



Security Council

PROVISIONAL

S/PV.2947

9 October 1990

ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
NINE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 9 October 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Sir David HANNAY

(United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Northern
Ireland)

Members: Canada
China
Colombia
Côte d'Ivoire
Cuba
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Malaysia
Romania
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
United States of America
Yemen
Zaire

Mr. FORTIER
Mr. LI Daoyu
Mrs. CASTAÑO
Mr. ANET
Mr. ALARCON de QUESADA
Mr. TADESSE
Mr. TÖRNUDD
Mr. BLANC
Mr. REDZUAN
Mr. MUNTEANU
Mr. VORONTSOV
Mr. PICKERING
Mr. AL-ASHTAL
Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA

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The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

LETTER DATED 26 SEPTEMBER 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/21830)

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken at the previous meetings on this item, I invite the representatives of Algeria, Israel, Jordan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Tunisia and Yugoslavia to take the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber. I invite the representative of Palestine to take a seat at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bendjama (Algeria), Mr. Bein (Israel), Mr. Salah (Jordan), Mr. Treiki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Ghezal (Tunisia) and Mr. Silovic (Yugoslavia) 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 Bangladesh, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic 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 accordance 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. Mohiuddin (Bangladesh), Mr. Moussa (Egypt), Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Kadrat (Iraq), Mr. Al-Sabah (Kuwait), Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia) and Mr. El-Fattal (Syrian Arab Republic) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 8 October 1990 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request that the Security Council extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Abdulmalek Ismail Mohamed, Chargé d'affaires, Office of the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, during the Council's discussion of the item 'The situation in the occupied Arab territories'."

That letter has been published as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/21852. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 to His Excellency Mr. Ismail.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

(The President)

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

The first speaker is the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait. I invite His Excellency to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AL-SABAH (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, on behalf of the Arab Group, which Kuwait has the honour of chairing this month, I should like to congratulate you as you preside over the work of the Council for this month and wish you every success in your lofty task. Your experience and skill are well-known to all members. It also gives me great pleasure to extend our gratitude to the Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union for the manner in which he conducted the affairs of the Security Council last month, a period which witnessed accomplishments related to world peace and security.

The Palestinian people fell victim yesterday, in Holy Jerusalem, to a horrendous crime that has shocked the Arab and Islamic worlds and threw a challenge to the conscience of the whole world. As a matter of fact, that crime is just another episode in the ongoing criminality of Israel against the Palestinian people. The escalating tempo of such acts is designed to break the will of that people, suppress its brave resistance and deprive it of its rights. Its ultimate aim is to force the Palestinian people to leave their homes so that they may be replaced by foreign settlers. This is the nature of occupiers everywhere.

The military might of Israel has claimed tens of our innocent Palestinian brethren who were killed over the past two days. Those victims have committed no crime. Their only crime was that, quite spontaneously, they tried to defend one of the oldest shrines of Islam. This is a religious duty. They tried to protect that shrine with their bare hands, their vulnerable bodies and their pious hearts. They had no weapons of whatever sort. They were protecting shrines that are sacred to

(Mr. Al-Sabah, Kuwait)

Moslems the world over. Their only defence was the common belief in the sanctity of those shrines. The sons of the Palestinian people defended those religious sentiments against a wave of extremist Zionists who have been desecrating those shrines for a long time.

For us, the people of Kuwait, our indignation at the enormity of this new crime and the need to face up to it acquire an added importance, at a time when His Highness Sheih Al-Sabah, the Emir of Kuwait chairs the fifth session of the Islamic Summit. The world must not stand powerless while Israel suppresses the unarmed Palestinian people and desecrates one of the holiest sites of Islam.

We, in Kuwait, when we speak of the inhuman Israeli practices against the sons of the Palestinian people, know full well the bitter taste of what that unarmed people suffers under occupation. We feel this bitterness because, in our own country, we experience a similar situation. The Kuwaiti people is subjected to inhuman practices, which fly in the face of all international norms and laws, at the hands of the forces of the Iraqi régime that has committed aggression against Kuwait, occupied its soil and caused the Kuwaiti people all sorts of suffering.

That is why, we in Kuwait, call for an immediate end to the Israeli practices and the protection of the Palestinian people. Our call is prompted by the similar ongoing experience of our unarmed Kuwaiti people - whose only weapon is their belief in the justice of their cause that is supported by the whole world.

I should like to address the Palestinian people, through the Security Council, and assure them that, regardless of the bitterness and cruelty of our own experience under a similar brutal occupation, we shall never let the Palestinian people down in its plight. This is how we are in Kuwait and we shall never change.

(Mr. Al-Sabah, Kuwait)

What took place yesterday was a double crime. Brutal force was used against unarmed civilians and the holy places of the Islamic nation have been desecrated. This dangerous development makes it necessary for me to ask the Council, in the name of the Arab group, to do the following:

First, to strongly condemn this criminal act by an Israeli group that behaved rashly outside the boundaries of the law;

Secondly, to call upon Israel, the occupying Power, to desist forthwith from these practices against the unarmed Palestinian people;

Thirdly, to call upon Israel to provide full protection and respect for all the Islamic Holy Places in Jerusalem. Such practices cannot be accepted under any pretext;

Fourthly, to send a fact-finding mission to the occupied Palestinian land to investigate these inhuman practices and report on them; and

Fifthly, international protection should be provided to the Palestinian people under occupation.

The Security Council, in considering this grave question, should be consistent with its just and firm stand against the injustice and suppression that befall any people when it falls victim to aggression. Let us try today to take action that would be balm to the wounds of the unarmed Palestinian people and shore up its steadfastness in facing up to the aggressive usurper.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): I have had the opportunity to congratulate you informally, Mr. President, but I should like to avail myself of the occasion of this formal session to express to you my delegation's pleasure at seeing you presiding over the work of the Council for the month of October and to assure you of our co-operation. We are sure that your mandate will be a successful one.

I should also like to compliment and congratulate your predecessor, Ambassador Vorontsov of the Soviet Union, for the clear-sighted and wise manner in which he conducted the Council's proceedings during the difficult month of September as it dealt with the current Gulf crisis.

Once again, the Council is considering with concern the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. Last May, in Geneva and New York, the Council went into an exhaustive consideration and detailed study of the question, and we even had the privilege of hearing a statement by President Yasser Arafat, the uncontested leader of the Palestinian people, as well as statements by all the members of the Council and by the many delegations that took part in that special meeting.

Constructive proposals were put forward at that meeting on 25 May 1990, but they have not been acted upon. Nevertheless, they are still as relevant as ever, if we are truly desirous of putting an end to the hatred, the lack of understanding and the abusive use of force that make up the daily catalogue of events that are tearing apart this region of the Middle East.

The massacres that occurred again yesterday, 6 October, in Jerusalem, add to the heavy toll for which the occupying Power bears prime responsibility. The Security Council cannot rest nor can its conscience be clear so long as such murders, punishments and excesses perpetrated in the guise of purported measures to

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

maintain public order are not met with any appropriate action or decision by the Council.

The Security Council will not be able to maintain its credibility and prestige as long as no constructive and concrete action - such as the dispatch of a fact-finding mission made up of members of the Council to inquire into the facts on the spot - has been taken to attest to its constant concern for the maintenance of international peace and security wherever they are threatened.

Our Council will not have fully exercised its functions if it does not manage to convert the spirit of war and confrontation with which the Middle East is rife to a spirit of dialogue and agreement among all the parties concerned, in accordance with its resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and in so doing to promote the convening of an international conference on the Middle East in which all the permanent members of the Council will participate along with all interested parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the true representative of the Palestinian people.

My delegation believes that until the Council can evidence some political will to come to grips with the question of Palestine, which lies at the very heart of the Middle East conflict, and so long as there has been no implementation of resolution 181 (II), which was adopted on 29 November 1947 at the second session of the General Assembly and which provides for the creation of a Palestinian Arab State, the Palestinian people in their frustration will never cease to demand their legitimate rights, particularly their right to exist as a people within a clearly defined State.

If such is not the case, what we have come to call the intifadah will continue, notwithstanding acts of intimidation, rebukes and the use of military

(Mr. Bagbani Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

force, for the struggle of a people for independence and freedom knows no price. The modern history of mankind has shown this to be true.

In light of the foregoing, my delegation deplores the violent acts committed by the authorities of the Israeli police in Jerusalem on 8 October, which have cost the lives of at least 19 Palestinians, and considers that such massacres must be unequivocally condemned and appropriate measures taken by the Council.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Zaire for his kind words. The next speaker is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt): I wish at the outset to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I am confident that you will lead the deliberations of the Council with wisdom and ability during the month of October.

Let me also commend your predecessor, Ambassador Vorontsov of the Soviet Union, for the excellent manner in which he led the Council's deliberations in the month of September.

It was with very serious concern and with a sense of outrage and condemnation that we in Egypt learned of the disturbing news emanating from the occupied Palestinian territories and from Jerusalem. We are of the view that the massacre that took place in the Holy City should be condemned in the strongest of terms. It is abundantly clear that the Israeli occupation authorities have failed to live up to the responsibilities incumbent upon them in accordance with international law and Conventions, Security Council resolutions and the Charter of the United Nations.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

The persistent recurrence of massacres, of practices that affect the lives of the Palestinian population under the Israeli occupation, makes it imperative for the Security Council to take a firm stand on behalf of the international community in order to save the Palestinians from elimination and brutal treatment by the authorities of occupation or the extremist Israeli elements who have no moral standards of civilized behaviour in their treatment of the Palestinians. The continuation of Israeli policies and practices, such as the one perpetrated yesterday, 8 October, is bound to add to the gravity of the situation in the Middle East and erode the chances of a peaceful settlement, let alone peaceful coexistence in the future.

The carnage in Jerusalem proves beyond doubt that the foreign occupation is the source of all ills in the Middle East and that the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, as well as from other Arab territories, is a major prerequisite for peace and stability in the region.

The Security Council has adopted several resolutions in connection with the Israeli occupation. Israel has honoured none of them. Israel has to understand that the international community shall never acquiesce in its occupation or in its expansionist schemes. We in the Arab world, we in Egypt, shall never cease in our efforts to achieve a comprehensive settlement that would provide for the withdrawal of Israel from those Arab territories. We shall never accept any fait accompli based on false claims or unlawful premises.

We call upon Israel to abide by the rule of law. We call upon Israel to respect the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. We call upon Israel to put an end to the brutal treatment by its forces of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem. We call upon Israel to stop all actions which would constitute a provocation to the Palestinian population and to restrain the provocateurs among

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

its population. We call upon Israel to stop the policies of settling individuals and groups in the occupied territories. We call upon Israel to bear in mind the explosive situation in the area and to act responsibly in such circumstances.

We call upon all countries not to undertake any action that would constitute a violation of Palestinian rights. We call upon all individuals from all nations not to contribute to the desecration of Muslim and Christian shrines or to add to the charged atmosphere in the occupied territories. We call upon all enlightened Jewish people all over the world to help put an end to such practices led by the extremist elements in Israel or in the occupied territories believed to be condoned by the occupation authorities.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

We call upon the Security Council to condemn such acts and to demand of Israel that it exercise restraint, avoid acts of provocation, respect international law and fulfil its legal obligations pursuant to the Fourth Geneva Convention. We call for the immediate dispatch of a mission to investigate the situation in Jerusalem and to report back as quickly as possible. We call upon the Council to take the measures necessary, by all means available to it, to protect the Palestinians living under occupation.

It is this Council, with this membership, that stood firm vis-à-vis foreign occupation, against violations of the purposes and principles of the Charter. Foreign occupation is foreign occupation, regardless of the occupier. No country is above the law and no country should be immune from the rule of law.

We call upon the Council to take an honest and courageous stand, as it has always done: it should call Israel to order, protect the rights of the Palestinian people and save them from an occupation that loots them not only of their territories but of all their rights, including the right to life.

In that respect, I take this opportunity to quote from Egypt's statement made only a few days ago before the General Assembly:

"The deteriorating situation and rising tension in the Gulf should not make us lose sight of another source of tension in the region, namely the continuing Israeli occupation of the Arab territories and the increasing suffering of the Palestinian people under occupation. Israel would be mistaken to imagine that the Gulf crisis will divert attention from the Palestinian question or from the intifadah of the Palestinian people and their legitimate quest for their inalienable rights, in particular their right to self-determination ... It would be a gross miscalculation on Israel's part to attempt to capitalize on the Gulf crisis in order to distort the realities of the Palestinian question or to push it into obscurity and oblivion.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

"Having said this, we must strongly reaffirm that the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force is indivisible."

(A/45/PV.21, p. 67)

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

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

Mr. GHEZAL (Tunisia) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives my delegation pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. We are certain that under your presidency, the Council will be able successfully to complete its work thanks to your wealth of experience and your proven efficiency, and thanks to the prestige and weight of your country, the United Kingdom, as a permanent member of the Security Council.

I cannot but take this opportunity also to pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Yuliy Vorontsov, Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union, who presided over the work of the Security Council last month. I congratulate him on the wisdom and experience he displayed as President.

The Security Council was convened last Friday to consider the rapidly deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, the recent actions by the Israeli forces of occupation and the brutality those forces have used against the rightful owners of the country in an attempt to put down the glorious intifadah which broke out nearly three years ago and which has not flagged in its determination to reclaim the Palestinian people's right to live in freedom on the land of their ancestors, as all other peoples and nations do.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

In its intransigence, Israel has stymied every peace initiative that aimed at resolving the problem; it persisted in its repression in pursuance of its goal of judaizing the Palestinian lands by deporting their indigenous inhabitants and suppressing their Arab Islamic and Christian identity in violation of all international conventions, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, and all the norms of civilized behaviour.

The fact that Israel is bringing into the country hundreds of thousands of Jewish emigrants from the Soviet Union and elsewhere in pursuit of its usual policy of fait accompli, shows that Israel has embarked on yet another dangerous attempt to squeeze out the indigenous population and face the international community with the fait accompli of a demographically restructured occupied territory.

The representative of Israel has even mocked the Security Council, the spilled blood of the unarmed innocent victims, the tragedy of the Palestinian people and even the sanctity of the Holy Sites in the region. Only yesterday he repeated what he had said on Friday, namely that the convening of the Security Council is a diversionary tactic that is meant to divert attention from the Gulf crisis.

The truth of the matter is that Israel is exploiting the Gulf crisis in the worst possible way for its own purposes. It has escalated its repression and arbitrary actions, intensified the use of force against the population, and expanded its settlement building programme. In all this, it has taken advantage of the preoccupation by the world with the Gulf crisis.

If we recall previous meetings by the Security Council at about the same time in previous years, we must also recall that the Palestinians, including women, old people and children, have been the victims, every week, nay every day and every hour of the day and the night, of repression, persecution and brutality at the

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

hands of the Israeli occupying forces, and that they have never had any recourse against that sort of aggression. There has never been anyone to deter Israel and stay its murderous hand.

Has the occupation come to an end? Has Israel desisted from its barbaric practices which fly in the face of international law, international conventions and the principle of human rights, so that the Security Council, the guarantor of peace and justice in the world should look the other way and take no action? No: it is quite the contrary. The reports of international organizations - including the Human Rights Committee, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, Amnesty International, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East - have demonstrated by facts, figures, dates and other irrefutable data the enormity of the suffering that has been visited upon the Palestinian people for decades. The torture, expulsion, exile, the demolition of homes, the malnutrition, deprivation, and lack of even basic education, have continued unabated.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

As the Chairperson of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Mrs. Diallo, the Permanent Representative of Senegal, has told the Council, Israel's record is replete with all these forms of injustice. In the well documented report she introduced during the Council's meeting last Friday, she produced the evidence.

Apart from those repressive practices, Israel is daily committing atrocities adding to its already heavy dossier. The most recent was the massacre at the Boreij refugee camp, where 180 Palestinians were injured and 200 others, aged between 12 and 45, were detained. Fifty houses were demolished and the Israelis later besieged the camp and deported half its inhabitants. Naturally enough, the Red Cross, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the media were prevented from entering the camp.

The Israeli authorities did not even give first aid to the wounded, and they prevented their families from visiting them. Old people and children were particularly affected.

Yesterday, Israel perpetrated the atrocious massacre in the al-Aqsa Mosque, the first of the two kiblans, the third most sacred place of our religion. Twenty-one Palestinians were killed and hundreds were wounded. Our television screens showed fearful pictures, and the media told us of atrocities committed by the Israeli authorities during the massacre and afterwards.

Such acts are committed daily by Israel's occupying forces. In London Mr. Douglas Hurd, Foreign Minister of the United Kingdom, made a statement, reported in The Washington Times of 5 October, which was also quoted by the Permanent Representative of Malaysia yesterday, because it says a great deal. Mr. Hurd said:

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

(spoke in English)

"Anyone with a sense of humanity must sympathize with the Palestinians. Their lands are occupied, they have no political rights and they are daily the victims of a misguided policy which believes that the security of Israel must rest on closed schools, illegitimate settlements and even collective punishments." (S/PV.2946, p. 38)

(continued in Arabic)

In the teeth of all this, we are told by Israel that this meeting by the Security Council is merely a diversionary tactic or just routine.

What matters, however, is this: What justification or pretext is there for the Council not to take firm and urgent action against Israel's acts of repression, in order to deter Israel and put an end to the plight of the Palestinian people? If it does not, let us say a fond farewell to justice and equity and say goodbye for ever to peace and security in the region. The Security Council has cared for all oppressed peoples. Why should it not care for the Palestinian people?

The plight of Palestine is as old as the United Nations. The General Assembly and the Security Council have adopted a number of resolutions on it, but most of them have remained a dead letter so far, some for 43 years, some for 23 years and others - the most recent - for three years. Other draft resolutions have been put before the Council and, of course, they were not adopted.

Today, international relations - thank God - have witnessed détente and agreement. That is why we hope the Security Council will remove the injustice that has been weighing so heavily on the Palestinian people for more than four decades. We ask it to take speedy action to extend international protection to those people, as proposed in a report by the Secretary-General which has itself remained a dead letter. The Security Council would thus pave the way for the holding of an

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

international peace conference on the Middle East as soon as possible, under United Nations auspices, with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in order to remove the nightmare that has beset the region and to usher in an era of peace, security and stability, and thus restore the right of the Palestinian people to live a life of dignity and their right to create their own independent State on their own national soil.

That, the Security Council can now do.

Last month, the Security Council demonstrated its newly found ability to move forcefully, not only to adopt resolutions but also to guarantee their implementation. The Council has also upheld international legitimacy. We are on the side of international legitimacy. We are committed to it, in every case, in every part of the world, every time. We are very anxious to have it respected everywhere and upheld at all times. International legitimacy is basically embodied in the United Nations Charter and the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. To ensure the sanctity of international legitimacy, we must avoid selectivity regardless of who is involved. Selectivity is ruled out. What is at stake now is the credibility of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole.

When they met here in New York, the Foreign Ministers of the five permanent members of the Council reaffirmed the need to initiate a process of negotiation, with the participation of all the parties involved in the Middle East conflict. We expect them to translate their words into deeds, soon.

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

The next 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): I am happy to congratulate you, Sir, on presiding over the Council's work for this month. I wish you every success.

I should also like to express my appreciation to your predecessor, Mr. Vorontsov, Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union, for the great job he did last month.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

The Council has heard the eloquent statement of Mr. Al-Sabah, the Foreign Minister of Kuwait, which we strongly support. The Israeli authorities persist in their grave practices in the occupied Arab territories, ignoring the Charter. They do not recognize any rights, nor can anything seem to deter them or compel them to respect the law.

The events of yesterday and today in Jerusalem at the hands of those authorities are a horrendous crime under any law and contravene the Charter of the United Nations and all international conventions. Today, the Council sits in judgement on that crime and its perpetrators.

Saudi Arabia's anger at today's and yesterday's events at the Al-Aqsa mosque is shared by the Arab and Moslem nations. We denounce Israel and warn it of the consequences of bloodshed, the desecration of the holy sites, and the denial of the rights of the Palestinian Arab people. The random shooting of unarmed Arab civilians by the Israeli police, who killed their victims by the dozen as if their lives had no value whatsoever, flies in the face of all human values, of all that the United Nations stands for, and of every basic concept and convention on human rights.

The gravity and enormity of the crime committed by the Israeli authorities are redoubled by the fact that it came on the heels of a previous attempt to desecrate Al-Aqsa mosque, the third holiest place in Islam.

The claim of the Israeli representative that the armed Israeli troops acted only in self-defence is refuted by the number of Arab dead and wounded. Israel believes that it can exploit any situation in the area to justify its crimes. That is an illusion which ignores reality, and adds to the gravity of those crimes.

The Security Council, in the light of its principal responsibilities, should take a very stern and unambiguous position. It should condemn the crime and those

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

who perpetrated it. It should hold the Israeli authorities responsible for all their actions and take every measure to protect the Palestinians against this terrorism.

We support our brethren in Palestine and their struggle, and call on the entire world to support them as well. We also bless the memory of the victims and martyrs, whose blood irrigates the holy places at Al-Quds.

We hope that before too long Palestine will soon be amongst us as a Member State working in conjunction with other States. The tragedy of the history of Palestine and the Palestinians is replete with victims of terrorism and of broken conventions, laws and treaties. The Security Council is responsible for the safety and security of those people and should deal with those crimes in accordance with the Charter of the Organization. We greatly hope that the Security Council will shoulder its responsibilities vis-à-vis today's events in Al-Quds and Palestine, and that it will prove to the Palestinians and the whole world that it stands by what is right, wherever that may be.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Saudi Arabia for his kind words.

The next speaker is Mr. Abdulmalek Ismail Mohamed, Chargé d'affaires of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ISMAIL (interpretation from Arabic): Since I have the honour of speaking before the Council for the first time under your presidency, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency for this month, which requires wisdom and responsibility in the fulfilment of your tasks. We are confident that you will conduct the affairs of the Council with all expertise.

I would also like to add my voice to those expressing appreciation for the extraordinary manner in which Ambassador Vrontsov, the permanent representative of the Soviet Union, conducted the affairs of the Council last month.

There is little left for me to add after the statements of earlier speakers. However, regrettably, Israel has seized every opportunity to add a negative element to the international community and to ignore all international laws and norms in defiance of this and other international forums. Thus, its actions compel us once again to speak.

Isn't it enough to have one grave situation in the Middle East that is already threatening security and peace, not only in the region but throughout the world? We now see Israel acting against the justice of the Palestinian cause in a very barbaric manner. Such repeated behaviour ignores the resolutions of the Council and the General Assembly.

Israel claims that, in order to achieve quiet, it must fight against what it claims to be instability. Should we accept such a claim? We would like to ask Israel a reverse question: by ignoring realities and responding with live ammunition, tear gas and other barbarities to the children of a people that expresses its will by stones, can Israel claim its actions to be those of a self-respecting Government living up to its responsibilities, especially at a time like this? Is this behaviour that can lead to quiet and the search for peace?

(Mr. Ismail)

The representative of Israel repeatedly refers to Israel's desire for peace. All this is very confusing. What kind of peace does Israel want? Peace as in Security Council resolutions, or Pax-Israeliana as in the illegitimate aspirations of an entity that uses Hebrew names from the history books for the occupied territory and, on that basis, claims that that territory is part of its own heritage?

The Palestine question is the core of the crisis in the Middle East. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. That is the first side of the equation.

The second side of the equation is the Israeli practices against the Palestinian people and against international peace and security.

Are those two sides of the equation co-equal? Events have proved that they cannot be; there is no balance between them.

As it has done recently, the Security Council's action should be guided by principles, law, right and justice. The Security Council should make it its business to have those principles applied everywhere. Only in that way can it gain credibility. Only in that way can it ensure that the great values it stands for will be respected.

I was talking to one of my colleagues in the corridors of this building the other day. He asked: What can we do now? Are we supposed to be reading out essays in the Security Council for all the world to hear? The representative of Israel, like his predecessors, seems to be intent on turning the Council into something that is akin to a school. He goes on reading out quotations from newspapers, from radio, broadcasts and television programmes. Most of the material that is read out is so trite that it does not deserve being read out. Apparently, the intention is to impress the Council and show others that he is well-read.

(Mr. Ismail)

I am sure the Security Council would prefer the representatives of Israel to spell out their reading of the United Nations Charter, and their understanding of the Security Council resolutions on their occupation and their invasion. I am sure the Council would wish to ask them whether they are prepared to respect resolutions and conventions on this subject. That is what the world wants to hear from Israel. That is what is required if peace and security are to be maintained - not the monotonous reading out of quotations from newspapers, intelligence service manuals, and so forth.

Obviously, someone from a certain State can engage in a narration about differences or contradictions in another State, or anywhere else, but the end result is the same - that is, this does not prove that the narrator is for peace, especially when he comes from a war-mongering country.

Recently, we have noted that general questions have been crystallized into specific ones for consideration by the Security Council. Some of these questions are direct; some are indirect. What is important is to say "yes" to the law, "yes" to legitimacy, "yes" to principle - but for all, and not only for some; "yes" to the Security Council, "yes" to resolutions - but for all and not just for some.

If I were to ask all the questions that need to be asked, I should have to make a very long speech. The fact is that our peoples need answers to these questions. Our peoples have supported steps previously taken by the Council. We have supported action by the Council in this new phase. The Council has acquired a new status and moral authority during the past few months.

What we and others would like to know is whether the Security Council of August and September is the Security Council of October. The Council has two feet. Why does Israel want it to walk on two fingers? I leave the answer to the Security Council.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Mr. Ismail for his kind words about the presidency.

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.

Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): I should first like to offer my congratulations to you, Sir, on your accession to the presidency of the Security Council for October. I wish you every success as you carry out your duties.

I would also take this opportunity to express my gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Vorontsov, the representative of the Soviet Union - a country with which the Syrian Arab Republic has long-standing ties - for the exemplary way he conducted the Council's work last month.

Sheik Jaber Al-Sabah, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, has made a very important statement on behalf of the Arab Group. We highly commend his statement, which expresses the feelings of all Muslims and Arabs vis-à-vis the deeds committed by the occupying Israeli forces.

The occupying Israeli forces continue to escalate their campaign which aims at changing the demographic structure of the occupied Arab territories. Those forces persist in killing Arab civilians and deporting them by force while hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants are settled on the lands of occupied Palestine under colonialist settler pretexts. This is done in the context of a scheme that aims at creating the purely Israeli racist entity that has been the objective of the Zionist Movement since the end of the last century under the slogan: "The immigration of a people without land to a land without a people."

The Israeli occupation authorities committed a new crime on Monday, 8 October 1990, that is added to the record of their crimes which started with the establishment of Israel. The targets of the crime, this time, have been the

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab
Republic)

Palestinians and the Holy Places, which have a very special place in the hearts of Muslims and Christians alike. Those Holy Places, which the entire international community venerates and regards as part of the heritage of mankind, have been desecrated.

This premeditated massacre should not surprise anyone, perpetrated as it was by this terrorist entity called Israel. It is a flagrant violation of human values that has earned the condemnation of the whole world. It is also a violation of the Charter, of United Nations resolutions and of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The Security Council, the General Assembly and other world forums have previously condemned the annexation of the City of Jerusalem and declared it to be null and void. It is worth recalling that the Council condemned Israel for its attempt to burn down the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first Qibla and third Holiest Place of Islam. At the time, Israel tried to shrug that crime off by blaming it on a deranged person. One cannot but wonder what pretext the Israeli authorities have up their sleeve this time as justification for this bloody, unforgivable massacre. They will probably blame it on a bunch of mentally deranged persons.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

The Security Council has to rise to the level of its responsibilities, move fast and put an end to these brutal massacres, and various other Israeli practices which violate the rights of Arab man and endanger his very existence and his culture. The Security Council is duty bound to put a stop to the repeated Israeli massacres which started in Dier Yasin in 1948, and have continued unabated ever since.

The premeditated murder of 23 Palestinians of all ages and the wounding of hundreds of other unarmed civilians is but a new episode in the continuing series of acts of terrorism perpetrated by Israel with a view to expelling the Arabs and destroying both Muslim and Christian holy places for the purpose of establishing the purist racist Zionist entity.

We should like to recall the desecration of the Greek Orthodox cathedral in Al-Quds, which was occupied by Israeli settlers. They are still there to this day.

The Security Council should rise to the level of its responsibilities and put an end to these Israeli practices. The Security Council should rein in Israel, stop the mass immigration of Soviet Jews to the occupied Palestinian Arab territories and stop the building of Israeli settlements on the ruins of demolished Palestinian and Syrian towns and villages. The Council should ask all those who finance Israel's colonization projects to desist. Both the money and the influx of immigrants should be stopped. In addition, the Security Council should firmly and unequivocally condemn Israel for this criminal act. For this purpose, the Security Council should set up a committee of its members to be sent to the spot to investigate the violations that are taking place in Al-Quds and the rest of the Arab occupied territories, in contravention of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 which Israel continues to reject despite your many resolutions. That committee

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

should then present to the Security Council a report on its findings so that the Council might adopt the necessary measures.

We reiterate that it is imperative that Israel withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories. This is a prerequisite if we are to usher in the new international order for which everyone hopes, and if we are to prepare the way to a just and lasting peace in the region of the Middle East by holding an international peace conference in accordance with the principles of international law and the resolutions of the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his statement and for his kind words addressed to me.

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

Mr. KADRAT (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): I congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council, and I pay tribute to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union, Mr. Yuliy Vorontsov, who conducted the business of the Council very skilfully.

The massacre perpetrated by the Zionist occupation forces in the Haram al-Sharif is but a link in the long chain of crimes committed by the Zionist entity against the Palestinian people over a period of half a century. It is just another example of the Zionist endeavours to judaize Arab Jerusalem, which was occupied by Israel in 1967 and was later annexed and proclaimed the eternal capital of Israel.

Since then, Israel has persisted in its aggressive acts against the Palestinian people and in the other occupied Arab territories. Israel engages in this kind of activity only because it knows full well that the Security Council will not impose any sanctions against it or do anything else to deter it from

(Mr. Kadrat, Iraq)

launching aggression against the Palestinians. It knows that the United States of America, as a permanent member of the Security Council, will use its veto to prevent the Council from imposing any measures against it, especially the sanctions provided for in Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter.

Iraq has always pointed out that the lack of security and stability in the Middle East is caused mainly by the Zionist aggressive and expansionist policies, by Jewish settler immigration, and by the policy of preventing the Palestinian people from exercising its inalienable right to return to its homeland and to establish an independent Palestinian State. The international community, as represented in the United Nations General Assembly, has recognized all these rights. Since 1947, it has been calling for implementation of the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland. But United Nations resolutions regarding the Palestinian question and holy Al-Quds remain dead letters because the Security Council, for its part, has not taken the necessary measures to ensure their implementation.

Israel, sometimes with the support of its Western allies, has committed acts of aggression aimed at the realization of its expansionist dream of establishing the so-called great Israel that Zionists claim should extend from the Nile to the Euphrates. The United States and its allies advocate international legitimacy and compliance with the resolutions of the Security Council. They took only hours or days to enforce the sanctions provided for in Chapter VII and to mobilize military forces in the region. I refer to recent measures, which are unprecedented in the history of the United Nations, against Iraq. Now the world witnesses Israel's persistent crimes and acts of aggression following upon the heels of each other. Israel has annexed and, for many decades, occupied land by force, in violation of

(Mr. Kadrat, Iraq)

resolutions of the Security Council. But in this case, the United States of America did not speak of international legitimacy or feel the need to invoke the sanctions provisions of Chapter VII. On the contrary, the United States prevented the Security Council from undertaking its basic responsibilities in respect of the aggressor. In addition, the United States has continued to provide the Zionist aggressor entity with every possible military and material assistance. It has also extended to that entity the political protection that enables it to implement its expansionist policies to the detriment of the Palestinian people and the rest of the Arab nation which is being weakened with a view to its eventual fragmentation into mini States on a religious basis.

These United States policies and postures and those of its allies expose the hypocrisy and double standards of their racial discrimination in Western interests in the region while ignoring the basic concepts of international legitimacy and human rights - which they claim to champion and defend. The most telling proof that they are simply paying lip-service to such lofty principles is the strident campaign which has been waged by Western circles to allow Soviet Jews to emigrate to occupied Palestine and the silence they have kept with regard to the right of the Palestinian people to return to their land. The United States of America, the champion of peace and human rights, is denying the Palestinian people, of all the peoples of the world, the opportunity to exercise its right to self-determination.

(Mr. Kadrat, Iraq)

Iraq reiterates its call for serious study to be given to the initiative launched by President Saddam Hussein on 12 August 1990. That initiative was elaborated in the statement delivered on behalf of Mr. Tariq Aziz, the Foreign Minister of Iraq, before the United Nations General Assembly. That initiative calls upon the international community to apply common criteria and principles to all the problems of the region, foremost among which is the Palestinian cause, of which the United Nations has been seized for more than 40 years. The solution of that problem should aim at establishing security and stability in the region in compliance with international law, justice and United Nations resolutions.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Iraq for his congratulations addressed to the presidency.

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

Mr. MOHIUDDIN (Bangladesh): Mr. President, Israel has put this Council to a severe test. I have not the slightest doubt that under your astute leadership the Council will acquit itself commendably and well. It is a pleasure for my delegation to see you in the Chair, not least because Britain and Bangladesh enjoy the closest ties - but also because at such trying times as these we need someone of your prodigious capabilities to guide us. Similarly, I should like to offer my felicitations to Ambassador Vorontsov of the Soviet Union for conducting the proceedings of the Council last month so admirably and with great distinction.

Israel's atrocities and its infliction of the blood bath on the streets of the Holy City of Jerusalem yesterday are an affront to the Council. The eyes of the world are focused on this Council. The confidence that the world has placed in the Council, made so abundantly clear in recent weeks, must not be allowed to be

(Mr. Mohiuddin, Bangladesh)

shaken. The Council's credibility cannot be allowed to erode. The Council cannot afford that now. There is too much at stake.

We have more than ever before looked up to you in the Council in recent times as the protector of the weak. We have seen you as the proponents of fair play and justice. We have applauded your determination to uphold the principles enshrined in our Charter. We have gone along with you regardless of the costs to us. Today, we lay before you a case where a Member State, Israel, has been perpetrating the most horrendous violations of civilized behaviour. We urge you to act in the same vein as during the preceding weeks. We expect you to stand up for right and to condemn wrong. You cannot, you must not, disappoint us.

Yesterday's tragedy ought not to have taken the world by surprise. Israel has made no effort to disguise its duplicity. Its repressive measures to quash the intifadah have taken new and far more ominous forms. The Council's repeated calls on Israel to abide by the relevant Geneva Convention have fallen on deaf ears. Despite the appeal of the international community, widespread violation of human rights persists.

Bangladesh's position on the issue is consistent and categorical. The intifadah has testified to the rejection of the occupation status quo. Neither dehumanization, detention, banishment nor death has deterred the Palestinian resistance. Its cause is founded on justice. Israel must withdraw from all territories occupied since 1967. The inalienable national rights of the Palestinians, including the right to a State of their own in their homeland with Jerusalem as its capital, must be restored. We support the convening of an international peace conference with the participation of all parties concerned, the permanent members of the Council and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO),

(Mr. Mohiuddin, Bangladesh)

on an equal footing. It is time the Council acted to bring this about. The consensus on this is unquestionably growing and is almost complete.

The acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible under international law. No transgressor State must be permitted to continue its illegality with impunity. No aggressor must be allowed to profit from acts of aggression. These are fundamental values that all of us present here and outside cherish. These are the basic ground rules of international conduct which all of us must adhere to. In pursuance of these ethics and in defence of these beliefs we have sent soldiers far from home. These principles have tied us, round this table and outside this Chamber, in a common bond. Let not this bond be shred asunder by the obduracy of a single irrational entity.

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

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

Mr. KHARRAZI (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset I should like to express my congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. I am confident that with your diplomatic abilities you will guide the Council to effective and concrete results. I should like to extend my appreciation also to your predecessor, Ambassador Vorontsov, for the distinguished manner in which he conducted the Council's work in September.

The situation in occupied Palestine has been discussed in the Security Council since the early days of the occupation. During these years the régime occupying Palestine has continued its crimes against the innocent people of Palestine. Murdering and injuring Muslim people of Palestine, expelling the Palestinian inhabitants, changing the demographic composition of the occupied territories

(Mr. Kharrazi, Islamic
Republic of Iran)

through the deportation of Palestinians and the illegal migration of Jews, and efforts aimed at eliminating the Islamic character of the occupied territories: all this has shown the barbaric nature of the Zionist régime and its total disregard of the Charter and principles of international law.

Unfortunately, during the past four decades these cruel actions have been dealt with by the international community in such a way that the Zionist régime has felt free to continue its violation of all recognized rules of international law against the inhabitants of the occupied territories. Now the big question is: How long can we wait and witness the continuation of these acts of lawlessness and violations of basic human rights? Is it not time to resort to the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter against the persistent Zionist aggressions, which indeed constitute a threat to international peace and security?

(Mr. Kharrazi, Islamic
Republic of Iran)

Yesterday morning the Zionist forces committed yet another act of aggression against the Haram Al-Shareef and the Moslem people of Palestine. So far, more than 20 innocent civilians have been martyred and more than 200 people have been wounded as a result of the latest brutality by the Zionist régime. This premeditated crime was another attempt by the Zionists to desecrate the Islamic Holy Place and to show the world that they have a free hand to commit crimes with impunity.

Unfortunately, recent events in the Persian Gulf caused by the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait have diverted the attention of the whole world from the atrocities committed by the Zionist régime in the occupied territories. The international community has supported the Security Council's expeditious response to the Iraqi aggression. This shows that the Council is and must be in a position to shoulder its legal responsibilities vis-à-vis all acts of aggression in different parts of the world. The current situation in Palestine presents a major challenge to the Security Council to prove that the Council is an independent body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security and that it refrains from employing a double standard in dealing with different crises. We believe it is high time for the Council to meet the justified expectations of world public opinion and to act promptly by adopting effective measures under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter against the Zionist régime for its persistent aggression against the Islamic land of Palestine.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his kind words addressed to the presidency.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Mauritania, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I

(The President)

propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance 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. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud (Mauritania), Mr. Hasbi (Morocco), Mr. Umer (Pakistan), Mr. Al-Ni'mah (Qatar) and Mr. Al-Shaali (United Arab Emirates) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

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

Mr. OULD MOHAMED MAHMOUD (Mauritania) (interpretation from French): Allow me at the outset to extend to you, Sir, my warm congratulations on the United Kingdom's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. I should also like to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Yuliy Vorontsov of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, for the skill and efficiency with which he guided the Council's work last month.

I shall try not to take too much of the Council's precious time, particularly since my country fully endorses the statement made by the representative of Algeria, who spoke on behalf of the delegations of the States members of the Arab Maghreb Union.

This is not, of course, the first time the Council has been called upon to take a decision on Israeli actions that have gravely violated the rights of the Palestinian people, actions that complicate an already tragic situation and that undermine efforts being made to reach a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict - that is, efforts to ensure the long-awaited convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East.

(Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud,
Mauritania)

The United Nations, and in particular the Security Council, has, along with other responsible bodies, been discussing the question of Palestine ever since the creation of the State of Israel. Since 1947 the Council has adopted countless resolutions on this question, and the rejections of those resolutions by the occupying Power have been equally numerous.

The international community has daily been a witness to all kinds of acts of provocation and aggression against the Palestinian people.

In other words, this new massacre committed in a Holy Place, and at the very time when the Muslim community is commemorating the anniversary of its Prophet's birth, is unfortunately nothing new. It is a further example of the policy of the physical elimination of the Palestinians, just as this meeting is another in the habitual protests by the international community against violations of law. However, is it not high time that this body took effective measures to put an end to the horrible massacres of Palestinians as well as to Israeli actions that now, more than ever before, run the risk of triggering confrontations that this time will neither be brief nor limited to the region.

At the very time when the Council is still seized of the question of the mass immigration of Soviet Jews - an immigration that, as we know, is aimed at altering the demographic structure of the occupied Arab territories - and at the very time when the international community, and the Security Council in particular, is dealing with a crisis that poses a threat to regional and general peace, can we allow Israel to continue to perpetrate its serious misdeeds? Today, it would be very difficult to accept inaction or passivity by the Council. Such behaviour would have tragic implications for the future of peace, particularly today, when everywhere in the world, with the exception of the Middle East, the news is of the

(Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud,
Mauritania)

quest, through dialogue, for solutions to all conflicts and of growing co-operation between different States and political systems.

As the Council is doubtless well aware, the new eruption of violence, like the immigration of the Soviet Jews, is occurring in plain sight and with the knowledge of everyone. The Israeli authorities show total contempt for the concerns of the international community, including those of the General Assembly, whose most recent resolution, 44/2, on the subject demands that the occupying Power desist immediately from policies and practices that violate the rights of the Palestinians.

This new massacre and the repeated statements by Israeli leaders about the need for a "Greater Israel" to meet the demands of the influx of immigrants are a result of the policy of settlement and immigration. However paradoxical it may be, in this case the effect is creating the cause.

Yet it is all too obvious that the repression, the immigration and the annexation of new territories, combined with the methodical genocide to which the international community is witness, are a long way from achieving the Israeli dream.

(Mr. Ould Mohamed Mahmoud,
Mauritania)

The intifadah, launched in December 1987, and the subsequent proclamation of the State of Palestine are proof - if proof were needed - that peace in that region requires that account be taken of the irrefutable facts, including the struggle of the Palestinian people for respect for its inalienable rights.

My country, which takes every opportunity to reiterate its sincere commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, fervently hopes that the Security Council will not leave the Palestinian people unprotected.

My delegation considers that because of its special responsibilities the Council must act finally to take concrete, effective measures against growing injustice in Palestine, against the massacres committed yesterday in Al-Quds on the precinct of the Mosque, against mass immigration and against all anachronistic acts which quite simply run against the tide of history and undermine the gains achieved through the détente that is so precious to the international community in the promotion of universal security and peace.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mauritania for the words he spoke about the presidency.

The next speaker, the last I intend to call upon before we adjourn for lunch, is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. UMER (Pakistan): I should like to begin, Sir, by extending to you the sincere felicitations of my delegation on your assumption of the high office of President of the Security Council for the month of October. We are confident that your great experience and tested abilities will enable the Council to deal successfully with the momentous and sensitive developments of which it is currently seized.

(Mr. Umer, Pakistan)

I should also like to avail myself of this opportunity to express our gratitude to your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Yuliy Vorontsov, Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union, who handled the work of the Council with great distinction and skill last month.

The consideration of the situation in the occupied Arab territories is yet another sombre reminder, if any were needed, that the international community has not been able to resolve what is perhaps the oldest issue on its agenda. The question of Palestine has been figuring in the debates of the United Nations for about four decades, and we are no nearer to a solution of the problem today than we were 42 years ago, when it first came up for the consideration of the world body.

All over the world people are vividly conscious of the cruel fate which has overtaken the Palestinian people under alien occupation in the land of their birth, and as refugees scattered in foreign lands. This tragedy is of such proportions that familiarity with it does not blunt the edge of our sensitivity or render us immune from suffering the pangs of conscience it generates.

In the West Bank and in Gaza the indomitable people of Palestine face a relentless oppressor pursuing a calculated policy of harassment and terrorism aimed at compelling them to abandon the land on which they have lived for over a millennium and where they have built a vibrant nation and a proud civilization. Outside the land of their birth, most of them suffer the indescribable hardships of deprivation and life in exile.

The intifadah of the Palestinian people, now in its thirty-fourth month, is being brutally suppressed. The events of yesterday constitute the most glaring example of Israeli contempt for Palestinian human rights. It was with deep shock and horror that the international community learned of the killing of 22 unarmed civilian Palestinians and the wounding of almost 200 others in the compound of one of the holiest shrines of Islam.

(Mr. Umer, Pakistan)

According to today's New York Times, the death toll was the highest for a single day since the start of the intifadah - in which at least 793 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli troops.

This latest act of Israeli violence against unarmed civilians is outrageous. The mindlessness of the action was matched by its brutality. Innocent people were murdered in cold blood. However, the incident was not an isolated episode, but stemmed directly from the policy of Israeli repression, which has recently been intensified. The latest killings were an outcome of the Israeli attitude of total disregard for Palestinian human rights and the inevitable result of the official Israeli policy of oppression against the Palestinian people.

My Government has categorically condemned yesterday's killings. A press release issued on 8 October states:

"The Government and the people of Pakistan are appalled by the brutal, inhuman and senseless orgy of violence resorted to by the Israeli army and extremist secular groups against unarmed civilians on 8 October in the Holy City of Jerusalem, in which 22 Palestinians were martyred and more than 200 wounded.

"Israel's continued disregard of human rights and callous attitude towards international public opinion deserve condemnation in the strongest possible terms. We call on the international community to raise its voice against this outrage and to initiate appropriate action to restrain Israel from blatantly violating norms of human values.

"We extend our sincere and heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and pray for the early recovery of those who were wounded."

The continuously deteriorating conditions inside the occupied territories are rendered more poignant by the bleakness of the prospects for a solution of the Palestinian question on the basis of the realization of the inalienable national

(Mr. Umer, Pakistan)

rights of that people, including a State of its own in Palestine. The numerous international initiatives, including the peace proposals by Chairman Yasser Arafat, aimed at seeking a just solution of the Palestinian problem have so far foundered on the rock of Israeli intransigence.

The first step would obviously be to protect the defenceless Palestinian population from the continuing brutal assaults by the Israeli authorities. The United Nations must act resolutely now to uphold the application of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 1949.

We therefore support the proposal for the establishment of a Security Council commission to be dispatched immediately to examine the situation in Jerusalem and other Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967. The Security Council must have access to accurate and factual information in order to ensure the protection of the Palestinian people.

Simultaneously, urgent efforts need to be undertaken to find a just and lasting settlement in Palestine. The modality for such a settlement is available in the form of an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation, on an equal footing. The requirements of the situation demand that this goal be pursued with greater urgency.

(Mr. Umer, Pakistan)

As the Secretary-General himself has said,

"today's incidents are a tragic illustration of the dangers inherent in the stalemate that has for far too long characterized the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." (Press release - SG/SM/4502)

I take this opportunity to reaffirm the abiding commitment of the Government and people of Pakistan to the Palestinian cause, a commitment which goes as far back as the beginnings of our own struggle for independence. Pakistan will continue to exert all efforts and extend all support for the deliverance of the Palestinian people from Israeli occupation.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his warm words addressed to the presidency.

In view of the time, I intend to adjourn the meeting now. With the concurrence of members of the Council, the next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of the item on the agenda will take place this afternoon at 5.30 p.m.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

