclaim, on the other hand, that the boundaries should be established wherever the Zionists choose to settle. The speakers who constantly refer to the right of all States in the area to live within secure and recognized boundaries should by now be fully aware that, in the view of the Zionist entity, such boundaries mean expanded boundaries drawn by force and coercion. It is the duty of the States which emphasize the necessity of establishing secure and recognized boundaries to leave no doubt in the mind of the expansionist aggressor that the international community will not countenance policies dictating expanded boundaries at the expense of neighbouring States.

75. Those who call for the resumption of negotiations as a framework for the over-all settlement of the problems in the Middle East should also be reminded that they can and should first impress upon the Zionist entity that there can be no negotiations while its forces continue not only to occupy Arab territories but also to establish Zionist settlements in those territories. There can be no hope for peace in the area while the Zionists continue to deny even the principle of the right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. As has been pointed out, the Council itself

indeed cannot carry on the negotiations, but it certainly can adopt resolutions which would impress upon the intransigent party the futility of its aggressive and unjust policies. Silence and the inactivity of the Council can only encourage the aggressor to further acts of aggression and intransigence. Furthermore, the right of return is a basic human right which cannot and should not be tied to political or other considerations.

76. In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm here once more my country's total commitment to the cause of the Palestinian people and to their struggle to survive and assert their nationhood. Bitter experience with the ruthless Zionist adversary has taught us that it will never accept justice for the Palestinians and it will never willingly surrender the territories it has occupied. What has been taken by force can therefore only be regained by force. We shall continue the struggle together with our brothers, the Palestinian people, and their sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, as long as the injustice continues and as long as the Security Council is prevented by the power of the veto from even acknowledging the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

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

78. Mr. ŠMÍD (Czechoslovakia): Mr. President, I should like to thank you and the members of the Council for the opportunity afforded me to state my Government's position on the question under consideration. It is a particular honour and pleasure for me to be addressing the Council under your presidency. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Republic of Guyana enjoy friendly relations, and last month I had the honour to sign together with Ambassador Jackson documents on the establishment of official diplomatic relations between our two countries. May I wish you all success in the fulfilment of your responsible task as President of the Council.

79. We join others in expressing sincere condolences to the United States delegation on the tragic death of Ambassador Meloy and two members of his staff in Lebanon, and we deplore that senseless act of violence.

80. Over and over again old and new tensions in the Middle East remind us of the fact that this region remains a dangerous hotbed of war. The absence of a solution of the unsatisfactory situation in the Middle East represents a great danger for world peace and international security. The reason for this is that Israel, enjoying the support of certain imperialist circles, stubbornly refuses to withdraw from the Arab territories it seized in 1967 or to recognize the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine. Today it has become even more evident that the so-

called step-by-step measures, far from being able to become a part of the comprehensive solution to be reached in the Middle East, actually can play into the hands of those who attempt the postponement of the basic solution. Bypassing the international machinery of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, such partial steps only further the fulfilment of desires to freeze the existing situation and sanction the continued occupation by Israel of Arab lands.

81. Czechoslovakia, as a member of the socialist community, has always supported the just struggle of the Arab people against Israeli aggression, being aware that the Arab national liberation movement is encountering there one of the rapacious ramifications of world imperialism. My country considers itself to be an integral part of those forces which are seeking a political solution by peaceful means for the entire complex situation in the Middle East. It is so because of our foreign policy, which is governed by a desire for peace, international security and progress, and also because of our traditional friendship with the Arab States and peoples. We honour this friendship and, in so far as we are able, we assist the Arab peoples in their just cause.

82. Recently the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic has several times expressed in the United Nations and elsewhere its opinion concerning the solution of the Middle East conflict. It also has stressed the fact that the settlement of the Palestinian question represents an inseparable part of a just peaceful solution of the Middle East conflict. The Palestinian question is the question of the implementation of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to sovereign national existence, to a homeland and to return. We have always maintained that a permanent solution of the conflict is not possible without securing these national rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

83. By its resolution 3376 (XXX), which was co-sponsored by Czechoslovakia, the General Assembly at established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The report submitted by the Committee emphasizes the importance of implementing the rights of the Palestinian people as the corner stone and the key to a fundamental political settlement of the Middle East problem. The Committee's report also reiterates the fact that the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine has been and remains the Palestine Liberation Organization, whose participation on an equal footing is indispensable in all efforts, talks and conferences on the Middle East held under the auspices of the United Nations.

84. We welcome the conclusions of the Committee. They confirm our conviction that, without the implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, it will be impossible to guarantee a lasting peace for all States and peoples in the Middle East. They confirm our conviction that it would not be

possible to seek any path towards the solution of the conflict without the participation of the political representatives of the Palestinian people—the Palestine Liberation Organization—from the very beginning and on an equal footing. We consider the results of the Committee's work to be an important contribution to the efforts for the attainment of a peaceful and lasting settlement in the Middle East. We should like to express our hope that the Council will endorse all the recommendations in the report.

85. We continue to hold the opinion that the Geneva Conference represents a suitable international machinery for negotiations aimed at the solution of the problem. It is also our opinion that the proposal to hold the Conference in two stages—the first organizational and the second aimed at finding a solution to the essential problems of a settlement—corresponds with the needs for the solution of the problem. All interested parties should participate on an equal basis in the work of the Conference, including the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

86. The attainment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East has to be the common aim of all peace-loving countries and of the United Nations. The continuing and concentrated efforts of all who are interested in a peaceful and lasting settlement are needed for the implementation of the well-known decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council which contain the basic elements for a political settlement of the Middle East conflict. Present developments call for all those who are striving for a just solution in the Middle East to assist in furthering the unity of the Arab States and nation on an anti-imperialist basis. The implementation of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people would serve the interests both of the Arab people of Palestine and of all peoples in the Middle East and in the entire world.

87. In connexion with the anti-Soviet statement of one of the speakers at yesterday's meeting, the delegation of Czechoslovakia cannot but note that such distortions of the real situation in the Middle East divert attention from the substance of the problem under discussion and benefit only the Israeli aggressors and their protectors. This is evident to everyone.

88. Mr. REIS (United States of America): I should like, on behalf of the United States delegation, to express our appreciation to the representatives who have spoken this morning, and in particular those of Romania, the Syrian Arab Republic, Somalia and Czechoslovakia, for their expressions of regret at the death of the United States Ambassador in Beirut and his two colleagues. We appreciate this very much and we shall note it in an appropriate way.

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 A/AC.183/L.8, pp. 7 and 8.