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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 2 December 1988, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. CAPUTO

(Argentina)

- Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work [137 and 8] (continued)
 - (a) Report of the Secretary-General
 - (b) Draft resolution
 - (c) Report of the Fifth Committee

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. RAUL ALFONSIN, PRESIDENT OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Argentine Republic.

Mr. Raul Alfonsin, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Argentine Republic, His Excellency Mr. Raul Alfonsin, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President ALFONSIN (interpretation from Spanish): I have come before the Assembly with an open heart at a very special time in the life of my country. We are witnessing a new beginning in the world. Man, in his historic quest for perfection, has come to stake his ultimate claim: absolute respect for his dignity. His claim is urgent. There is no room for delaying rhetoric, nor is there impunity for procrastination. Wherever he may be, man feels the urgent need to struggle to achieve that which he knows is required for the enjoyment of full respect for his dignity.

(President Alfonsin)

This is not a random quest, because he knows his objective. It does not define an ideology, because it is guided by ethics. It does not implement a strategy, because it is supported by the development of natural law. It is simply a vital impulse, or, better still, life itself. In brief, it is the immutable fact of his constant progress.

Sometimes man lacks freedom, or the possibility of realizing the rights and individual privileges inherent to his human condition. Sometimes man does not even have the possibility of protecting his rights, because they are denied to him by social conditions.

The peoples of the world who make history have decided to fight for a freer, more just and more egalitarian society. The developed world, in terms of the various philosophies that guide it, has started out on its quest for fundamental answers.

This need to respond to man is more important in orienting political action than economic problems or technological gaps. In my view, it is even more important than the dangers of the arms race.

This is the new peace, which is defined through man, who is the protagonist of history and the ultimate subject of every imaginable norm. This new dialogue is aimed at bringing about orderly change without the need to sacrifice any part of our inalienable human rights. For this reason, disarmament, détente and solutions to regional conflicts not only ensure peace but also bring the industrialized countries closer to a new qualitative change in their societies. In fact, the industrialized world, without exception, is moving towards a new frontier of progress, which will not be stopped by the logical and, at times, tragic vicissitudes of life.

The world needed peace. I think that peace can now change the world.

(President Alfonsin)

However, this new peace requires new ways of thinking and acting. This is the time to lay down foundations, because man has so decided.

The developed world is finding its answers, but this is not enough, because, at the same time, in the developing countries concrete answers cannot be given to the demands of the times. Stagnation and poverty prevent the fulfilment of man's needs, and man, out of respect for his own dignity, calls for a juster, freer, more egalitarian society.

In the previous era of peace after the last war, the protagonists prepared themselves in the economic field to ensure reconstruction. Those were the times of Bretton Woods and of the agreements between the COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Co-operation) countries. Surely in the Western world it was understood that the implementation of tough economic policies had in the past generated abnormal dictatorships in Europe?

In the new era of peace, it is equally urgent for the protagonists to reach basic agreements to accompany its civilizing march. However, today we have different protagonists, and the peace of the future is not exclusively linked to East and West: there is a new and perhaps principal protagonist - the South.

We may achieve the necessary conditions for world stability, such as disarmament and the defusing of regional conflicts, but nobody can be certain of having achieved lasting peace if growth in the developing countries does not solve the problems which man poses in his quest for dignity. His Holiness Pope Paul VI was right when he affirmed that the new name for peace was development. In the previous uncertain and dangerous peace, the perspective on problems and the image of two thirds of mankind was distorted for decades, during which regional conflicts were experienced as part of the East-West confrontation and, therefore, as problems the solution of which called for a military-strategic approach alone. This new

(President Alfonsin)

peace must open up the way to a different kind of thinking about the relationships between peace, security and growth.

It is clear today that the ecological imbalances which have come about in some countries can seriously affect other countries. In this instance, interdependence is clear. What seems to have escaped attention is that today the economy is as good a conductor of imbalances as is the atmosphere. This interdependence has turned the planet into a ship in which some societies travel first class, but that privilege will be of little use if there is a bomb hidden below. We must defuse that bomb, not only because it is a matter of justice, but also because it is in the concrete interest of all.

Let us profit by the experience which led us to the exceptional political situation which we witness today. Obviously, nothing could have been achieved by way of agreements between the Soviet Union and the United States of America, and no regional conflict could have been defused, if some basic attitudes had not become part of the behaviour of the parties. These basic attitudes are flexibility in their positions, the courage to de-escalate, imagination to find unconventional paths and boldness to initiate new dialogues. The same holds true here: there is a need to de-escalate and to use the imagination, ultimately, to enter into dialogue in order to find new paths towards a strategy for development.

Often, the demands of some and the refusals of others have been expressed in terms of confrontation. Often, to initiate a dialogue was interpreted as a sign of weakness. Today, it is clear, from recent events in the political and military spheres, that true strength lies in the readiness to maintain a dialogue on reasonable and rational grounds. This requires the support of all, not only of the countries in the North but also of those in the South.

(President Alfonsin)

Dialogue requires only that we recognize the need to work together to solve a common problem; indeed, new formulas for development do not mean that we should shirk any of our own responsibilities or renounce our national economic discipline. They will mean only bringing to the economic sphere what already exists in the political sphere.

That is why the Organization, more than ever active and imaginative in the pursuit of peace, is formulating measures to deal with this necessary stage of international economic dialogue. The initiatives taking shape here, such as the idea of a special session on development and the proposal to begin work on defining possible areas of consensus, are extremely urgent; I hope they will materialize within the next few days. They are not put forward in a spirit of confrontation; they are based solely on the fact that, through dialogue, we can build a world that is, to put it simply, worthy of mankind.

My country believes that such initiatives are of vital importance to guarantee the stability of achievements in the military and political spheres. I insist that this is not a concern of the South only. It is a concern of all; of all mankind.

Next week the top leaders of the United States of America and the Soviet Union will meet here in New York. That will certainly be an occasion for consolidating what the two super-Powers have already done together. I hope, however, that it will also be an occasion for thinking about what remains to be done. There must be no repetition of the events that followed 1945, when it took so long to understand how to safeguard peace after the War.

Indeed, more than 40 years ago Niels Bohr said that "we are in a completely new situation which cannot be resolved through war". It has taken a perilously long time to grasp the meaning of his enlightened views. We have had to wait

(President Alfonsin)

nearly half a century for the end of war and the beginning of the atomic era to make way for peace. Today, that peace also requires worthy standards of living for all. With that so obvious, we must avoid waiting too long.

It is time for new initiatives to mobilize the political will of States, with imagination and flexibility, to find the most appropriate paths and the most fitting environments to begin a practical dialogue on growth and development.

As I said, I am certain new initiatives will soon be taken in the United Nations, to whose Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, we express our special appreciation for his clear-sighted and tenacious work for peace.

For almost half a century, since the last War, we have lived in a precariously balanced world, where conflicts of all kinds have proliferated in the third world. To the third world's own burdens, we must add that of often being the ideological battle-ground of the East-West conflict.

At the root of many difficult situations in those regions are stagnation, marginalization and extreme poverty. In the last decade, many medium-sized and small countries have been crushed under the weight of servicing their debt, by a drastic fall in the prices of the raw materials that are their main exports, by an unjust international economic order, by discriminatory policies in foreign trade, and by the absurd transfer of capital to more developed countries - which amounts to a reverse Marshall Plan several times over.

Expectations unmet cause desperation, which always favours the adventurism of the authoritarians. Time and again we have told them they would not succeed. We must confront them with the same courage with which we carry out economic policies, without making opportunistic concessions.

(President Alfonsin)

But I can say to all the politicians of all the developed countries that the touching solidarity they express to those persecuted by dictatorships is not enough. It is post-mortem solidarity which has to be expressed because when the time came those countries could not stand in solidarity with democracies.

We want to be protagonists in this new peace.

We want to respond to mankind as it demands respect for its dignity. Can anyone believe it too ambitious to work towards what is today the primary national goal of every one of the developed countries?

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Argentine Republic for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Raul Alfonsin, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

The meeting was suspended at 3.50 p.m. and resumed at 5 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 137 and 8 (continued)

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS WITH THE HOST COUNTRY: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

- (a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/43/909)
- (b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/43/L.43)
- (c) REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE (A/43/910)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): Under agenda items 137 and 8 the Assembly has before it draft resolution A/43/L.43 which has just been circulated as document A/43/L.43. I have to announce that the following countries have added their names to the list of sponsors: Algeria, Bahrain, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Yemen and Zambia.

Before proceeding to consideration of these items, I should like to remind the Assembly of rule 78 of its rules of procedure which reads, in part, as follows:

"As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

In view of the limited time available and the desire of Members to dispose of item 137 expeditiously, I suggest that we proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/43/L.43 even though it has been circulated only this morning.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to my proposal.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I call on the representative of the United Arab Emirates, who will introduce the draft resolution, in his capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group, on behalf of the Arab States Members of the United Nations.

Mr. AL-SHAALI (United Arab Emirates) (interpretation from Arabic): As late as 7 o'clock last night the General Assembly still hoped that the United States would give a favourable answer to our call for it to reconsider its decision and issue a visa to Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, so that he might participate in the meetings of the General Assembly devoted to consideration of the question of Palestine. Despite successive American statements and refusals, we had indeed hoped that the voice of reason and a sense of commitment to the law would triumph over narrow self-interest. We had hoped that the United States would reconsider its decision in response to General Assembly resolution 43/48, of 30 November last, by which the overwhelming majority of countries of the world declared that the decision of the United States not to issue a visa to Mr. Arafat was a violation of the Headquarters Agreement.

With the exception of the United States of America, which is the cause of the problem and a party to it, Israel, which is party to every United States foreign policy decision, and of the United Kingdom, whose position no one understands, members of the General Assembly - 151 of them - have deplored the American decision and requested the United States to reconsider.

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab Emirates)

We had hoped that the United States would abide by the behests of its legal system and its affirmation that its government processes were ruled by law and not by personalities and that it would therefore respect the legal stipulations of the Headquarters Agreement and uphold international legality as clearly and unanimously called for in resolution 43/48. However, the American administration has chosen not to respond to the opportunity afforded to it, persisted in its erroneous stand and continued to flagrantly violate the Headquarters Agreement, thus defying the unanimous will of the international community, clearly reflected in the Secretary-General's report of 1 December 1988 (A/43/909 and Corr.1).

Faced with this intransigent American stance, the General Assembly of the United Nations, at this juncture has no alternative but to take the step which the United States of America has compelled it to take, namely, the interim measure of transferring consideration of the agenda item "Question of Palestine" to the United Nations Office at Geneva.

In the light of all this, I have the honour to present draft resolution A/43/L.43 of 1 December 1988, on behalf of my delegation and as Chairman of the Arab Group, and on behalf of the delegations of the Arab countries members of the League of Arab States as well as the delegations of Bangladesh, Cuba, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Yugoslavia and Zimbabwe.

The draft resolution consists of three preambular and three operative paragraphs.

The first paragraph of the preamble recalls resolution 43/48, which the General Assembly has already adopted, and stresses two elements: that the General Assembly has urged the host country to abide scrupulously by the provisions of the Headquarters Agreement and has called upon it to reconsider and reverse its decision which denied Mr. Yasser Arafat the required entry visa.

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United
Arab Emirates)

The second paragraph of the preamble states that the Assembly has considered the report of the Secretary-General, who had been requested, in resolution 43/48, to contact the United States Government to ascertain any new position it might have taken following the adoption of that resolution. That second paragraph of the preamble indicates that the United States Government has persisted in its refusal to issue the visa.

The third paragraph of the preamble affirms the right of persons mentioned in section 11 of the Headquarters Agreement to enter the United States of America without any impediments for the purpose of transit to or from the Headquarters district. This means that the United States Government is obligated to grant visas to such persons. It is clear that Mr. Yasser Arafat falls within that category of persons.

I should like to turn now to the operative paragraphs of the draft resolution.

Operative paragraph 1 contains a moral judgement, which the General Assembly must make, given the refusal of the United States Government to accept its request to reconsider its decision. The least one can say here is that the refusal should be deplored.

Operative paragraph 2, providing for the transfer of consideration of the item on the question of Palestine from the United Nations Headquarters in New York to the United Nations Office at Geneva, states that the consideration of that item shall take place in a plenary meeting, during the period from 13 to 15 December 1988. That has two basic implications: first, that the transfer is not a result of a wish or choice on the part of the General Assembly but is due to a case of force majeure created by the United States decision which violates the Headquarters Agreement; secondly, that that transfer is without prejudice to or

(Mr. Al-Shaali, United Arab Emirates)

change of the normal practice of considering all agenda items, including the question of Palestine, in plenary meetings in New York.

In operative paragraph 3 the Secretary-General is requested to make the necessary arrangements for implementation of the draft resolution and he is authorized to adjust the schedule of meetings at the United Nations Office at Geneva during those days, so that the question of Palestine may be considered.

I should like to thank all the Member States which voted in favour of resolution 43/48. In fact they have voted in favour of the good of the United Nations and its universality. We hope that the present draft resolution will be adopted, as was the earlier one.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes before the voting. May I remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. BEIN (Israel): As the Assembly may recall, Israel voted against resolution 43/48 of 30 November 1988.

Since its inception in 1964 the PLO has operated as a terrorist organization dedicated to one goal: the destruction and liquidation of a State Member of the United Nations. The covenant of the PLO and its bloody acts of terror stand in complete opposition to the word and spirit of the United Nations Charter.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I understand the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization wishes to raise a point of order. As an observer to this Organization he is not authorized to raise a point of order.

Would the speaker continue, please.

Mr. BEIN (Israel): In 1974 Israel strenuously objected to the resolution of the General Assembly which unjustly accorded to the PLO observer status in the United Nations. The position of the Government of Israel has not changed. Accordingly, Israel will vote against draft resolution A/43/L.43, which

"deplores the failure of the host country to respond favourably to the request of the General Assembly contained in its resolution 43/48".

The PLO has not abandoned terrorism. The nature of the PLO has not changed. As in the past, it is a terrorist organization in close contact with, and of assistance to, practically every insurgent and terrorist organization in countries throughout Europe, Africa, Asia and Central and South America. The killing of women and children in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem is clearly condoned. The burning alive of Jewish families is encouraged.

Even as the PNC was meeting in Algiers, PLO terrorists of Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction were busy. Attempts were made to infiltrate Israel to take hostages and carry out mass murders. One group was caught by the Israeli Defence Forces.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I apologize to the speaker but the representative of Syria has asked to speak, I understand on a point of order.

Mr. AL-MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): The statement now being delivered by the representative of the settler Zionist entity bears absolutely no relation to the item under consideration in the General Assembly; nor is it an explanation of vote. I therefore call upon the President to stop the speaker from continuing his statement.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Syria for the information. We take note of it, and I call upon the representative of Israel to take note of that observation and continue.

Mr. BEIN (Israel): The representative of Syria has just demonstrated in miniature the problem facing us in the Middle East. They do not even want to listen to us.

One group of those terrorists who came to our borders was caught by the Israeli defence forces. Another was confronted by a unit of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and two Lebanese hostages were murdered in cold blood by the PLO terrorists.

In Algiers, Abul Abbas, a member of the PLO's "executive committee", the mastermind behind the hijacking of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro in 1985, even joked callously about the murder of the 69-year-old American Jewish passenger, Leon Klinghoffer: "Perhaps he went for a swim", he said.

The "covenant" of the PLO was adopted in 1964, three years prior to the Six Day War -

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I am sorry to interrupt the representative of Israel again. I understand that the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. TREIKI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, I request you to ask the speaker to heed your observation, for

(Mr. Treiki, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

we are now dealing with the draft resolution and not with any extraneous matters. Would you please reiterate your request that he abide by your observation.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We are dealing with a procedural resolution on matters which are obviously sensitive for the entire international community. Let us try to settle this question in the best possible manner, avoiding a climate of confrontation in this Hall, which is unnecessary and inappropriate, given our purposes. Taking those considerations into account, and insisting on the procedural nature of the draft resolution before us, I call upon the Assembly to allow the representative of Israel to continue with his statement.

Mr. BEIN (Israel): Mr. President, all I wish to do is to explain the reason for Israel's vote.

I was speaking about the "covenant" of the PLO of 1964, which refers to pre-1967 Israel only. It clearly states that the boundaries of the Palestine which it lays claim to are not meant to be negotiated boundaries. Compromise with Israel is ruled out. Since then, the PLO's objective of "liberation of the whole of Palestine" has not changed.

On 22 October 1988, Abd Al-Rahim Ahmed, a senior member of the PLO's "executive committee" and head of the "Arab Liberation Front", explained in the United Arab Emirates Al-Biyan:

"... U.N. (partition) Resolution 181 (of 1947) tore away part of Palestine in order to establish the 'State of Israel' ... The acceptance of the decision to evacuate Israeli forces from the 1967 borders is the peak, but not the end, of the ongoing struggle. The Palestinians will continue to struggle until the whole of Palestine will become the state of all the Palestinians ...".

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

Some delegates may wish to replace the shores of the East River with the picturesque "Lac de Geneve", even if only for a few days, but let us not forget that this departure from the routine course of our work, as appealing as it may seem to some delegates, would tax the burdened budget of the Organization with expenses of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Moreover, the Assembly is asked to pack its bags and travel to another continent just for the dubious pleasure of lending an ear to a person who deliberately conceived, instigated and organized some of this era's most cruel atrocities against innocent civilians of many nations.

The delegation of Israel does not view the circumstances as compelling or justifying the unprecedented convening of the General Assembly in Geneva. The debate in question can take place in New York in such a manner that all views will be heard, thus avoiding the considerable financial implications which would accompany a move to Geneva.

We have been told in this chamber that the latest PNC decisions in Algiers harbour a new message of peace in relation to the Arab-Israeli conflict. I should like to state here that there is no country in the Middle East which desires and strives for peace more than Israel does. Israel's unambiguous and crystal-clear desire for peace with all its neighbours was stated in the founding document of the State of Israel. It is part of Israel's very essence.

Yet the Arab States as a whole avoided recognizing the right of the Jewish people to their homeland in Israel. Since Israel's rebirth, no Arab country, with the notable exception of Egypt, has unequivocally sought or proposed a viable concept of negotiation and peace with Israel which would guarantee and take account of the interests of both sides in the conflict.

All Israel wants is to coexist peacefully with all States in the region. It has signed a peace agreement with the most prominent Arab State, Egypt, and is

(Mr. Bein, Israel)

yearning and willing to negotiate directly with all its neighbours. The basis and goal of such negotiations would be to reach peace agreements which will take account of the interests of both Israelis and Arabs.

The only commonly accepted basis for political settlement of the conflict is Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which take account of the interests of both sides.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I apologize for interrupting the representative of Israel. The representative of Saudi Arabia has asked to speak on a point of order.

Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia): It seems that the speaker does not realize that we are not discussing a draft resolution on the question of Palestine. This is a draft resolution concerning the question of moving the discussion to Geneva, under the item entitled "Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country; organization of work of the forty-third regular session of the General Assembly". I hope that the President will ask him to limit his discourse to that subject so that we do not waste our time listening to a monologue that has no meaning at the present time.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We take note of the point of order raised by the representative of Saudi Arabia. The speaker has 30 seconds left. I would beg the representative of Israel to make use of his 30 seconds.

Mr. BEIN (Israel): The PLO specialized in the hijacking of aeroplanes and cruise ships. Now it seems that they have expanded their activities and are trying to hijack the General Assembly. Accordingly, the delegation of Israel will vote against draft resolution A/43/L.43.

Mr. OKUN (United States of America): My Government has already stated that it does not favour convening the General Assembly in Geneva to consider the question of Palestine, agenda item 37, because we believe that the change of venue is unnecessary. None the less, we have said that we would not oppose such a move and that the United States would be represented if a meeting were held in Geneva. I wish to reaffirm that position.

(Mr. Okun, United States)

We object to the draft resolution before the Assembly today, however, because it includes language that is unnecessary and unacceptable to my Government. This could have been a procedural draft resolution, but some were not content with that and drafted it in substantive terms. The draft resolution deplores the fact that the United States has declined to reverse its decision to deny Mr. Arafat a visa, a justifiable decision taken for compelling reasons. Moreover, as established procedure recognizes, the "right of persons" to enter the United States under section 11 of the Headquarters Agreement is subject to the right of the United States to deny entry to individuals in order to safeguard our national security. Consequently, my Government must vote against this draft resolution.

Mr. CANETE (Paraguay) (interpretation from Spanish): Draft resolution A/43/L.43, which my delegation will support, is consistent with the provisions of resolution 43/48, recently adopted by the General Assembly. My delegation regrets the intransigence that prevails, since this is not conducive to positive results.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/43/L.43. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of this draft resolution has been issued as document A/43/910. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against: Israel, United States of America

Abstaining: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/43/L.43 was adopted by 154 votes to 2, with one abstention (resolution 43/49).

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I call now on those representatives wishing to speak in explanation of vote.

Mr. ZEPOS (Greece): In this Assembly, two days ago, I stated on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community that we believed, as we still do, that, in accordance with the Headquarters Agreement and the opinion of the Legal Counsel of the United Nations, the Chairman of the Executive Council of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Mr. Yasser Arafat, should have been allowed to address the Assembly in New York.

As far as the third preambular paragraph of the resolution just adopted is concerned, we concur with the interpretation of the Headquarters Agreement given in the opinion of the United Nations Legal Counsel.

Mr. KAGAMI (Japan): My delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/43/L.43, which has just been adopted. However, we regret that the third preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 1 still contain wording that is inappropriate.

We should also like to make our position clear at this juncture that, in principle, the Organization's New York Headquarters is the proper venue for General Assembly plenary meetings and that, in the interest of maintaining the strength of the Organization, this principle should be strictly observed hereafter.

Mr. FORTIER (Canada): Canada voted in favour of draft resolution A/43/L.43 in keeping with our belief that, at this time in particular, all those voices which could make a contribution to resolving the difficult political situation in the Middle East should be heard in this forum. We regret, therefore, that the United States Government could not see its way to changing its decision with a view to granting Mr. Arafat a visa for the purpose of addressing the General Assembly in the headquarters city of the United Nations.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

We were pleased that the drafters of the resolution made reference in operative paragraph 2 to the decision to consider the question of Palestine in Geneva being made without prejudice to normal practice. Canada sincerely hopes that in the future normal practice will be consistently followed and that all discussions of items on the agenda of the General Assembly will take place in the headquarters city of the United Nations.

Mr. BOREHAM (Australia): Australia voted in favour of the resolution just adopted by the General Assembly. As we have explained before, Australia regrets the decision of the United States Administration which has brought about this situation. However, we have reservations about the language in operative paragraph 1, which we believe is too strong. Australia would have preferred that operative paragraph not to have been included in this resolution. We would have preferred a wholly procedural text. The Australian Government would like to express the hope that adoption of this resolution will be the end of recriminations on this matter at the General Assembly.

We are pleased to note also that operative paragraph 2 states that this decision is without prejudice to normal practice, and wish to state our view that this move to consider an item of the agenda away from United Nations Headquarters in New York should not set a precedent for the future.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (New Zealand): New Zealand voted for resolution A/43/L.43 since we consider that there are compelling circumstances which, in the present instance, call for the convening of the General Assembly in Geneva.

It is particularly important at the present time that all the parties to the situation in the Middle East have the opportunity to be heard. We would have preferred some aspects of the resolution, in particular operative paragraph 1, to have been couched in more moderate language. In view of our long-standing preference that the General Assembly meet at Headquarters, we particularly endorse the language of operative paragraph 2 of the resolution that the present decision is without prejudice to normal practice.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): In accordance with resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, I now call on the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)): Once again the international community, through the General Assembly, has, within hours, supported and stood firm on what is right and has deplored what is wrong.

I wish to assure the Assembly that the Palestine Liberation Organization would much rather have had the debate on the question of Palestine at the proper venue, here. It is only because of the intransigence of the host country and its lack of respect for international law and legal obligations that the international community has to pick up a bill of more than \$1 million, money which could have been used for something more constructive. I say about \$1 million because the report we have before us shows that the United Nations will have to spend about half a million dollars and the remainder will have to come out of the pockets of delegations that will have to go to Geneva in order to discharge their duties in this question.

(Mr. Terzi, PLO)

Mr. President, we are gratified by this manifestation of solidarity and would have hoped that in the short debate here, as you yourself mentioned, the representatives of one State would have elevated the discussion to the level that it merits and not converted it into a dark alley of obscenities and name calling.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We do not yet have the report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 36, entitled "Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa". If I hear no objection I shall suspend the meeting for a few minutes in order to ascertain when the Assembly can have the report.

The meeting was suspended at 5.45 p.m. and resumed at 5.50 p.m.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We shall not have the report of the Fifth Committee for approximately an hour and fifteen minutes to an hour and a half. It is late but, as we know, next week may be our last week of deliberations here in New York, and we have a very busy schedule. Therefore, I favour continuing our work until late tonight to make sure we conclude our consideration of agenda item 36 today, as envisaged.

I hope that we shall have the report of the Fifth Committee by 7 p.m. Accordingly, I intend to suspend the meeting until then, when we shall begin with explanations of vote.

If there are no objections to the procedure I have suggested, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to it.

It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 5.55 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): First of all, I want to thank representatives for their patience during this waiting period, which proved much longer than expected. Unfortunately, we have not made substantial progress and it is not yet possible for us to begin our work. We still have the same problem; we do not have the report of the Fifth Committee on the financial implications of the various draft resolutions that we have to vote on under agenda item 36. Indeed, the report of the Fifth Committee will not be available in all the languages until very late this evening.

I therefore suggest that we adjourn our meeting now and take up this item again at the beginning of our work on Monday.

Since this means a considerable delay in our work, I am once again going to ask members for their understanding on two points. First, I suggest that we begin our meeting on Monday morning at 9.30 rather than at 10 o'clock. I know that this may cause some inconvenience, but I also know that all members understand the need for us to speed up our work. Secondly, may I ask members to be particularly punctual so that we can resume our consideration of item 36 at 9.30 a.m.

Furthermore, in order to make it possible for us to make progress in considering the report of the Fifth Committee, and to have views thereon, copies of the report in the various languages, will be available tomorrow, Saturday, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., in the Division of General Assembly Affairs, in room 3670 of the Secretariat building. Thus, it will be possible for members to have the document 48 hours before we begin its consideration on Monday.

If there is no objection to this proposal, the Assembly will meet on Monday at 9.30 a.m.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 8.05 p.m.