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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
EIGHT HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 7 June 1989, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. PICKERING

(United States of America)

Members: Algeria
Brazil
Canada
China
Colombia
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Malaysia
Nepal
Senegal
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland
Yugoslavia

Mr. DJOUDI
Mr. ALENCAR
Mr. FORTIER
Mr. YU Mengjia
Mr. PEÑALOSA
Mr. HAGOSS
Mr. TORNUDD
Mr. BLANC
Mr. HASMY
Mr. RANA
Mr. BA
Mr. BELONOGOV

Mr. BIRCH
Mr. PEJIC

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The meeting was called to order at 3.55 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

LETTER DATED 31 MAY 1989 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/20662)

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken at the 2963rd meeting, I invite the representatives of Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber; I invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to take a place at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Shakar (Bahrain), Mr. Badawi (Egypt), Mr. Salah (Jordan), Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Al-Masri (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Ghezal (Tunisia) and Mr. Sallam (Yemen) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber; Mr. Terzi (Palestine) took a place at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Democratic Yemen, Israel, Kuwait, Pakistan and Qatar in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Alfi (Democratic Yemen), Mr. Bein (Israel), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Shah Nawaz (Pakistan) and Mr. Al-Kawari (Qatar) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/20677, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Algeria, Colombia, Ethiopia, Malaysia, Nepal, Senegal and Yugoslavia.

The first speaker is the representative of Saudi Arabia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me pleasure, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. Since you are assuming it for the first time, I wish to express my sincere hope that your tenure will provide great support to the Council in the completion of its work, for you are well known for your depth of understanding, your ability and your straightforward character.

I join previous speakers in expressing thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, Sir Crispin Tickell, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, for the ability and wisdom with which he conducted the affairs of the Council last month.

As I address the Council on behalf of my country and on behalf of the Islamic Group in the United Nations, which I have the honour to chair, I wish to ask a question: Since the Security Council has the authority to adopt binding resolutions, has the time not come for Israel to commit itself to the Council's resolutions? Has the time not come for the Security Council to take the necessary measures against Israel now that all other measures have failed?

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

Let me put on record a prediction about how history will write about this period. Providing the Zionist authorities with immunity against measures adopted by the Security Council, the General Assembly or other United Nations organs - either by voting with them or by abstaining as they commit the ugliest of crimes against the human race and the worst of violations against moral values and human standards - only does the Israeli authorities a disservice. It encourages them to persevere in their behaviour. If matters continue as they are, Israel's friends will have led Israel into a situation in which they will be unable to help it.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

We have been shocked by news that Israeli soldiers have desecrated copies of the Holy Koran. I would draw the Council's attention to that very serious crime, with its consequent dangerous reactions in the Islamic world.

If the vast majority of international public opinion, which condemns Israel and rejects its pretences, is at fault, and a small minority at the United Nations which sees matters differently is right, there is something wrong in the nature of international and human relations. That wrong should be looked into, and the stand taken by the few should be corrected.

The Zionist authorities are occupying the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan and southern Lebanon. Everybody agrees that that is the reality. The occupation has been declared illegitimate by the Council. If an illegitimate occupation has any known laws, those laws of occupation are defined by international commitments. The Zionists have violated those laws brutally since the start of the occupation and the atrocity of that violation has become unbearable since the beginning of the intifadah of the Palestinian people against the occupation. The intifadah is the legitimate right of the Palestinian people in facing an occupation which will not end voluntarily.

We meet today to look into the acceleration of Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people and to give expression to international public opinion concerning what the Israeli gangs are doing now, at this hour, to a people on its own land resisting with the simplest means of resistance, the people against which the ugliest crimes of genocide are being committed. Shall we again be incapable of taking a stand against it in the Council?

Mr. Shamir, the Israeli Prime Minister, has said that he will crush the Palestinian resistance just as he can crush insects. Such talk is unacceptable, but it reflects the mentality of the rule and the rulers. Since then Mr. Shamir

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

has called upon the Zionist settlers whom the Israelis transported to the territories of the West Bank and Gaza to avenge themselves. That is a clear call for aggression against the Arabs, in addition to the aggression carried out by the Israeli military and police authorities themselves.

The Israeli army authorities have now committed against the Arab population all the crimes in the book. They have buried people alive; broken the bones of children and adults; attacked women and the elderly; filled the concentration camps with thousands of detainees; closed the schools and universities and prohibited teaching in homes; stopped the wheels of trade and economic life; cut off the means of livelihood; exposed people to hunger and deprivation; imposed curfews and military blockades in various areas; killed people with the use of tear gas, firearms and lethal rubber bullets stuffed with steel; blown up houses; destroyed farms and crops; and cut off electricity and water. The procession of martyrs still grows longer day by day. Those are just some of the acts that the occupying army has committed against a people on its own land, with its own heritage.

But that has not been enough for the Zionist leaders. They have let loose the brutality of the settlers on the Arab land, to commit a list of crimes and racist acts against the Arabs. They call upon the settlers to take vengeance, then pretend after each crime that they are not under their control. It is a cheap farce, clear to all. The Zionists are today surpassing South Africa in racial discrimination, by decreeing that white badges be worn by Arab labourers. Arabs, in their own country, are today being forced by the Zionist to wear badges - white, not yellow. The rest of the story is only too well known to the Council. Whether or not this cheap exercise has been stopped since it was made public, it certainly reflects a defective, racist mentality, which rules the Zionist psyche in principle. Those who refuse to equate zionism with racism might learn something from this exercise and discover what they are ignorant of.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

A recent catastrophe - it will definitely not be the last - was reported on the media a few days ago, when The New York Times on Saturday, 3 June, referring to a raid by a group of 30 Zionist settlers on the village of Kifl-Harith, in which they killed a girl and wounded several other people, burned houses and fired at residences, stated:

"In an unusual justification for the settlers' actions, Israel radio reported, a rabbi associated with the settlers, arrested after Monday's killing in Kifl-Harith, said that biblical prohibitions on the spilling of blood applied only to Jewish blood, not to that of non-Jews."

Has the Council heard anything more appalling? Is there any greater violation of religious values? The Zionists wanted in the past to transform the spiritual content of religious books into real estate documents in order to acquire Palestine, and now they are transforming it into a licence to commit the ugliest crimes, prohibited by all religions, including the Jewish faith.

It is ironic to say that the settlers are one thing and the Zionist authorities, which arm and direct them and incite them to use weapons, are something else. There is no distinction between them, even though the Israeli Army gives the appearance of curtailing some of their activities after they have committed their crimes.

Is it not our right to ask the Security Council - while the carnage is getting worse and while the Palestine Liberation Organization is trying to achieve peace, a move whose positive effect everyone recognizes - how we can stand by as spectators of what is taking place in the land of Palestine, and of what the occupying racist Zionist authorities are committing against the people, the owner of the country? I do not need to make it clear that the situation there is not one of reciprocal violence.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

This is a legitimate, unarmed Palestinian struggle, carried out with the simplest of means, against a disciplined occupying army and disciplined, heavily armed gangs, which commit all kinds of crimes against humanity - and we have already mentioned some of them. When such crimes are committed in other countries, protest marches take place in the streets. Are human rights universal or are they optional? Can we expect this time a more positive attitude by the Security Council?

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz, has declared its full support for the rightness of the Palestinian people's struggle, has condemned all these acts against humanity and has warned of the danger of aggression against the Holy Places in Jerusalem and in Palestine. At the last Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, held in Riyadh, it supported, along with the Islamic States, the Palestine Liberation Organization and commended the quest for peace based on right and justice. That position should receive a positive international response if we are to reach the shores of peace and security in the near future.

As for Palestine, the people of Palestine and the land of Palestine, the banner of righteousness shall always rise high, and, there, right shall revert to its owners. No matter how long it may take, the struggle which has been waged by the Palestinian people from the beginning and which the intifadah today crowns with glory and dignity, will attain its objective. The reign of injustice may last but a day; the reign of justice will last until doomsday. It would be better for the Zionists to read the writing on the wall before the train of events overtakes them; it would be better for them to seize a historic occasion to reach a settlement that would be acceptable to the Palestinian people on their land, the people who are the final arbiters in the fate of their cause.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

We again salute the Arab Palestinian people on their ancestral land and repeat our support for their legitimate intifadah against the forces of aggression, racism and tyranny. There can be no doubt that right will prevail.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Saudi Arabia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. DJOUDI (Algeria) (interpretation from French): The Algerian delegation is very pleased at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council during the month of June. You came here preceded by an enviable reputation as an experienced diplomat. You have already - and I wish to bear personal witness to this - won over your colleagues by your human and professional qualities. We are convinced that these qualities guarantee that our work will be led with the wise competence that is required.

I extend to Ambassador Crispin Tickell of the United Kingdom, who preceded you as President, my delegation's congratulations on the remarkable way in which he presided over the Council in May.

The Security Council once again has before it the continuing deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. During the year and a half of the intifadah by the Palestinian people, the repression by the occupier has become ever more brutal. The international community has been deeply moved at the excesses inflicted every day on Palestinian civilians, who have been wounded in their flesh, in their possessions, and even in their faith. This situation, which is of great concern in itself, shows alarming signs of deteriorating further because of a pitiless escalation. The occupier reaches new limits each day - limits which violate the most elementary rights of the physical integrity of the Palestinians, their precarious material goods and their most sacred spiritual values.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

It is as though, by the infernal logic of the repression they have unleashed, the occupation forces are seeking to test increasingly each day - over and above the Palestinians' capacity to resist, which has been shown to be immutable - the limits of what international opinion can become accustomed to. They know that international opinion is sometimes selective in showing its emotion, but more often is prevented from taking concerted action to prevent the misdeeds of the occupation forces.

It was not enough for the bullets of the oppressor to cut down adolescents, old people and infants. It was not enough to raze the wobbly houses, to uproot the national tree - the olive tree. It was not enough to inflict the supreme punishment in the eyes of a Palestinian: expulsion of those who proclaimed their attachment to the ancestral land. No, in its delirium of omnipotent brutality, the occupier has gone further: it has violated freedom of worship, places of prayer, and profaned the Holy Koran. And, what is more, settlers have intervened as willing assistants, machine-guns in hand, in the exercise of physical liquidation being conducted.

These crimes are an inevitable throwback to practices of painful memory to those who have experienced foreign domination and colonial occupation. They can end only with the end of occupation.

The accelerating course of events accelerating in the occupied Palestinian territories is a striking reminder of a colonial situation - a colonial situation characterized by a process of liberation that has reached maturity and, for that very reason, must confront the unleashing of frenzied repression designed to delay an outcome that is inevitable in the history of peoples: the sovereign and independent affirmation of their national destiny.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

What other explanation could there be for the fact that the intifadah, which the Israeli leaders are determined to stifle, is on the contrary given new force by the very repression designed to stifle it, thereby providing twofold proof of determination in the face of the duration of the struggle and determination in the face of repressive, unprecedented deployment. Is not this frenzy of repression, ineffective as it may be - and it is ineffective, despite its terrible ferocity - proof in itself of disarray in the face of this inevitable fact of unremittable independence?

Although the Palestinian people have history and right on their side, the international community, and the Security Council above all, must ensure that the inevitable outcome - the consecration of sovereignty established on their land - is not artificially delayed at the cost of prolonging their martyrdom.

An enormous responsibility is borne by those who, especially in the Council, have the power to influence the course of events in order to accelerate a negotiated political settlement to the Middle East conflict, including its key Palestinian element.

If one does not wish to lose sight of that objective, one cannot hold that justice is served merely by expressing regret that the repressive Israeli machinery - certainly one of the most frightening in existence - has not been able in 18 months to keep its violence at a level that would be tolerable for consciences that seek peace of mind. There is no such thing as "gentle" repression; when repression remains the expression of the denial of the fundamental national right of the Palestinian people. Nor can we expect that people to renounce a form of resistance which, although its message is tremendously effective, has very insignificant means.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

If despite daily tribulations the tendency is towards passivity, including that into which this organ has been constrained, who can guarantee to the Palestinian people that it will not be once again condemned to indifference regarding its fate if the intifadah abates? From that point of view, it is as unjust as it is mistaken to try to place on an equal footing the brutal, repressive and indiscriminate violence of the occupier and the defensive, liberating resistance of the oppressed. Nor is that the least of the intifadah's lessons that one must forcefully accept: by its nature and legitimate ambitions, the intifadah can only be extinguished when the national rights of the Palestinian people are realized.

I said earlier that the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories is reminiscent of the situation in a colony on the eve of sovereign emancipation. From that point of view, when one recalls the events that have occurred in various struggles for independence, one cannot help but compare the search by Israeli leaders for an illusory negotiating partner of their choosing to the hypothetical third power which other colonial régimes in other latitudes, reluctantly convinced of the necessity for change, have vainly attempted to substitute for an authentic expression of a people's sovereign will.

And yet, such a manoeuvre is significant in that it reveals the proximity of the inevitable moment when the sole authentic representative, the PLO in this case, asserts its exclusive representative nature in the very face of those who have hitherto striven to deny it all legitimacy. It is indeed an indisputable fact today that no fair and definitive solution to the Middle East conflict could be envisaged without the participation on an equal footing of the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Such a solution necessarily entails the achievement of its national rights, including its right to return and to establish its independent State.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

In that regard, the PLO, notably in the daring decisions made by the Palestine National Council in Algiers on 15 November 1988, indicated the large part it is ready to play in the formulation of a just and final settlement to the Middle East conflict within the framework of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations. That is the path that was recently upheld once again at the most recent Arab Summit. Earlier, the General Assembly itself had echoed that opinion in renewing its determination that such a conference be held.

It thus remains for the Council to make its decisive contribution towards the achievement of that goal.

Faced with the situation in the occupied territories, the responsibilities of the Security Council towards the Palestinian people are as clear as its duties regarding the restoration of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

As regards the Palestinian people, the Council's failure to act respecting the necessity to guarantee adequate international protection would be tantamount to what is commonly called today failure to assist a people in danger. Any measure must necessarily include the full implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and United Nations supervision. The Council must therefore focus its efforts on such measures, as well as those bearing on a global settlement.

To that end, a minimal draft resolution has been submitted to the members of the Council, indicating the measures that are indispensable to the protection of the Palestinians in the occupied territories. Being limited in scope, it should enjoy the Council's unanimous support. Failure to adopt it would certainly be seen as an encouragement to repression and a reward for the occupier's violence. We earnestly hope that the Council will overcome the immobilism to which it has been constrained and will discharge its responsibility in this situation.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Algeria for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is Mr. Engin Ansay, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, to whom the Council extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedures at the 2863rd meeting. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ANSAY: On behalf of the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and on my own behalf I should like to thank you, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to address the Council on an issue of such extreme importance to our organization.

I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the high office of President of the Security Council for the month of June. I am sure that your well-known diplomatic skills, vast experience and professional merits will enable you successfully to conduct this month's proceedings of the Council.

May I also pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, Sir Crispin Tickell, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for the skill and ability with which he conducted the arduous work of the Council during the past month.

The continued aggravation of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory has once again led to the convening of this body. In fact, in defiance of the will of the international community, the international instruments on human rights and the resolutions adopted by the United Nations, inhuman measures have been taken by the forces of the occupying Power in recent days, especially against the uprising of the valiant people of Palestine in the occupied Palestinian territory. The policy and practices of the iron fist have been intensified and

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have resulted in the death and injury of many more innocent civilians, including children and women. The imposition of curfew on the Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to prevent them from attending Friday prayers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque during Ramadan and afterwards was yet another example of the continuing Israeli repression and the denial of the basic rights of the Palestinian people.

After a lengthy debate a few weeks ago, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 43/233 by 129 votes in favour and 2 against, with one abstention. The adoption of that resolution and the debate in the General Assembly well expressed the preoccupation of the international community with Israeli policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian territory against the Palestinian people. It also highlighted the necessity for the scrupulous observance by Israel, the occupying Power, of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and it underscored the urgent need to achieve, under the auspices of the United Nations, a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict. Alas, despite the profound expression of concern by the international community, the heavy hand of terror has continued to ravage the land of Palestine and its bruised but brave people.

We now unfortunately find ourselves in a situation where not a day passes without appalling reports from the occupied Palestinian territory that Palestinians are being shot, beaten or tortured by Israeli troops. The relentless application of brute force since the beginning of the intifadah has claimed more than 500 lives. Every day now newspapers give accounts of such barbaric practices by the Israeli occupying forces against innocent Palestinian children, women and men.

(Mr. Ansay)

Long after the régime in South Africa abolished the so-called Pass Laws branding the non-whites with special ID cards in order for them to enter the white areas, Israel has now started to implement the same racist practice with the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip. No doubt they will apply it to the rest of the Palestinians very soon. In other words, as the Israeli daily Ha-aretz wrote the other day - and the following are its words - "The State of Israel is liable to find itself now on the road that South Africa abandoned".

The United Nations has an historic and particular special responsibility towards the people of Palestine. The eviction of the Palestinians from their homes and from their soil, their immense sufferings and travails, all those killings and this latest emergence of apartheid all started after a certain decision taken by the General Assembly some 40 years ago.

Yet for decades the international community ignored the national aspirations and identify of the Palestinian people, treating their tragedy as merely a question of refugees. Twenty-two years after the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a new generation of Palestinians, who had seen nothing but the overweening arrogance of Israeli occupying forces and colonial settlers, has come of age. No amount of terror and intimidation can suppress the flame of liberty and freedom for which their youthful spirits yearn. Thus on 8 December 1987, Palestinians threw the first stone against the armed might of the Israeli occupying forces. Thus the glorious intifadah had at least jolted the conscience of the international community.

The courageous Palestinian intifadah in the occupied Palestinian territory approaches its nineteenth month now. They have waged a heroic struggle against injustice, oppression and occupation in order to retain their inalienable right to self-determination, to return to their homeland and to establish an independent and

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sovereign State in Palestine with Al Quds-Al Sharif as its capital. The international community has not yet been able to redress, or even fully to realize, the injustices suffered by the Palestinian people. Therefore the Palestinian people, through the intifadah demonstrated once again their determination to resist Israel's brutal policies of oppression, occupation, deportation, Judaization of Palestine, desecration of the Holy Places of Muslims, establishment of illegal settlements and adoption of barbaric measures to silence the intifadah. The men, women and children of Palestine have demonstrated a legendary valour against Israeli occupying forces which have killed hundreds of Palestinians and injured thousands in their brutal but futile efforts to suppress the uprising. The brutality of the occupying forces has revolted the entire international community and brought home the need for an urgent settlement of the Palestinian issue.

The Declaration and resolutions adopted by the Palestine National Council on 15 November 1988 in Algiers which, inter alia, proclaimed the independence of a Palestine State, constitute a landmark in the search for a peaceful solution to the Middle East problem. The affirmation by the Palestine National Council of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, as well as its acceptance of all relevant United Nations resolutions on the question of Palestine, is a clear demonstration of the Palestinians' commitment to achieving a lasting and durable peace. Indeed, the historic decision taken at the Palestine National Council's meeting and the message of peace brought by Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, to the December meetings of the General Assembly in Geneva have elicited universal acclaim from the international community. Especially in light of Chairman Arafat's most recent clarifications, we in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) firmly believe that a very sound medium has been established for a real peace process to be negotiated and completed.

(Mr. Ansay)

Any further intransigence from either the Israeli Government or any of its protectors will only be conducive to spoiling any existing hopes for peace and negating all the sacrifices undertaken by the Palestine leadership.

As we all know, the Palestine question is at the core of the Middle East problem, and at the heart of the Palestine question lies the problem of Al Quds-Al Sharif. For the OIC this is the minimum common denominator for peace. The continuing aggression against Palestinians and against the Holy Places constitute a grave threat not only to the stability of the region but also to international peace and security.

The Eighteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from 13 to 16 March 1989, hailed with pride the Palestinian people for their heroic steadfastness and expressed its backing and total support for the blessed intifadah of the Palestinian people.

The Conference declared its recognition of the establishment of an independent Palestinian State and supported the Declaration of Independence and the political programme adopted by the Palestine National Council at its nineteenth extraordinary session. It reaffirmed that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and is alone entitled to represent them and participate on their behalf, independently and on an equal footing, in all conferences and activities dealing with the question of Palestine. It also insisted on placing the occupied Arab territories under the temporary aegis of the United Nations and requested international forces to ensure the protection of the Palestinian citizens and their property in Palestine and to supervise the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from these territories. The Conference stressed that the question of Palestine was at the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict and stressed the need for a speedy convening of the

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international conference for peace in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations.

The Eighteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers reaffirmed its commitment to the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and held the view that all settlements established - or to be established - by Israel in all the occupied territories, including the city of Al Quds-Al Sharif, are null and void as well as illegal. It requested the United States of America to develop and promote its dialogue with the PLO and adopt an impartial stand by recognizing the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people which could bring about a just and comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem.

The Conference expressed its total rejection of all measures taken by Israel to annex the Holy City and its proclamation as the eternal capital of the Zionist State and voiced its deep concern over the escalation by Israel of its criminal practices against the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque.

In this context I should like to touch on another relevant point: the elections. I regret to say that Israel's recent so-called election plan and initiative is a profound fallacy. It is an illusionist scheme aimed only at ending the intifadah and at legitimizing the occupation. As long as Israel's election proposals remain vague and separate from the final objective of the Palestinians to self-determination they will be nothing but a device for perpetuating the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Certainly we are all for the holding of elections in the West Bank and Gaza, but we - that is, the Palestinians and the entire membership of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the membership of the United Nations, with the sole exception of Israel - are in favour of a truly democratic choice.

The only genuine form of democracy is that practised freely without restrictions, threats or any form of intimidation. That is not possible today in

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the West Bank and Gaza, where any gathering, even of only five people, can be broken up with bullets. Nor is it possible at a time when Palestinians who try to practise their right to freedom of expression are liable to prosecution. Under the rules of occupation as enforced by the Israeli army, it is illegal for Palestinians to engage in political activity, to campaign or even to express their national feeling and beliefs.

Our worries are supported by the words of Yitzhak Shamir, Prime Minister of Israel, and Yitzhak Rabin, Defence Minister of Israel and Military Governor of the West Bank and Gaza. Mr. Rabin told the daily Ha'aretz last April:

"We will send to prison any elected Palestinian who declares loyalty to or affiliation with the PLO".

Mr. Shamir informed Yediot Aharonot:

"We do not need America's help to carry out the elections. We can control the whole process. We will not talk to the PLO. We have nothing to talk about with the PLO. And if the elected Palestinians will not abide by the rules of the game, we will cancel everything and return to the previous situation."

I ask here: Can we talk of elections under these circumstances?

If I may quote from a recent Washington Post article,

"The intifadah has shown that the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza are not 'pro-PLO' but are the PLO. This is why the PLO is not afraid of the results of free and democratic elections and it is why the Israelis are afraid of those same results."

(Mr. Ansary)

What Mr. Shamir is proposing clearly contradicts not only the principles of democracy and freedom upheld by the free world, but also the democratic principles of Israel itself. We do not believe that is what President Bush had in mind when he called for elections in the West Bank and Gaza.

We believe that a package deal in the Middle East is the only path to lasting peace in the region. The Palestinians seek a settlement that will put an end to bloodshed in the area. They seek a comprehensive peace, not a truce. They are seriously committed to this goal, while Mr. Shamir and his Government still cling to the same old expansionist dreams.

President Bush called for a mutually acceptable formula on the issue of elections. This is very important if we wish to keep the peace process moving in the Middle East. As President Bush also repeated and emphasized, the Israeli occupation of Gaza and the West Bank must come to an end, and as Secretary of State Baker stated, Israel should abandon all notions of "Greater Israel".

Let us ask ourselves here: What must this body do now? Despite the best efforts and the unswerving dedication of the Secretary-General, can the Council afford inertia any longer? Clearly, time is of the essence. Every day the tragedy continues to widen. Therefore, we must tackle the problem at its roots. The problem of Palestine is not intractable. The essential elements for a just, equitable and lasting solution have already been identified and reiterated by various Islamic Summit and Ministerial Conferences, as I have informed this body on several previous occasions.

Recently, an emergency Arab summit meeting held in Casablanca from 23 to 26 May 1989, expressed, inter alia, its satisfaction at the resolutions adopted by the nineteenth session of the Palestine National Council and affirmed its backing of the Palestinian peace initiative based on the Arab peace plan. The Conference

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also extended full support to the Palestinian stand on the issue of elections, namely that the elections should take place after the Israeli withdrawal and under international supervision. Only on the basis of Israeli withdrawal can steps towards peace be negotiated, elections held and the final status of the West Bank and Gaza determined. For this we need action by this body. We in the Organization of the Islamic Conference once again strongly condemn the heinous assault on human freedom and dignity by the occupying forces in the occupied Palestinian territory and demand that they desist forthwith from inflicting further inhuman tortures and practices upon innocent Palestinian people. We would like at the same time to request that the Security Council take appropriate action with regard to the current very grave situation in Palestine.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Mr. Ansay for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is Mr. Clovis Maksoud, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, to whom the Council extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure at the 2863rd meeting.

I invite Mr. Maksoud to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MAKSOUD (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, on behalf of the League of Arab States, I should like to congratulate you on the assumption of your new post at the United Nations. Your eloquence and commitment to principles are only too well known, as are the values represented by your country. I have known you personally as a very seasoned diplomat who is aware of the facts and seeks the truth. Seeking truth is a commitment we share with you. I should also like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. While it is only a short time since you have assumed the post of

(Mr. Maksoud)

Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, we hope that your assumption of this post will be a great remedy for the pains of the Palestinian people.

(continued in English)

I should also like to express our appreciation to the former President of the Security Council for the great ability with which he conducted the affairs of the Council last month.

I want to express our appreciation for this kind invitation so that we may be heard on a subject of great concern to the Arab nation as a whole and to the Arab people.

There has been an attempt in recent months to routinize Palestinian casualties. People expect every day to have three, four or five Palestinians killed, and because of the fact that the Palestinian uprising has gone on so long, there is a dual attempt on the part of Israel and its supporters to routinize the casualties of the Palestinians and to marginalize the United Nations and its Security Council. That is the dual objective, and that is why we in the Arab nation have recourse to the United Nations, for we need it as centre stage in crisis management, in problem solving and in securing what the Charter has entrusted it to secure: a just and comprehensive peace.

Furthermore, there has been an attempt by the Israeli occupying authority to derail the pattern of the intifadah from its substantive commitment to civil disobedience and non-violence and political determination. In a way, the Palestinian uprising is supposed to be caught between the cross-fire of the reckless vendettas of the illegal settlers and vigilantes and the oppressive pattern of the Israeli army's occupation, as if the Palestinians are supposed to have a preference for one over the other.

(Mr. Maksoud)

In a way, we are bombarded day in and day out by a new attempt at projecting the systematized planned violence of the Israeli occupation as being on an equal level with the Palestinian uprising, which is basically a non-violent operation. The intention of the Israeli occupation authorities is to exasperate the Palestinians, so that fatigue permeates the Palestinian situation and the Palestinians would then be ready to accommodate, in one form or another, Israel's annexationist policies. As members of the Council all know, Israel does not consider itself in the occupied Palestinian territories as an occupying Power.

(Mr. Maksoud)

Is it an occupying Power? Everybody, including the United States, ascertains that Israel, in the West Bank and Gaza and East Jerusalem, in the Golan Heights and South Lebanon, is an occupying Power.

Therefore it has to be treated as an occupying Power to render it compliant with the articles of the Geneva Convention and to create a situation and a resolution of the Security Council that would force Israel first to treat itself as an occupying Power and, secondly, to comply with the resolutions. Hence the principal function of the Security Council is, on the one hand, to enable Israel to desist from the practices it is undertaking and, on the other, to protect the political, national, legal and human rights of the Palestinian people under occupation.

Those facts are so obvious it is redundant to repeat them. But it is another deliberate plan of Israel to make us appear to be repetitive and redundant through its continued defiance of and contempt for the United Nations, the Geneva Convention and all tenets of international law. This is an attempt to routinize the United Nations and render it marginal. The whole thrust of the Israeli position is to render the United Nations and the Security Council exclusively a platform where we seek to verbalize our frustrations, and to ensure that the Security Council not be an instrument of consequential resolution.

That is the essence of the matter. The battle on this front is between Arab determination to render the Security Council functional, credible and effective and the Israeli policy to reduce the Security Council into an object of contempt and its resolution into an object of total non-compliance.

So one of the spill-overs of the inhuman practices of Israel in the occupied territories is this question: What is the function of the Security Council mechanism at this particular stage and on this particular problem?

(Mr. Maksoud)

Many of my colleagues have spelled out in no uncertain terms the record of Israel's violations, replete with acts of violence against people, deportation, the burning and destruction of houses, and practices and legalisms that tend to frustrate and mutilate the national and human rights of the Palestinians under occupation. Therefore I would not want to spell them out again, except to show that there has been an intensification in the level of Israeli oppression in direct proportion to the clarity and coherence of Palestinian moderation.

This symmetry of more intensive Israeli ruthlessness and more objective moderation on the part of the Palestinian leadership is intended as a trap to bring about continued polarization and continued conflict. In that respect, we consider that the continued intensification of the oppressive measures of the Israeli army, as well as the reckless criminal pursuits of the Israeli illegal settlers, juxtaposed with the position of statesmanship of the Palestinian State and of the PLO leadership, represents a dilemma worthy of insightful investigation on the part of the international community.

What is the objective of the Israelis, when they know that the Palestinian State declared on 15 November came about as a consequence of a consensus of the Palestinian people, a realization that the PLO is, as I have often stated, for the Palestinians a framework for their peoplehood. It is a state of mind in the absence of their State. It is the articulation of their national identity in the absence of their national citizenship. The fact that Palestine is under occupation does not make it less amenable to exercising its prerogatives of sovereignty. And it has done so in no unambiguous terms by stating categorically that it has accepted the jurisprudence of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) and Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) as the definers of the national patrimony of both the Palestinian State and the Israeli State and that this commitment to the two-State system is firm, is genuine, unequivocal.

(Mr. Maksoud)

But I must say that this commitment is not final, because it will be finalized only by mutuality and reciprocity and recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people to an independent State. Otherwise we are on the threshold of new conflict and destabilization, which we all seek to avoid. That is why we have had recourse to the United Nations and its principal organ, the Security Council. We have done so repeatedly because we too, in the Arab world, have a constituency that many times asks us "Is this continued recourse to the Security Council going to bring any results? Is there a dichotomy between your rhetorical statements and the performance of the Security Council? Are you resorting to the United Nations Security Council in order to buy time? Is that a substitute for our lack of determination to retrieve the rights of the Paletinians?"

We will not answer those logical questions except by a further commitment to render the Security Council resilient, functional, effective. That is our commitment. And that is why the Arab League summit meeting held in Casablanca came to a conclusion supporting without hesitation a central role for the Security Council in preparing an international conference, in bringing about a peaceful outcome to the conflict that has lasted more than 40 years.

Should we be penalized for that act of faith in the United Nations with more Israeli intransigence, more Israeli oppression, more Israeli annexation and faits accomplis?

(Mr. Maksoud)

If the impression becomes prevalent that the Security Council is bound to become marginalized in order to accommodate Israeli objectives and behaviour patterns, then we might have to revise much of our Arab strategy of peace. I want to say that we do not want to revise our strategy of peace: our commitment to peace with justice. We want to salvage it, in spite of Israel. But there is a fundamental distinction between our commitment to peace on the one hand and passivity and resignation to the inevitability of Israel's sway over the occupied territories on the other.

It is in that light that we look upon much of what has been said over the past few weeks concerning Israel's elections proposal. We are told by the United States Secretary of State that these are ideas worthy of pondering. We have pondered and reflected upon those ideas, and have found them lacking in credibility and in respect for the Palestinian State's authority to designate its own negotiators. The principal role of the negotiations touted by Israel - unfortunately, with a permissive attitude by the United States - is to be a "fishing trip" to discover what rights the Palestinians "might" have. We conceive of negotiations as a vehicle for structuring a mutually acceptable outcome. In the same way that Israel does not enter into negotiations to negotiate on whether or not it has a right to exist, the Palestinians will not enter into negotiations - nor, since the Palestinians are a part of the Arab nation, would the Arab States enable them to do so - on whether or not they have a right to self-determination. That right is axiomatic and recognized, in the same way that the international community has said that within the pre-1967 borders the right of Israel to exist is not negotiable.

Therefore, we have to define the goal of negotiations: It is to structure the outcome, not to determine it. That has been the pattern of negotiations between all colonial territories or national liberation movements and their colonial

(Mr. Maksoud)

countries. Negotiations would be on how to structure, phase and determine the independent State of Palestine.

This is a historic opportunity. The Palestinians have bitten the bullet by agreeing to abandon their legitimate dream of a historical Palestine in order to remove the nightmare of occupation. Let them not despair, having made that historic gesture of reconciliation.

That is why, when we come to the Security Council, we come with a commitment to its central functions. We come not to articulate our frustrations, but to try and achieve our legitimate rights and hopes.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Mr. Maksoud for his kind words addressed to me.

I now invite the representative of Tunisia to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. GHEZAL (Tunisia) (interpretation from Arabic): I wish at the outset, on behalf of the Tunisian delegation, to congratulate you most sincerely, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for June. Your competence, diplomatic skill and remarkable human qualities, as well as the pre-eminent position of your country, are an earnest of success in the work of the Security Council.

It is my pleasure also to convey to your predecessor, Sir Crispin Tickell, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, our gratitude for the remarkable skill with which he conducted the work of the Council in May, and for all his praiseworthy efforts.

The tragedy of the Palestinian people has lasted for more than 40 years, during which that people has been subjected to every possible form of injustice and tyranny. For the past 22 years the Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem have been suffering the most frightful form of foreign occupation

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

and brutality and have seen their rights usurped. In the 18 months since the beginning of the glorious intifadah of the Palestinian people - the revolution of the stone-throwing generation - in the occupied Palestinian territories, not a day has passed without news of a Palestinian man, woman or child being killed. Not a day passes without houses being destroyed. Not a day passes without Palestinians being thrown into prison or detention camps without charge or trial. Such are the actions of the Israeli occupation authorities. They are just a few examples of the violations of the rights of the Palestinian people: violations of international norms and agreements.

The Security Council, which is charged with the maintenance of international peace and security and bears a special historical responsibility for the fate of the Palestinian people, is fully aware of the events in the region. The Council knows that the situation is deteriorating. The Council's attention has been repeatedly drawn to the threat posed by that situation to regional and international peace and security. The Council must shoulder its responsibility with respect to that situation in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

In its most recent resolution on the subject, resolution 43/233 of 20 April 1989, the General Assembly called upon the Council urgently to consider the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

The Assembly also asked the Council to take the necessary measures to guarantee international civil protection for the Palestinians. Unfortunately, however, the Council has been unable even to adopt a declaration expressing its concern about the situation, which is deteriorating with every passing day.

While this impotence and this silence continue, in the past few days we have seen an even greater deterioration in the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. Indeed, the Israeli authorities and armed forces have given free rein to their barbarous tendencies. The armed forces and groups of armed settlers by the hundreds have been unleashed, launching campaigns of criminal terrorism in many places against unarmed Palestinians, attacking their belongings and their sacred values.

The Israeli occupation authorities have provided the groups with automatic weapons, jeeps and military communications equipment, which they have used to attack Palestinian settlements and villages, in a naked outburst of terrorism. They have destroyed and burned property and wounded and killed people. We recall the atrocious crime perpetrated in Kaf1 Harith by a group of 30 armed Israeli settlers against a 14-year-old Palestinian girl, who happened to be beside her house when it was riddled with bullets.

As the Council is aware, such crimes committed against Palestinians by groups of armed terrorists are nothing new, but they have become extensive and systematic. They would not be so serious but for the support and protection of the Israeli occupation authorities. The incident in the village of Beita, where the authorities blew up some Palestinian houses after the death of a young Israeli girl at the hands of the Israeli settlers, is just one example of that support and protection, when Israel knew that the death resulted from the actions of other Israelis.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

Recently we learned of another example of shameful action: The Israeli authorities have imposed on Palestinian workers in the Palestinian occupied territory a requirement to wear badges bearing the legend in Hebrew "Foreign worker". What could be more cynical or tyrannical than the foreign oppressor making the Palestinian a foreigner on his own soil? Those badges remind us of other badges and an inglorious period in human history. It would be well for those who adopted that shameful measure to rescind it.

Today we have heard in the Council, as we did yesterday, details of other atrocities committed by the occupation authorities and groups of terrorist settlers. For example, an eight-month-old baby was seriously wounded by bullets of the occupation authorities. The authorities have also profaned the Koran in the school of Deir El Balloot, where Israeli soldiers tore out pages of the sacred book and papered the WCs with them, as the Israeli press itself reported.

We have all read in The New York Times today that, according to the Israeli press and even representatives of the occupation authorities, the authorities have begun to apply apartheid measures against the Palestinians. Among those measures we would mention the requirement to carry a kind of identity card or passport, similar to the passes imposed on the black inhabitants of South Africa. According to the Israeli press itself, the apartheid régime has ended that practice.

We would also point out that, although many countries and peoples are proud of having made education compulsory, the Israeli occupation authorities seem to have decided to make illiteracy compulsory; it is imposed by force in the occupied territories. The authorities have closed all the colleges and schools and have banned all forms of teaching, private or public, for adults or children, in the schools or at home.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

Is not all that sufficient reason for the Security Council to come down firmly against the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories? Can there be any excuse for the Council to maintain its silence and lack of interest, to ignore the cause and the rights of the Palestinian people and to wash its hands of all concern and responsibility for the whole region?

The young Palestinian State and the leaders of the Palestinian people have proved that they were sincere in their pursuit of a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian problem. The Palestinian people in the occupied territories has demonstrated its maturity, its patience and its resistance. It has used the stones of its ancestral land as weapons against the Israeli war machine. It will win - there is no doubt. The will of peoples is indomitable, no matter what the power of the occupier.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

In the light of this situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, which is already very serious but is worsening, we once again call on the Security Council to take the indispensable, urgent measures they have been asked to take in the Secretary-General's report of 21 January 1988, in order to secure international protection for the defenceless Palestinian people, groaning under the yoke of the occupier, and to compel the Israeli authorities to respect international treaties, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilians in Time of War, concluded on 12 August 1949. That is the first, indispensable step towards the achievement of a peaceful, just and lasting settlement within the framework of the principles laid down in General Assembly resolution 43/176 of 15 December 1988. That resolution was adopted almost unanimously and in it the Assembly calls for the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East and recommends the consideration of measures necessary for the holding of the conference.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Tunisia for the kind words he addressed to me.

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

Mr. SALLAM (Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the delegation of the Yemen Arab Republic, I am pleased to extend to you, Sir, our congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June 1989. We are sure that, with your well-known political experience and your extensive diplomatic service, you will contribute to the effectiveness of the Council's work.

On behalf of the delegation of the Yemen Arab Republic, I express also our admiration and appreciation to your predecessor for the valuable work he did during his presidency of the Council last month.

(Mr. Sallam, Yemen)

The Security Council last met on this subject on 17 February 1989. It had held a lengthy discussion on the deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. But the Council failed to adopt even a draft resolution condemning Israel for its persistent inhuman practices against the Palestinian people in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and for its continued failure to implement the relevant Council resolutions. That failure was the result of the use of the right of veto by a big Power, a permanent member of the Security Council. Thus, that Power has in effect allowed the culprit to pursue without constraint, with impunity, its arbitrary practices, which violate human rights. That in itself has encouraged the aggressor to continue its brutality.

The argument advanced at the time by the representative of the big Power in question was that the adoption of a draft resolution similar to the one before the Council might not indeed advance the cause of peace in the region.

The conditions of the Palestinians under occupation have not improved since 17 February last. Indeed, they have only worsened day by day.

On Saturday, 3 June, The New York Times quoted a broadcast by Israel Radio to the effect that Rabbi Isaac Ginsberg had advised his associates among the Jewish settlers after the killing in Kafl Harith on Monday, 29 May, that

"Biblical prohibitions on the spilling of blood applied only to Jewish blood, not to that of non-Jews".

Such racist words cannot be ascribed to Allah, God the Almighty - quite the contrary.

In the same article in The New York Times on 3 June, the same reporter, Alan Cowell, quotes Daniella Weiss, a member of the Gush Emunim movement, as stating:

(Mr. Sallam, Yemen)

(spoke in English)

"Settlers attacking Palestinians should be praised for it and no one should speak against them".

(continued in Arabic)

The question now is: Having heard these calls by Israeli heretics, will the Security Council once again refuse to condemn them and their abhorrent practices?

The Palestinian people continues to suffer daily as a result of the arbitrary Israeli violations of their human rights. The use of bullets, sticks and poison gas to disperse demonstrations by children, the breaking of bones of human beings, starvation and torture of detainees, dynamiting of houses, burning of crops and produce, economic boycotts, collective punishment of towns and villages, closing of schools and universities, desecration of Holy Places and other acts of profanation cited by Ambassador Zuhdi Terzi, the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine: all these are arbitrary practices that cannot be justified in any circumstances.

The goal of the Palestinian intifadah is not to drive the Jews out of Palestine. I repeat: the goal is not to drive the Jews out of Palestine. Rather, the aim is the establishment of an independent Palestinian State that would coexist in peace and harmony with its neighbours.

It is therefore the Security Council's duty to make Israel comply with its obligations under all the instruments, including treaties, it accepted as a State on its admission to membership to the United Nations. That includes the implementation of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 12 August 1949, on the Protection of Civilians in Time of War. Compliance with treaties is essential, as the Secretary-General stated in the following passage from his report on the work of the organization to the forty-third session of the General Assembly:

(Mr. Sallam, Yemen)

"The principle that treaties must be complied with and carried out in good faith, commonly expressed in the maxim pacta sunt servanda, is basic to the Charter. Respect for international agreements is not only one of the fundamental principles of international law; it is the foundation of the organized international community. If this principle were abandoned, the whole superstructure of contemporary international law and organization, including the functioning of the United Nations, the effectiveness of the decisions of its competent organs and resort to international arbitration or judicial settlement of justiciable disputes, would collapse. It is in the equal interest of all States, large or small, to work towards a world where nations will operate within a complete, coherent and viable system of law. Any movement away from this goal holds equal danger for all". (A/43/1, p. 12)

In any event, and despite the regrettable developments that have taken place since 17 February 1989, we take note of several positive events, including the proposal to hold elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip of Palestine, the advancement of certain United States ideas on a peaceful settlement by means of elections, and some occasional statements made by United States officials.

But the call for elections or the publication of those scenarios of a settlement, irrespective of the degree of good faith put into them, will not contribute effectively to the achievement of a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East, unless and until the Council, with the consent of all its members, endorses a comprehensive peace plan that sets a specific time frame for its implementation and is guaranteed by the permanent members of the Security Council and all parties to the conflict.

It is only logical, then, that an international peace conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, will provide a viable and practical framework for the implementation of the aforesaid plan through direct negotiations

(Mr. Sallam, Yemen)

to be conducted between the parties concerned within the working committees of the conference. If the Security Council were to accept the notion of an international peace conference, it would have to make Israel commit itself to withdrawing its forces from the occupied Palestinian territories and to replacing them with an international force to be deployed for a specific period of time in order to supervise free and fair elections. Later, the same international force would oversee the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination.

The world community is now enjoying a relatively calm period that augurs well for the peace and security of mankind. In an atmosphere of political relaxation between the two super-Powers, the world as a whole stands to make enormous political, social and economic gains. It was against that backdrop that the Geneva agreements on a peaceful solution to the Afghanistan problem were concluded. The cease-fire between Iraq and Iran has also been established. Only in such a global mood was it possible to embark on the implementation of Security Council 435 (1978) on Namibia. Soon, God willing, the international community will celebrate the independence of Namibia and its admission as a full-fledged member into the family of nations. With the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea and the initiation of dialogue between the Kampuchean parties themselves, a peaceful settlement to the Kampuchean problem will be achieved. In Cyprus, the two Cypriot communities have expressed a desire for dialogue in a bid to reach a peaceful solution to the question of Cyprus. Thanks to the good offices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, the Western Sahara problem will soon be resolved once and for all.

All that leaves the Security Council with one major problem: the Middle East issue, at the core of which is the question of Palestine. The Arab leaders, in their endeavours to solve the problem peacefully, have made bottom-line concessions and in good faith have put all their cards on the table before the international

(Mr. Sallam, Yemen)

community in a sincere pursuit of a comprehensive and just peace in the region. In their Joint Communiqué issued on 26 May, 1989, at the end of the Arab summit meeting held in Casablanca, the Arab Heads of State endorsed:

"The convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council along with all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, with a view to achieving a comprehensive and just settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and all other relevant United Nations resolutions, as well as the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, to agreeing on security guarantees for all the States in the region, including the State of Palestine; to resolving the Palestinian refugee problem in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 194 of 1948; and to considering all the relevant resolutions of the United Nations as the basis for international law that guarantees the right of the Palestinian people to establish its independent State."

While Palestinian Arabs in their turn have also made bottom-line concessions in order to solve their problem, which is more than 40 years old, bringing pressure to bear on the Palestinians to make further concessions will only consolidate deeply rooted convictions among the Arab masses in all Arab countries that what has been usurped by force will only be regained by force. The Council, which has repeatedly failed to bring about a comprehensive and just settlement in the Middle East, losing several favourable political opportunities, will be held fully accountable for the adverse consequences of a delayed political solution to the problem.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Yemen for his kind words addressed to me.

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

Mr. AL-SHAKAR (Bahrain) (interpretation from Arabic): I should like at the outset, to extend to you, Sir, our warm congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. We are confident that your well-known diplomatic experience and skills will enhance the effectiveness of the Council during the current month.

I also take this opportunity to commend your predecessor, Sir Crispin Tickell, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for the effective manner in which he guided the Council during the month of May.

The Council has convened at the request of the Arab Group to examine an extremely important issue. There is no question that the deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories is a pressing matter that warrants immediate and since efforts on the part of the Security Council, given the pace of the developments in the Middle East region. Thus, it is incumbent upon this organ to fulfil its mandate of maintaining peace and security, which has long been lost to the area.

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

We are all aware of the importance of the time factor on the course of events and its positive or negative impact on the peace process in the area. Thus the Arab Group's request that the Security Council be convened at this point in time was not without good reason. It reflects a world-wide concern over the deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the growing suffering of the Palestinians, who have been the victims of daily oppressive and arbitrary measures under the yoke of Israeli occupation.

In a report released on 1 June on the situation in the occupied Arab territories, International Amnesty strongly condemned the practices of the Israeli occupation authorities, which are in massive violation of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian population, and cited over 5,000 Palestinians detained without trial since the beginning of the glorious Palestinian uprising in December 1987. Most of those Palestinian detainees continue to languish under severely harsh conditions in Israeli detention camps.

Ever since the start of the valiant Palestinian uprising, which stands out as a new stage in the national Palestinian struggle to end the Israeli settler occupation, Israel has met that uprising with every possible means of oppression, intimidation, brutality and torture in order to abort it. The horrendous crime at Nahhalin perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces last April still lives in the world's memory. The Nahhalin massacre shook the world's conscience, for its martyrs and victims were blameless and innocent villagers whose destiny had led them into the hateful grip of the Israeli occupation.

The Security Council is meeting at a time when Israel is making a desperate effort to appear in the international arena as a seeker after peace, on the basis of the so-called Shamir peace plan; but at the same time it continues to step up its repressive, brutal practices against the unarmed civilian Palestinian population. Thus, indiscriminate shootings, the imposition of curfews, the

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

application of various forms of collective punishment - including deportations, dynamiting of homes, expropriation of land, closing of schools and institutes and preventing worshippers from performing their religious duties - all are aspects of Israel's brutality. It is obvious that the purpose of the intensification of the Israeli crackdown on the Palestinians in the occupied territories is to coerce the Palestinians into accepting Shamir's plan for elections.

That plan in its nature and essence aims at lending some legitimacy to the Israeli occupation and to Israel's usurpation of the land of the Palestinians and their inherent right to self-determination, as well as at circumventing the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, namely, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

It is only natural that the Palestinian people and leadership should not accept that plan, which usurps Palestinians of their right to their land and to self-determination. The Israeli plan to hold elections in the occupied Palestinian territories is nothing but a thinly veiled manoeuvre by which Israel tries to deflect the international impact of the intifadah. In effect, that means that the status quo Israel has desperately tried to consolidate is not acceptable at all. Hence it is now essential to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine under international law.

My delegation believes that the Israeli peace manoeuvre in the guise of a call for elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under the bayonets of occupation is nothing but a device to end the intifadah and to consolidate the occupation and status quo, because that plan does not recognize the holy right of the Palestinian people to regain their land and to exercise their right to self-determination over their territory. Does it make sense for the Palestinian people to accept a plan that usurps their right to their land and self-determination? Such elections

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

cannot be held except under international supervision and in the context of an over-all peace process under international law.

In view of these facts, my delegation feels that the Security Council must act speedily in order to curb the arbitrary Israeli practices and alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people under the heavy heel of occupation. In this context I would recall that at its resumed forty-third session the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/233 on 20 April 1989, which is a praiseworthy stand reflecting the international consensus that the Security Council should take adequate measures to ensure international protection for Palestinian civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories. It is our fervent hope that the Security Council will this time respond to that international consensus by adopting an appropriate resolution providing maximum protection for the Palestinian people against the brutalities of the Israeli occupation authorities. The Palestinian people in the occupied territories have the right to receive international protection from the various forms of repression, humiliation and torture meted out daily by the Israeli occupation authorities, which flout all human values and accepted international norms of conduct. This has prompted Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar to recommend to the Security Council in a valuable report over a year ago (S/19443) that it make a concerted effort to take proper measures to ensure international protection for the Palestinian people. It is my delegation's view that the Council should intercede, in keeping with its international obligations, in order to end the mass abuses of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories for the past 18 months - that is, since the beginning of the glorious Palestinian intifadah. It is against all reason to leave the Palestinian people hostage to ruthless treatment by the Israeli occupation authorities, whose practices are contrary to all human and moral values. Immediate

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

action by the Security Council to protect the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, under the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, would constitute an important step towards ending the systematic killing of innocent Palestinians and putting an end to the escalation of brutality by the Israeli occupation forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, pending the achievement of a permanent solution of the question of Palestine under international law.

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

The Palestinian national intifadah, which has gained world-wide sympathy and support because it aims at achieving independence and self-determination for the Palestinian people, has resulted in the formal recognition by many peace-loving countries of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence; in the recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization as their sole, legitimate representative; and in recognition of an independent Palestinian State. The intifadah has restored to the question of Palestine its appeal and relevance and brought the Arab-Israeli conflict, which is at the root of the problem, back into the focus of international attention, with its proper place on the world agenda.

It is a source of satisfaction and hope that this meeting of the Security Council to examine the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories comes in the wake of the positive outcome of the special Arab summit meeting held in Casablanca, Morocco, from 23 to 26 May this year. Those results were welcomed warmly by the international community and represent a sincere effort to bring about a genuine and fair peace in the region.

The resolutions adopted at the Arab summit reflect the sincere wish of the Arab States and the Palestine Liberation Organization to achieve peace on the basis of justice and in line with international legitimacy, which calls for the achievement of a peaceful settlement on the basis of land for peace and the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination over its national soil.

Needless to say, one of the basic tenets of peace endorsed at the Arab summit is the convening of an international Middle East peace conference, under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of the five permanent members of the Security Council and all parties concerned, including the Palestine

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

Liberation Organization, the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The goals of such a conference would be to reach a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), to implement the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions, which provide a basis for the application of international law, and to ensure the right of the Palestinian people to establish its independent State. Thus the resolutions adopted at the Casablanca summit would provide a valuable opportunity that warrants the support of the international community.

Bahrain sincerely hopes that for its part, the Security Council will support the Casablanca resolutions and make Israel accept the peace alternative. The Council would thus be fulfilling its long-awaited role in achieving the desired peace in the Middle East region.

Bahrain also hopes that the Council will be able to formulate a clear, positive, collective position that matches the constructive Arab peace initiative. But that position will have to be translated into concrete action so that the peace process can overcome the obstacles thrown up by Israel in order to prevent the convening of the international Middle East peace conference endorsed by consensus of the international community, as reflected in General Assembly resolution 43/176 of 15 December 1988.

Like all other peace-loving States, Bahrain believes in the possibility of achieving peace under United Nations auspices, if only all members of the Security Council would live up to their responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security in the region and work together in order to restore to the Security Council its positive and effective role in bringing about peace on the basis of justice, thus ensuring stability and safety for present and future generations in

(Mr. Al-Shakar, Bahrain)

the Middle East region. This, of course, would require bringing pressure to bear on Israel, including the invoking of measures under Chapter VII of the Charter, in order to force Israel to abandon its intransigence and arrogance and agree to and participate in an international Middle East peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations, that being the only alternative if we are to achieve an overall settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, at the root of which is the Palestinian question.

Bahrain looks forward to seeing a sincere international effort in which the Security Council would play its proper role in making this a key year in advancing the cause of peace, thus transforming aspirations for peace into a concrete reality, with the participation of all parties concerned, led by the United Nations, as represented by the Secretary-General and by the Security Council in its capacity as custodian of international peace and security.

I wish to stress Bahrain's conviction that the Council now has a valuable opportunity to establish a just and permanent peace in the region. May the Security Council make full use of it.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bahrain for his kind words addressed to me.

In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend to adjourn the meeting now. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue the consideration of the item on the agenda will take place on Thursday, 8 June 1989, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.