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President: Mr. Hamilton Shirley AMERASINGHE
(Sri Lanka).

AGENDA ITEM 29

The situation in the Middle East (*concluded*)

1. The PRESIDENT: The debate on agenda item 29 was concluded yesterday afternoon. I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote on any or all of the draft resolutions and amendments before the Assembly.

2. Mr. HERZOG (Israel): A few days ago [*90th meeting*] I rose to present to the Assembly draft resolution A/31/L.24 on behalf of my delegation. This draft resolution was, as I pointed out, crystal clear, unequivocal and straightforward, and as such represents Israel's policy on the issue of negotiations for peace.

3. We endeavoured by means of this draft resolution to brush aside the smoke-screen of contradictory statements issued by Arab leaders of late, some conciliatory and some warlike, each attuned and adapted to the audience before which it is delivered and the circumstances in which it is delivered.

4. Our purpose was to cut through this smoke-screen and to get down to specifics. Our purpose was to present a draft resolution which, if accepted as we presented it, would have the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East of December 1973 reconvened even tomorrow discussing peace in the Middle East.

5. Our draft resolution served also to clarify what would not be acceptable to us. Our purpose was to reaffirm the centrality of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), because they are the only resolutions which have been accepted by all the States parties to the conflict in the Middle East and by the Geneva Peace Conference as a mechanism for furthering the negotiating process in the Middle East.

6. It was important that we reiterate our position because members have before them a draft resolution submitted at the behest of the Arab States by a number of countries which would change the ground rules of the Geneva Peace Conference, erode its central position in the negotiating

process, substitute in effect the Security Council for the Geneva Conference and substitute a dictated settlement for direct negotiations between the parties.

7. These were the reasons for our draft resolution.

8. As I pointed out when I introduced the draft resolution, we had no illusions whatsoever as to developments in this Assembly following the submission of the draft resolution. It was quite clear that the automatic majority would move into action and would render our initiative ineffective. We nevertheless submitted the draft resolution, hoping against hope that it might perhaps be possible for the Assembly to rise for a moment above considerations of expediency and help our war-torn area to move towards a peace acceptable to all the parties. But this was not to be. On the instructions of the Arab States amendments [*A/31/L.25*] were introduced and the automatic majority moved into action. The amendments vitiate the entire content and purpose of our draft resolution.

9. For years many have criticized us for not putting our trust in the United Nations as a vehicle to bring the Middle East towards peace. We were castigated for not allowing the United Nations to play its part. We did not trust this General Assembly. Now we have been vindicated.

10. We gave the Assembly a chance. It could have seized upon it. Had it done so we might have well have been on the eve of the reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference.

11. But No. This would have not been in accordance with the true policy of the Arab States. This would have meant negotiations. This would have meant as a natural corollary the recognition of Israel's rightful place in the area, because that flows naturally from the fact of negotiating with Israel. This would have meant a rejection of the concept of dictation which seems to dominate this Assembly.

12. We gave the Assembly a chance and it proved again, and vindicated our conviction, that the United Nations General Assembly is not a body which can be entrusted with an impartial peace-making role.

13. Furthermore, the amendments to the Israeli draft resolution make a mockery of all these deliberations. They highlight the utter incongruity of this discussion and, what is worse, a lack of intellectual honesty on the part of those proposing the amendments, for the amendments are self-contradictory. They include two concepts in the same paragraph which are diametrically opposed and utterly irreconcilable. They include mention of the Palestine Liberation Organization [*PLO*] participating in peace negotiations and at the same time they reaffirm Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

14. How many times does this Assembly have to be told that the PLO's policy is diametrically opposed to any move towards peace with Israel? That article 15 of the Palestinian National Covenant calls for the elimination of Zionism? That article 19 of the Covenant declares the existence of the State of Israel to be null and void? That article 20 of the Palestinian National Covenant denies the existence of any historic or religious links between the Jewish people and the Holy Land? That article 21 of the Covenant rejects out of hand any form of compromise on this issue?

15. If the Assembly needs further testimony as to the incongruity of linking the so-called PLO to a Peace Conference and to Security Council resolution 242 (1967) let me quote again point No. 3 of the 1974 PLO 10-point programme,¹ which states that:

“The Palestine Liberation Organization struggles against any scheme or projected Palestinian entity the price of which is recognition [of Israel], peace [with it], secured boundaries, abdication of the national right . . .”.

16. On 26 November—only two to three weeks ago—the PLO leadership issued a statement following its meeting in which it said:

“The revolutionary command emphasizes that it rejects out of hand resolution 242 (1967) as a solution for the Palestinian people.”

17. Only two days ago—on 6 December—two of the leaders of the PLO were quoted as follows in the *Washington Post*. The report states:

“... that while there is talk of diplomacy and peace in the air, the interviews with George Habash, the leader of the so-called Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and Abu Iyad, Yasser Arafat's number two in the PLO, show that they are ultimately dedicated to war to achieve their aims.”

18. As George Habash stated:

“The question of a West Bank-Gaza solution for us as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine is impossible—100 per cent impossible, 1,000 per cent impossible. We simply believe . . . that any partition or recognition of the occupying force (Israel) is unthinkable.”

19. How ridiculous can we make ourselves? Whom do the sponsors think they are fooling? Here they include in the same amendment the PLO, which, as part of its basic philosophy, denies the right of Israel to exist and which rejects any form of compromise based on secure borders or recognition of Israel, and two completely contradictory concepts—a peace conference and Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

20. When each and every member here knows that the PLO rejects Security Council resolution 242 (1967), what sort of an amendment is this, if not a hasty and

ill-conceived ploy to prejudice an Israeli move towards peace?

21. The sponsors of the amendments have presented one so obviously self-contradictory amendment for one purpose and one purpose alone: that is, to sabotage Israel's move towards peace. Words fail me to give expression to the utter incongruity and lack of realism contained in this amendment.

22. Our purpose has been achieved. We had hoped for more, but we had no illusions. We have made it perfectly clear to this body and to the world that we are prepared to go tomorrow to Geneva for a resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference of December 1973, in accordance with the invitation from the Secretary-General dated 18 December 1973,² which the parties to the conflict then received.

23. In this connexion the attempt in the amendments—and indeed in draft resolutions A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27, which have to be considered as constituting one whole according to the explanations given here—to impose pre-conditions as to participation in the Geneva Peace Conference is irreconcilable with the letters of the Co-Chairmen of the Conference dated 18 December 1973 and signed by Ambassador Y. Malik for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Ambassador W. Tapley Bennett, Jr., for the United States of America. Their two letters, communicated by the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council, state:

“The parties have agreed that the Conference should proceed under the joint chairmanship of the Soviet Union and the United States. The parties have also agreed that the question of other participants from the Middle East area will be discussed during the first stage of the Conference.”³

24. For our part, as I have emphasized, we can resume the peace negotiations convened at Geneva in December 1973 as stated, under the co-chairmanship of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, tomorrow or whenever it is desired.

25. This was the message in our draft resolution. This we wanted the Assembly to endorse so as to encourage the process of negotiation towards peace in the Middle East. This the Arab States did not want the Assembly to endorse, so as to prevent the States in the area from entering into negotiations leading to peace and so as to substitute the concept of a dictate from this Assembly for the concept of negotiations.

26. The sponsors of the amendments did a great disservice to the cause of peace in the Middle East in sponsoring amendments which they knew in advance would vitiate the Israeli draft resolution. They did a great disservice to themselves in sponsoring one amendment which is a gross contradiction in itself and which cancels itself out in its own language

¹ Transitional programme of the Palestine Liberation Organization, adopted at the 12th session of the Palestine National Council, held in Cairo from 1 to 8 June 1974.

² See *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-eighth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1973*, document S/11161.

³ *Ibid.*

27. Accordingly, my delegation is left with no alternative but to admit that our fears have been vindicated and regretfully to withdraw draft resolution A/31/L.24. We accordingly withdraw draft resolution A/31/L.24.

28. I should like to say just a few words about draft resolutions A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27. My delegation will vote against both these draft resolutions.

29. There were certain ambiguities in draft resolution A/31/L.27, which might have seemed to be an indication of a softening of attitude on the part of the Arab delegations. Indeed, we felt that this might indicate a change for the better in the attitude of the Arab Governments and a move towards Israel's position. However, regrettably, the Ambassadors of Egypt and Syria pointed out to this body and elsewhere that these two draft resolutions are to be taken as one whole. That makes them completely unacceptable to my delegation, as it should do to all delegations which believe that a solution to a conflict must be based on negotiations and must take into consideration the position of all parties to that conflict. This is not done in these draft resolutions. The explanation of the Egyptian Ambassador injects the PLO as an element committed to the destruction of Israel into the process. We will have none of it. This, as we have made clear time and time again, is utterly unacceptable to our delegation.

30. Finally, these two draft resolutions being presented as a whole are one-sided, biased and hostile to Israel. They do not advance the cause of peace by one step. They attempt to change the ground rules of the Geneva Peace Conference, erode the central position of the negotiating process, substitute the Security Council for the Geneva Peace Conference and, most sinister of all, attempt to introduce the concept of a dictated settlement instead of supporting the Charter, not to mention Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which makes the negotiating process a central element in a solution of all conflicts.

31. For those reasons, my delegation will vote against the two draft resolutions.

32. The PRESIDENT: The representative of Israel, in explaining his vote, has announced a decision to withdraw the draft resolution presented by him and contained in document A/31/L.24.

33. As the Assembly is aware, amendments to that draft resolution were introduced by the representative of Sri Lanka and are contained in document A/31/L.25. May I ask whether the representative of Sri Lanka proposes to take any action under rule 80 of the rules of procedure? Does he wish to speak or to withdraw the amendments?

34. The representative of Sri Lanka has indicated that, on behalf of the sponsors, he wishes to withdraw the amendments contained in document A/31/L.25, which he had introduced.

35. I shall now proceed with further explanations of vote, and I should like to recall to all delegations the rule that any sponsor of a draft resolution does not have the right to explain his vote.

36. Mr. KANTE (Mali) (*interpretation from French*): I do not know whether it is appropriate for me to begin a statement in explanation of vote by extending my delegation's congratulations to the Secretary-General. There is a saying "When in doubt, don't". But I would ask the Secretary-General to allow me to express my joy at his re-election to his post. The confidence that the international community has just shown in him by re-electing him unanimously and by acclamation as Secretary-General of the United Nations confirms the wisdom of Africa's choice. I am sure that this second term of office will enable him to continue his lofty mission in the service of peace, justice and harmony in the world. My delegation will no doubt have an opportunity to express its satisfaction to him during a more appropriate meeting.

37. We have now reached the end of our debates on the Middle East crisis, which has been a constant source of concern to our Organization for more than a quarter of a century. The state of "no war, no peace" which has characterized the situation in the region since the conclusion of the interim agreement⁴ contains in itself the seeds of an international conflagration. The settlement process is blocked, while bitterness and resentment are crystallizing in the minds of the victims of Israeli aggression, who have been living under a cruel occupation régime since 1967.

38. Indeed, Israel's unlawful occupation of the Arab territories of Gaza, Jordan, Sinai, the Golan Heights and the Holy City of Jerusalem has lasted for almost 10 years now. The Tel Aviv Government has been nonchalantly pursuing there a policy of the systematic establishment of Jewish colonies and the methodical integration of these territories into the State of Israel. Expropriation of land, expulsion, deportation, repression, oppression, harassment, destruction of homes and public buildings, "collective punishment", profanation of religious buildings: that is the daily lot of the Arab populations living in those places. Even the premises and staff members of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East—which, after all, are covered by diplomatic immunity—have not escaped the persecution of the Israeli occupation administration. The oil deposits in Sinai are being exploited by the occupying country.

39. While engaging in these arbitrary practices, the Tel Aviv Government is trying to distort the economies of the occupied territories and, by the forced transfer of populations, to change their institutional structures and their demographic and geographic character. Almost 3 million Palestinians, victims of these arbitrary actions, are condemned to a cruel exile. More than half of them have been subjected since June 1967, for the second time, to the vicissitudes, deprivations and humiliations of a life of exile. In other words, their calvary has lasted for more than a quarter of a century.

40. All the attempts and efforts made by our Organization to find a peaceful, just and lasting settlement for the grave Middle East crisis have met with Israel's categorical refusal. We would cite, among other things, the joint efforts of the

⁴ Agreement between Egypt and Israel, signed at Geneva on 4 September 1975. For the text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirtieth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1975*, document S/11818/Add.1.

permanent members of the Security Council, the Rogers Plan, Mr. Jarring's mission, the mediation efforts of the "Committee of Wise Men" of the Organization of African Unity, the Secretary-General's initiatives, the Geneva Peace Conference—not to mention the hundreds of resolutions adopted on the question of Palestine and the Middle East crisis.

41. But, throughout the years, Israel has been unmasked by its expansionist policy. Its isolation in the United Nations increases from year to year. The consensus adopted on 11 November last by the Security Council,⁵ at the end of its series of meetings on Israel's arbitrary actions in the occupied Arab territories, is very revealing in this respect. Today the Tel Aviv Government is condemned by all the Member States of the international community—with one exception—for its aggression against the Palestinian people and the Arab nations. We hope that it will draw the necessary lesson from its isolation and will take the opportunity offered by this thirty-first session of the General Assembly to co-operate with the United Nations in the search for a just and lasting settlement to the Middle East crisis. To do that, it must give up the doctrine of "strategic depth", so dear to it, as well as the nostalgic, outdated slogans such as the so-called "law of return", "a land without a people for a people without a land", "Greater Israel", "historic rights", "secure and defensible borders", and so on.

42. Should we consider the statement made on 17 November 1976 in Jerusalem by General Sharon of The Reserves as a forerunner of such a development? Indeed, General Sharon, who on that day announced the establishment of his own Party, envisaged with regard to the settlement of the Middle East crisis "a comprehensive negotiation in Geneva with all the Arabs, including the Palestine Liberation Organization". He made it clear, moreover, that for him the important thing was to decide not "with whom" one would negotiate, but "what one would negotiate about". That is a statement that we welcome.

43. Did the delegation of Israel, for its part, wish to confirm that development by submitting for the first time to the General Assembly, which it has always despised and flouted, a draft resolution for the settlement of the Middle East crisis? The gaps, the inadequacies and the deliberate omissions that we find in that document—and, fortunately, these have been remedied by the amendments proposed in document A/31/L.25—should not make us lose sight of the very unusual nature of this text.

44. For the first time Israel is recognizing the authority of the United Nations, which it has been defying for 30 years. And for the first time too, the Government of Israel—through the statement of 8 December 1976 by Mr. Allon, the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs—recognizes the pointlessness of its doctrine of "territorial continuity" and definitely gives up its claim to integrate Gaza into the State of Israel. And, although it stubbornly continues to dispute the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, independence and a homeland—rights

recognized and repeatedly reaffirmed by the United Nations—it is realizing more and more, despite appearances, that the frustration of the Palestinian people is at the very centre of the grave crisis that has been tearing the Middle East apart for almost 30 years now. Any settlement that does not take account of that fact in advance is doomed to failure. A people made up of more than 3 million persons cannot disappear overnight. History teaches us, moreover, that no material means can overcome a people's determination to live in freedom.

45. The Palestinian people really exists. It has proved that through the trials Israel has unjustly imposed upon it. Israel must rid itself of its unjustified prejudices and face up to that reality. It must be said that the international community cannot encourage and even less condone aggression and the acquisition of the territory of other States by force, whoever may be the perpetrator and whoever may be the victim.

46. Israel must realize that time is against it. A great analyst of international political affairs said recently that, despite its power, Israel is isolated in the Middle East while the Arab nations have the future before them. The salvation of Israel lies in the inauguration and consolidation of a policy of peaceful coexistence in the Middle East. It is precisely this climate of tolerance and understanding that the United Nations has been trying to promote for 28 years by means of its various decisions on the Middle East crisis. Unfortunately it continues to run up against Israel's intransigence.

47. For the Government of Mali, as for all the States Members of the international community, the settlement of the serious crisis in the Middle East must necessarily include: first, the unconditional withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Arab territories; secondly, the restoration to the Palestinian people of its inalienable national rights, including the right to establish a Palestinian State; and, thirdly, the renunciation of belligerency and international guarantees of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of all the States of the region and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries—and I do mean "secure and recognized", and not "secure and defensible" boundaries—and fourthly, the internationalization of the city of Jerusalem, which is the sanctuary for the three monotheistic religions of the world.

48. Draft resolutions A/31/L.26 and Add.1-3 and A/31/L.27 and Add.1-3 and the amendments in document A/31/L.25, which are before us, are precisely in keeping with the concerns of my Government. The procedure laid down in them conforms with the letter and spirit of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which the parties have accepted, and with the conclusions of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people [see A/31/35], which we adopted some two weeks ago.

49. My delegation is, moreover, convinced that the Assembly at its thirty-first session will not let slip this final opportunity for the restoration of peace in the Middle East, for since 1948—that is, since the first Israeli aggression—the development of the situation has never been so favourable for a peaceful settlement of this serious crisis.

⁵ *Ibid.*, *Thirty-first Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1976*, document S/12233.

50. The adoption by the Assembly of the two draft resolutions and the amendments I have just mentioned and the resumption, under United Nations auspices, of the Geneva Peace Conference with the participation of all parties, including the PLO, represent the only possibilities open to us today for establishing peace in the Middle East.

51. The state of "no war, no peace" which has prevailed in the region since the conclusion of the interim agreement is a mere illusion. In this connexion we should remember the last flare-up of the crisis, the Ramadan war of 1973.

52. We live, therefore, in a state of considerable friction. Given the armaments accumulated in the region, the next convulsion will be total and will surely exceed in violence and scope all the previous ones.

53. Throughout Asia Minor and Africa the Middle East crisis is daily threatening international peace and security. That is a conviction my delegation shares with the majority of representatives present here.

54. What is at stake in our debate is important because the efforts of the thirty-first session to restore peace in the Middle East can be considered last-ditch attempts. No State Member of our Organization, including Israel, can afford to be responsible for their failure.

55. Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My country, Ecuador, considers the situation in the Middle East should be resolved as soon as possible because, if it is not, its particularly sensitive nature and the exacerbation of tensions among the countries of the region could increase its potential dangers and lead to the outbreak of a world conflict.

56. We therefore hope that every possible means will be used to solve the differences between the Arabs and the Israelis, whose peoples have common roots with ours. They are Mediterranean peoples whose culture in the context of our own civilization came to us through Spain in the form of the highest achievements of science, literature, the arts, philosophy, government and finance. In addition, the religions of those peoples, the Moslems and the Jews, have the same source as the Christian religion. That is why there are Holy Places common to us all. We have common prophets. And, looking back on the age of revelation, we should today remember as a good omen that Mohammed began the Hegira as an act of pacification between the Arabs and Jews of Yathrib, later known as Medina. Their minorities are now part of our societies. They have brought us their cultural contributions, which have enriched the human resources of our countries, into which they have been fully assimilated and in which they are respected and supported.

57. Why can they not live together in peace? Why do they not co-operate with the Latin Americans, who are friends of them both, so that we may not only develop cordial relations with Israel and the Arab countries but also embark upon joint undertakings to meet the challenge of under-development? We should make use of this opportunity for international co-operation to meet the demands of a competitive world, to close existing gaps and to satisfy all the needs which raise the spectre of hunger and despair, and

which are serious enough without the addition of wars and fratricidal hatreds that we should be able to overcome.

58. For that reason, we once again address an appeal to the two super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to undertake by common agreement decisive, nobly conceived and executed actions which, by restoring cordiality and lasting peace in the region, would show that their efforts are sincere and that those two great countries are capable of constructively orienting the course of contemporary history.

59. With regard to the draft resolutions before us, the attitude of Ecuador is based on the following principles: the fact that occupation by force does not confer rights and that hence the territories that were militarily invaded should be evacuated; the right of the Palestinian people to a recognized legal existence and a specific geographical location; the right of all peoples in the area, including the State of Israel, to live in peace within secure and defined boundaries; the right of the State of Israel, being fully recognized as such, to be able to take part in negotiations for the achievement of permanent agreements on guarantees entered into between sovereign States; the legal and historical need for such negotiations to be carried out under the aegis of the United Nations; and the need for respect for and full implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), as well as resolution 338 (1973) and the other resolutions which reflect world public opinion on the Middle East question.

60. For all those reasons, we shall vote in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.27, a proposal which Ecuador, which supports it, regards as an auspicious indication of a genuine and new will for peace in the region.

61. As far as draft resolution A/31/L.26 is concerned, we would have preferred it to be more objective and comprehensive in its operative paragraph 5, because, if some States are requested to desist from providing military assistance to Israel in respect of the occupied territories, there should also be a request addressed to other countries to cease providing support to other parties in the conflict.

62. Moreover, the words of condemnation in the draft resolution would be more acceptable were they to deplore situations and adopt measures within the competence of the General Assembly without taking decisions such as those relating to prohibitions of military assistance, which fall rather within the purview of the Security Council.

63. Having made these clarifications, we would point out that we must not reject any opportunity that brings with it the possibility of action conducive to understanding and to the settlement of disputes. It is our duty to do so as peace-loving countries and Members of the United Nations convinced of the potential of that Organization. For this reason we shall also vote in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.26.

64. Mr. STANBURY (Canada): As the Canadian delegation indicated in its statement during the debate on the Middle East situation [*89th meeting*], Canada's chief concern is that the opportunity be seized to begin realistic and constructive negotiations for a comprehensive Middle

East settlement. For this reason we are voting in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.27, although we have some doubts as to whether the time-table laid down therein is realistic and we would have preferred to see it refer explicitly to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which form part of what Canada, as well as virtually the entire world community, has accepted as the agreed framework for Middle East negotiations.

65. Similarly, because of the importance we attach to the resumption of negotiations, we would have voted in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.24 in its original form, although it made no reference to including Palestinians in those negotiations. It is our view that the members of the Geneva Conference will in any event have to agree upon appropriate arrangements for Palestinian representation in those discussions. However, to specify in advance what form that representation should take, which the amendments to draft resolution A/31/L.24 sought to do, can only make more difficult the task of getting the negotiating process started again. It is that task which we consider should have priority.

66. Mr. KAPLLANI (Albania): The General Assembly is now about to pronounce itself, by means of a vote, on two draft resolutions relating to the situation in the Middle East, contained in documents A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27. In the course of the debate on the situation in the Middle East the Albanian delegation made known the views of its Government and expressed its position on the matters relevant to the aforementioned two draft resolutions now before us [90th meeting].

67. The Albanian delegation wishes to emphasize once again that a just and lasting solution to the problem of the Middle East and to that of Palestine is an urgent matter. It is of great significance not only for the regaining of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and the Arab peoples but also for peace and security in the Middle East and in the world at large. The Albanian delegation holds that a just solution to these problems can and must be found by the Arab peoples themselves. The problem of the Middle East and that of Palestine cannot be solved by sacrificing the rights of the Palestinians and the other Arab peoples. Nor can it be solved by making compromises or striking bargains at the expense of those peoples. It cannot be expected either that those problems will find a solution by our pinning our hopes on the goodwill of the Israeli Zionist aggressors or by our relying on the special role and patronage of the two imperialist super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Nor can it be expected that the solution will come about as a result of their plans and designs through the ways and means they recommend.

68. The Albanian delegation has already pointed out that the step-by-step diplomacy of the United States imperialists and the plans of the two super-Powers to convene the Geneva Conference on the Middle East are fraught with great dangers for the Arab peoples' cause, as they serve the hegemonistic interests and ambitions of the two super-Powers in the Middle East.

69. For the reasons already explained and as we cannot accept some parts of draft resolutions A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27, in particular those referring to the Geneva

Conference on the Middle East, the Albanian delegation will refrain from participating in the vote on the aforementioned draft resolutions.

70. Mr. KUBBA (Iraq) (*interpretation from Arabic*): From this rostrum and in the Security Council Iraq has repeatedly emphasized its belief that Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 cannot be considered a sound basis for the achievement of a just peace in the Middle East in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Iraq, which fully supports the efforts of Arab countries to liberate their lands from the Zionist occupation and shares with the Palestinian people the struggle to ensure the exercise of their inalienable rights to their lands, does not find in the draft resolutions presented, which depend on resolution 242 (1967), anything to urge us to vote. Therefore, acting in conformity with our previous position, we are not going to participate in the voting.

71. Mr. SCRANTON (United States of America): As we move through the final debates of this General Assembly session we are also approaching the end of a very difficult period in the history of the Middle East—the year of the tragedy of Lebanon. I want to express my Government's profound gratification that the long travail of the people of Lebanon is drawing to an end. We will give every feasible support to President Sarkis as he faces the task of the reconstruction of his country, and we look forward to the day when Lebanon—its territorial integrity, its political independence and its national unity preserved—will resume its proud and rightful place among the nations of the Middle East.

72. In the calmer atmosphere in the area created by the healing process now going on in Lebanon, it is natural that attention is turning again to the overriding issue in the Middle East—the need for progress towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict that has so long burdened that region and without which no period of calm can endure. There is today—and we welcome it—fresh insistence that the negotiating process recommence and a sense of impatience with the *status quo*, which we share with the parties to the conflict. For our part, we believe that conditions are now conducive to the resumption of efforts to solve the underlying problems of both Lebanon and the region as a whole.

73. We welcome the recent encouraging statements of President El-Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Rabin of Israel. Here in the United Nations, I for one was encouraged by some of the comments made in the most recent debate on the Middle East, particularly those of the Jordanian and Israeli representatives. And now in this debate we have witnessed a unique experience—the introduction by both Egypt and Israel of draft resolutions advocating a peace conference.

74. In the past, events in the Middle East have often seemed to run ahead of diplomatic efforts to shape them into a peaceful course. This need not and must not be the pattern for the future. Out of this conviction were born the United States initiatives in the aftermath of the 1973 war, taken at the request of the parties. These efforts have yielded the first tangible practical steps towards an agreed

settlement in nearly three decades of fighting and uneasy truces. The three agreements reached in 1974 and 1975 are partial and interim accords, but they have helped to give substance to the framework for negotiation established in December 1973 in Geneva. They have begun to build patterns of co-operation, of interaction and of negotiation that are necessary prerequisites to successful negotiations for an over-all settlement.

75. A new Administration will take office in Washington on 20 January. Obviously I do not speak with authority on the details of its policies. There is, however, consistency in the approach of the United States to the problems of the Middle East which reflects principles and policies enjoying overwhelming public support in our country. With full conviction and confidence, I therefore say to those parties with whom we have worked in the Middle East to advance the cause of peace that they can rest assured that we will continue to work with them in this vital effort in the months and years ahead. Much has been accomplished already. Mutual commitments have been made to pursue the negotiating process, and there is a balanced and comprehensive framework in the form of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which contain the fundamental elements for those negotiations. The United States will not now abandon its determined and urgent search for peace. We will persevere, and we are convinced that a settlement will be achieved. The alternative is unthinkable.

76. I turn now to the draft resolutions under consideration in connexion with our discussion of the situation. The omnibus draft resolution [A/31/L.26] is similar in many respects to a resolution that we opposed last year. We shall do so again. We do not believe that the blanket condemnations of one side contained in this draft resolution are warranted or will have any positive effect. Nor do we see any logic in a call on all States to desist from supplying military and other aid to one side but not to the other. The United States cannot support and will not be guided by this proposal if it is endorsed. This draft resolution also lacks balance in its reference to the potential elements of a peace. One side cannot be expected to give everything and gain nothing.

77. There is no reference, first, to the end of the state of war; secondly, to an agreement that provides not only for the legitimate interests of the Palestinians but for the security of Israel as well, and, thirdly, to the right of a free and independent Israel to exist in the Middle East.

78. This draft resolution contains a request to the Security Council that carries at least an implication that somehow it ought to impose a settlement on the parties and that this should be done within an "appropriate time-table". The parties to this dispute have accepted the framework for a negotiating process that is aimed at producing an agreed solution. This is the essence of what has been accomplished—a mutual commitment to negotiate rather than to rely on time-tables or imposed solutions. The Security Council has in the past and can in the future make important contributions to peace in the Middle East. However, we do not believe that it is either appropriate or practical to look to the Council to impose its will on the parties to negotiations.

79. The temptation to write prescriptions in advance is a natural one, but it is also dangerous. Such prescriptions, hastily formed, can close the door to peace rather than open it, because there are still differences among us—and especially among the parties directly involved in the dispute—and those differences can be resolved only by negotiation between those parties. We cannot write a peace agreement here, not among 146 nations, nor can we bring about a detailed prescription for the procedure for reconvening the Geneva Conference without raising the possibility of the alienation of one or more of the parties, which would doom the Conference before it began.

80. This brings me to the second draft resolution before us, draft resolution A/31/L.27. The motivation and a good deal of the draft resolution itself is consistent with our view of the urgency of resuming the negotiating process. We are compelled, however, to vote "No" because of serious problems in two areas. First, this draft resolution sets an artificial deadline for the reconvening of the Geneva Conference. This is not a matter for the General Assembly but rather for the parties themselves to decide. It also sets out a time-frame for a meeting of the Security Council, a decision which we believe should be subject to consultations among Council members in the light of the situation at that time, and not prejudged by this Assembly. Secondly, the request to the Secretary-General to resume his contacts with the parties to the conflict is phrased in such a way as to imply that the PLO should be one of the parties consulted in preparation for reconvening the Geneva Conference. We believe that the question of additional participants at the Geneva Conference is one that can be addressed only by the original participants themselves.

81. The United States is in a special position, which we recognize, concerning this particular draft resolution, and indeed with regard to the reconvening of the Middle East Peace Conference—a position with which all of you are intimately familiar: a new United States Administration will take office in Washington on 20 January, and we therefore do not consider it appropriate to join now in a definition of detailed options or time-limits governing the evolution of this crucial negotiating process. The procedures and timing of a resumed Geneva Conference are matters which rightly must be determined by the participants themselves and by the Co-Chairmen.

82. This is obviously a question which will be addressed by the new American Administration. Accordingly, we will vote "No" on this draft resolution. However, in so doing, we join with all the rest of the nations here represented which sincerely desire that negotiations towards an over-all settlement resume promptly and that peace be the result therefrom for all the peoples of the Middle East.

83. In this connexion, I would like to recall the words of Secretary of State Kissinger in speaking to this Assembly on 22 September 1975:

"In the Middle East today there is a yearning for peace surpassing any known for three decades. Let us not doom the region to another generation of futile struggle. Instead, let the world community seize the historic opportunity before it. The suffering and bravery of all the peoples of the Middle East cry out for it; the hopes and

interests of all the world's peoples demand it. The United States promises its full dedication to further progress towards peace.”⁶

Those words have gained in urgency in the months since they were spoken, but the opportunity for peace still remains with us.

84. And now I ask for the indulgence of this body for a few moments more to recount a personal experience. Some of you may remember that in 1968 there was also a change of Administration in the United States; that I was sent by the then president-elect on a short mission to the Middle East. Upon returning from consultations with leaders there, I reported that many believed there was then an opportunity for negotiations towards a peaceful settlement. Some experts and some of us non-experts agreed.

85. Such negotiations did not materialize. Historians may argue forever as to whether or not an opportunity was missed. But that experience of disappointment runs deep in my memory and lingers on and on. Right now there appears to be another opportunity. Many experts and many of us who are non-experts believe that negotiations are possible now and should be undertaken. Apparently more are of this opinion now than in 1968.

86. The possibility is exciting. It is enticing—even to the point of a glimmer of hope of an over-all settlement. And with this excitement comes a new responsibility—a deep and abiding responsibility—to us all in this body: rhetoric for home consumption, polemics for home headlines, should be avoided. In advance of negotiations, beguiling prescriptions for results that will be “your way” or “my way”, or “our way”, can block that opportunity for negotiation. The slightest error, a mis-statement, a mis-meaning here can ruin that chance.

87. I know this is no time for lectures, either, especially from an American, who is in comparative safety thousands of miles away. This is no lecture to an Egyptian or a Syrian, or a Jordanian or an Israeli, or a Palestinian, who has lived on the brink of war or experienced war itself over decades, and who even today wonders, “Will it come again next year or next month, or next week, or tomorrow?” I simply request, with all my heart, that we all think before we speak now—that we all think before we act—so that, like those of us who had some hopes in 1968, we will not witness and feel our hopes dashed. Peace-keeping and peace-making are very difficult; they are very tenuous efforts. No one knows that better than Members of the United Nations. In comparison to lasting peace, war comes all too easily. So let us work quietly for negotiations to begin so that peace may come.

88. Mr. ALLAF (Syrian Arab Republic): Among the draft resolutions before the General Assembly on the question of the Middle East, draft resolution A/31/L.26 and Add.1-3 is the most concerned with the substance of the problem, the one which reaffirms the necessary elements for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region, and which prescribe the measures which should be taken by the

competent organ of the United Nations in order to ensure the establishment of a just and lasting peace.

89. This draft resolution bases itself, as is clear from its fourth preambular paragraph, on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and on the legality of all relevant United Nations resolutions. Two of the most important principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter are the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the principle of the non-use of force in the settlement of international disputes. The draft resolution upholds and reaffirms these two principles in its operative paragraphs 2 and 3.

90. The authors of the draft resolution have also reaffirmed what had already been affirmed by the overwhelming majority of the members of the international family, and what had also been clearly manifest in the Security Council debate on the Middle East problem, including the Palestinian question, last January—namely, that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved without the total Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories and the attainment by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national rights; and that those two principles and steps are the basic prerequisites to enabling all the countries and peoples in the Middle East to live in peace, free from any threat against their sovereignty, territorial integrity and national independence.

91. Operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/31/L.26 takes full account of these basic elements which are required for the establishment of a really just and lasting peace in the region.

92. The draft resolution contains another very important paragraph, operative paragraph 6, which is of the utmost relevance and necessity after 10 years of continuous Israeli occupation of Arab territories and 29 years of Israel's violation of Palestinian rights and defiance of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. What is most needed today is not new formulas or new solutions; what is needed is simply the sincere implementation of various General Assembly and Security Council resolutions relevant to the questions of Palestine and the Middle East. That paragraph therefore requests the Security Council, which is the principal competent organ of the United Nations, to take effective measures within an appropriate time-table for the implementation of all relevant United Nations resolutions on Palestine and the Middle East. No country can justifiably object to such a legitimate request addressed to the Security Council after a decade of Israeli occupation of Arab territories and after three decades of Israel's denial of the basic national and human rights of the Palestinian people.

93. In its operative paragraph 1, the draft resolution affirms the need for the early resumption of the Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all the parties concerned, including, of course, the PLO. On this point, the draft is consistent with draft resolution A/31/L.27, which calls for resumption of the Conference after the Secretary-General resumes his contacts with all the parties concerned, in accordance with his initiative of 1 April 1976.

⁶ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2355th meeting.

94. One of the parties concerned is, undoubtedly, the Palestinian people, represented by the PLO. Those who in their support of and bias towards Israeli aggression try to justify the exclusion of the PLO from participating in all efforts and conferences aimed at the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region are deceiving no one but themselves and proving their contradictory logic and double-standard policies. For while they affirm in their statements and arguments that no real solution can be reached without a satisfactory settlement of the Palestinian question and recognition of Palestinian rights, they abstain or even vote against any such affirmation in the text of resolutions.

95. I should like to make two last remarks on the question raised concerning the request in draft resolution A/31/L.26 that all States desist from supplying Israel with military aid and assistance as long as it continues to occupy Arab territories and refuses to obey the resolutions of the United Nations.

96. Some representatives were concerned because there was no similar request, as they said, in respect of the other party in the Middle East conflict. But what those representatives forget is that the other party is not occupying the territory of others; the other party is not violating the rights of other peoples; the other party is not establishing settlements in the territories of its adversary; and the other party is not taking measures to change the physical or demographic character of the territories of others. One party is the aggressor, the other is the victim. One party is the occupier; the other is the occupied. One party is defying and openly and publicly announcing that it refuses to implement United Nations resolutions; the other is appealing for the implementation of those resolutions. So how can anyone place the two parties on the same level? How can anyone equate the arms needed to defend one's own territories and ensure their liberation with the arms supplied to consolidate the occupation of the territories of others and to continue defiance of United Nations resolutions?

97. The other remark addressed to draft resolution A/31/L.26, and in a milder form to draft resolution A/31/L.27, is that the two draft resolutions lack balance because they do not refer to the three conditions for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region. That is not the case, because, as I have stated, draft resolution A/31/L.26 bases itself, in both its preambular and operative parts, on the Security Council debates held in January and on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and spells out very clearly the three elements that are needed to establish a just and lasting peace in the region. The first is withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the occupied Arab territories. The second is recognition of and attainment by the Palestinian people of their national rights. Thirdly, once those two prerequisites for peace have been satisfied, and a situation has been created where no occupation exists and where no violation of the rights of any people is taking place, there would be no obstacle in the way of any people or country in the region living in peace, free from any threat to their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence.

98. For those reasons, my delegation will vote in favour of draft resolutions A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27 and hopes that

the overwhelming majority of members of the General Assembly will support them, because they are complementary: one deals with the basic elements for the establishment of a just and lasting peace and the other has a procedural character, calling for the resumption of the Geneva Conference and other efforts by the Secretary-General and the Security Council to implement those same basic elements for the establishment of a just and lasting peace.

99. Mr. KAUFMANN (Netherlands): On behalf of the nine countries of the European Communities I wish to explain the vote of our delegations on the draft resolutions before us.

100. In our statement on 7 December in the debate on this agenda item [*91st meeting*], I recalled the four principles which in our view must govern a Middle East settlement and emphasized that they must be taken as a whole.

101. We have on many occasions put on record the firm support of the nine countries for Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) as providing the essential basis for a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East. We have, however, also recognized that the provisions of these two resolutions do not take into account the political dimension of the Palestinian question and have therefore, in our view, to be supplemented to include the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, in particular their right to the effective expression of their national identity, which could involve a territorial basis in the framework of a negotiated settlement.

102. As regards the Peace Conference on the Middle East, our nine countries believe that a way should be found to permit the participation of all interested parties, taking into account the importance of this Conference for the Palestinian people. We consider that the modalities of participation should be worked out in consultation among all the parties concerned, and we hope that any remaining obstacles will be overcome.

103. With regard to draft resolution A/31/L.26, we regret that the basic requirement which I referred to above, namely, that the four basic principles should be taken as a whole, has not been met, and that therefore the draft resolution is unbalanced. Some of the matters mentioned in this draft resolution can be effectively decided only in the negotiations themselves, and we do not consider that it would be helpful to try to pre-empt the outcome of these negotiations.

104. On the other hand, we have noted with satisfaction that in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution reference is made to the principle of all countries and peoples in the Middle East being enabled to live in peace. We regret, however, that the sponsors were not able to agree to follow in this regard the wording of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), even though there is an implicit reference to that resolution in operative paragraph 6.

105. The imbalance I have just mentioned is also reflected in the fact that this draft resolution addresses itself in its

request to one party only. Furthermore, reference is made to a number of General Assembly resolutions which we have not been able to support.

106. For all these reasons our nine delegations are not able to vote in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.26.

107. Turning now to draft resolution A/31/L.27, our delegations will vote in favour of it because its basic purpose—to facilitate the early resumption of the Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations—is shared by all of us.

108. While we agree with the urgency of resuming the Peace Conference, we believe that the precise date for this is not a matter which can usefully be decided here and now, but can only be worked out in consultations among all the parties concerned.

109. We would furthermore, with reference to operative paragraph 3, like to recall the general reservations we have expressed in the past concerning a tendency by the General Assembly to take action which may infringe on the prerogative of the Security Council—for example, by attempting to determine its time-table. However, at the same time, the moderate way in which the sponsors of this draft resolution have approached the general question is an encouraging sign for the future.

110. Mr. AKE (Ivory Coast) (*interpretation from French*): The following considerations will guide my delegation in its vote on the draft resolutions and amendments contained in documents A/31/L.24, A/31/L.25, A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27, submitted under agenda item 29 on the situation in the Middle East.

111. The situation in the Middle East remains a subject of serious concern, despite certain signs that might lead us to think that the situation had never been more favourable for finding a solution to this problem. Having had an opportunity to state the position of the Ivory Coast on this question, I shall merely recall the essential points.

112. The Ivory Coast, which is deeply attached to peace and to the peaceful settlement of disputes, believes that the solution to the Middle East problem should be sought through peaceful means, through negotiation or dialogue, direct or indirect, among all the parties concerned on the basis of the principles clearly defined by the United Nations. Since the Palestinian problem lies at the very heart of this situation, its solution, which is a prerequisite for any just and lasting peace in the region, presupposes that everything is done to enable the Palestinian people to enjoy their legitimate rights in the part of Palestine which belongs to them. That people, through their representative, the PLO, must participate at all stages in the negotiating process that must lead to peace.

113. The Ivory Coast reaffirms its support of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, which it continues to regard as a reasonable and realistic basis for the over-all settlement of the Middle East question. The weakness in Security Council resolution 242 (1967) having subsequently been remedied in respect of the Palestinian people

by General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, my country believes that these three texts are complementary, as they take full account of the interests of all the States and peoples in the region. All three should therefore be taken into account in the search for a negotiated solution to the Middle East problem.

114. The Ivory Coast reaffirms its support of the principle of the non-acquisition of territory by force and urges Israel to withdraw from the Arab territories which it has been occupying since the war of June 1967. In addition to creating favourable conditions for an Arab-Israeli dialogue, such withdrawal will enable the Palestinian people to establish their own State, distinct from both Israel and Jordan.

115. We are in favour of the reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and of resolution 3375 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, in which the General Assembly called for the invitation of the PLO to participate in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East held under the auspices of the United Nations, on an equal footing with other parties, on the basis of resolution 3236 (XXIX).

116. We believe that the Geneva Conference should adapt itself to present thinking and realities. Nothing indicates that its original composition should necessarily be maintained; it can be extended to include all the parties directly concerned in the search for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Hence the Ivory Coast considers that the participation of the Palestinians in this Conference is essential. However, it continues to have reservations with regard to references to certain provisions of the Charter which would imply the use of coercive measures in respect of any one party to the Middle East conflict.

117. It follows from what I have stated that the Ivory Coast, while agreeing with draft resolution A/31/L.24 initially submitted by Israel, regrets the deliberate omission from that draft resolution of reference to one of the parties to the settlement of the Middle East problem. It believes that Israel must realize that it cannot indefinitely ignore the Palestinian reality; it must take it into account.

118. In our view, the amendments submitted by India, Malta, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Yugoslavia complete the Israeli draft resolution and constitute a positive element. I do not think that the sponsors of the amendments, whose convictions are well known, would have submitted them had they not made sure that their friends agreed with their wording. Since we know, moreover, that Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) have not been specifically mentioned in certain General Assembly resolutions since 1974—as is demonstrated in draft resolutions A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27—there would perhaps appear to be a change of thinking, a change that should be encouraged.

119. With regard to draft resolution A/31/L.26, the Ivory Coast believes that it suffers from a fundamental defect, that of not mentioning the relevant Security Council resolutions on the situation in the Middle East. The last

preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 3 would be improved if they recalled Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974. Such a reference would, in our view, restore balance to this draft resolution. We have reservations of principle on some of its provisions; however, as we have previously voted for a similar text, we do not think that we can change our vote this year. We merely hope that the sponsors will take note of these reservations and present a better text next time.

120. The same observations, with regard to the same omissions, apply to draft resolution A/31/L.27. Furthermore, it seems to us that this draft resolution contains a certain ambiguity with regard to the convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East. Does it refer to a new conference, or to the Conference referred to in draft resolution A/31/L.24 and the amendments in document A/31/L.25? In any case, what is important to us is that all the protagonists to the Middle East tragedy should agree to sit down at the conference table in order to seek together the means for putting an end to the state of war prevailing in the Middle East and lay the bases for a just and permanent peace in the region. Because of its spirit, we shall vote in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.27.

121. Mr. ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen): My delegation will not participate in the voting on the draft resolutions before us for the following reasons. First, draft resolution A/31/L.26 seeks the implementation of all relevant resolutions of the Security Council on the Middle East question. Resolution 242 (1967) of the Security Council is seen by some as the fundamental framework for the solution of the Middle East conflict. That resolution not only ignores the national rights of the Palestinian people but also seeks *a priori* recognition of Israel, which we categorically reject.

122. Secondly, draft resolution A/31/L.27 on the Peace Conference on the Middle East does not specifically mention that the PLO is a genuine party to the conflict and that any solution of the Middle East conflict should be based on the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable right to national self-determination and statehood in Palestine.

123. My delegation, however, fully subscribes to those paragraphs in draft resolution A/31/L.26 which condemn Israel's continued occupation of Arab territories and calls upon all States to desist from supplying Israel with military and other forms of assistance.

124. Mr. OKTIZ DE ROZAS (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Argentina wishes to explain with crystal clarity the vote it is about to cast on draft resolution A/31/L.26. My delegation has from the very beginnings of this conflict maintained an unequivocal position based on the desire to find constructive solutions conducive to the achievement of a truly just and durable peace in the Middle East.

125. Prompted by that spirit, as long ago as 1947 Argentina maintained that the only viable and equitable solution in keeping with the provisions of the United Nations Charter was strict respect for the right to self-

determination of the people of Palestine, both Jewish and Arab.

126. Subsequently, with the evolution of the dramatic conflict which has affected all the countries in the region without exception, and which has just claimed its latest victim in Lebanon, Argentina maintained that it was necessary to respect all the political, racial, economic and religious realities in the region.

127. In 1967, both at the fifth emergency special session of the General Assembly and in the Security Council, of which Argentina was then a member, my delegation reaffirmed unambiguously that one of those realities was the State of Israel, a Member of this Organization, a State established on sound bases which qualified it as a fully sovereign and clearly defined country of the Middle East.

128. Israel has every right to live in peace with its neighbours within boundaries clearly defined and recognized in a peace treaty concluded with neighbouring countries, and with its inviolability guaranteed—if necessary—by the United Nations.

129. That security and that right to live in peace, to which Israel is undoubtedly entitled, should in no less a degree be enjoyed by the Arab States.

130. That is why in 1967 Argentina was the first member of the Security Council to state clearly that Israeli forces should be withdrawn from all the Arab territories occupied in the 1967 conflict, because the principle of the inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by force was fully valid and applicable. But that action can be neither unilateral nor isolated. It must be accompanied, in an effective balance, by the other measures contemplated in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

131. Only then can the march towards peace truly begin.

132. Last year too, we expressed our satisfaction with the partial agreement that made possible withdrawal from part of the occupied Egyptian territory. We stated, at the same time, that that was but a first step towards total withdrawal.

133. At present there are many favourable circumstances that enable us to visualize the possibility that we are closer today to a negotiated solution than at any other time.

134. In the context of that line of thinking, we have sponsored draft resolution A/31/L.27, calling for the early convening of the Geneva Peace Conference. We are convinced that this could lead to peace.

135. Similarly, out of a desire to promote the peaceful method of negotiation, we shall vote in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.26, which we believe contains some positive elements conducive to that goal and represents progress as compared to previous resolutions. Nevertheless, we must express some specific reservations on some aspects of the text which lack the necessary balance.

136. We believe that the condemnation of the occupation of Arab territories should be accompanied by a firm

recognition of the right of the State of Israel to exist within secure and recognized boundaries, as well as by reference to the set of mutual obligations wisely stipulated in Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

137. We believe, also, that the request made in operative paragraph 5 should be addressed to all the States that are supplying weapons to all the parties involved in the Middle East conflict, without any exception, and not only to the State of Israel. Those who contribute to the arms race in the region bear a heavy responsibility, and those who supply arms to the Arab States are not exempt from that responsibility.

138. Argentina's affirmative vote must not be construed in any way as a departure from the position that my country has held for the last 29 years. Rather, it must be viewed as a categorical ratification of that position, in the terms that I have used earlier in this statement.

139. The history of the Middle East is rich in lost opportunities. We trust that there will emerge from these tragic times in which we are living a constructive, sincere effort by both the Arabs and the Israelis to meet at the negotiating table and put an end, once and for all, to a situation affecting not only them but the entire world, a situation which without any doubt entails the gravest threat to international peace and security.

140. That is the exhortation we address to Israel and to the Arab States, with which Argentina maintains the closest ties of friendship.

141. Mr. ALZAMORA (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Peru will vote in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.26 because in our view it provides for the negotiating process that we seek to encourage by draft resolution A/31/L.27, which we also support. It introduces elements of political realism which that negotiating process must take into account. But, together with those elements—including withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967 and the definition of the rights of the Palestinian people, as well as measures towards the achievement of these objectives—the negotiating process must, in our view, include other fundamental elements of the process; that is, the recognition that all the States in the region have sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence, and the right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.

142. Consequently, the delegation of Peru will vote in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.26, on the clear understanding that the negotiating process, the intervention of the United Nations and the constructive initiatives of the Secretary-General will come within the purview of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX). On that same understanding—which could not be clearer, more objective or more in conformity with the principles of the Organization and the rights of the parties concerned—the delegation of Peru considers that participation in the Conference necessarily implies that these resolutions will be respected and, hence, that the principles and provisions they contain will be accepted.

143. The delegation of Peru has taken that position, despite its reservations on some parts of the draft resolution, in the firm conviction that the time has come to take advantage of the various positive elements that for the first time can be seen in the Middle East situation, in order to make decisive progress on the path of negotiation, the only path left to us today in our quest for peace and justice; all other considerations must be subordinated to that fundamental objective, which must have priority.

144. That objective is not only a requirement of international security or of our commitment to peace among peoples. It is also one of the imperatives of realism and commonsense, since confrontation or conflict between the parties has not led, after decades of such tragic confrontation, to the achievement of their highest respective objectives.

145. Negotiation, and negotiation on realistic political bases, is thus the immediate objective at this time. In that conviction, the delegation of Peru will support the draft resolutions before the Assembly, within the context of the clear views we have just expressed.

146. The PRESIDENT: We have now heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the voting. We shall therefore proceed to the vote on the two draft resolutions in, respectively, documents A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27.

147. I shall first put to the vote the draft resolution entitled "The situation in the Middle East" [A/31/L.26 and Add.1-3]. A vote by roll call has been requested.

A vote was taken by roll call.

Papua New Guinea, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, 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 Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Israel, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Fiji, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya,⁷ Luxembourg, Malawi, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Surinam, Swaziland, Sweden, Uruguay, Venezuela.

The draft resolution was adopted by 91 votes to 11, with 29 abstentions (resolution 31/61).⁸

148. The PRESIDENT: The General Assembly will now vote on the draft resolution entitled "Peace Conference on the Middle East" [A/31/L.27 and Add.1-3].

149. I should like to remind the members of the General Assembly that operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/31/L.27 has been revised by the sponsors to read as follows:

"Calls for the early convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and the co-chairmanship of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, not later than the end of March 1977". [see 94th meeting, para. 15.]

150. In regard to this draft resolution I should also like to inform the Assembly that I have been advised by the Controller that, in view of the uncertainties surrounding the duration of the proposed conference, it is not possible to provide the Assembly with the statement normally required regarding possible financial implications. I take it that under the circumstances, and in view of the importance of the issue before us, the Assembly will agree that we should waive the procedure prescribed by rule 153. If there is no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

151. The PRESIDENT: A roll-call vote has been requested on draft resolution A/31/L.27 and Add.1-3.

A vote was taken by roll call.

The Syrian Arab Republic, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica,

Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Surinam, 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 Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining: Bahamas, Barbados, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Malawi, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Swaziland.

The draft resolution was adopted by 122 votes to 2, with 8 abstentions (resolution 31/62).⁹

152. The PRESIDENT: I shall now call upon those delegations that wish to explain their votes after the vote.

153. Mr. WU Hsiao-ta (China) (*translation from Chinese*): In his statement at the plenary meeting on the question of Palestine [71st meeting], the Chinese representative already expounded in a comprehensive way the position of the Chinese Government on the question of the Middle East and Palestine. We are in favour of the righteous views embodied in draft resolution A/31/L.26 condemning Israel's occupation of Arab territories and its atrocities there, demanding Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and the attainment by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national rights and requesting all States to desist from supplying Israel with any form of aid or assistance. However, we have to point out that the two draft resolutions, A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27, involve the Geneva Conference and Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), on which the Conference is based. The Chinese delegation's position on the Geneva Conference and on the above two Security Council resolutions is known to all. Basing itself on this position, the Chinese delegation did not participate in the vote on the two draft resolutions contained in documents A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27 respectively.

154. The Chinese delegation would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that the Chinese Government and people firmly support the Arab and Palestinian peoples in their just struggle against Israeli Zionism and super-Power hegemonism and for the recovery of their lost territories and the regaining of their national rights. We sternly condemn the aggression by Israeli Zionism and the super-Power support and abetment of it. We have consistently held that Israel must withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories and that the national rights of the Palestinian

⁷ The delegation of Kenya subsequently informed the Secretariat that it wished to have its vote recorded as having been in favour of the draft resolution.

⁸ The delegation of Gabon subsequently informed the Secretariat that it wished to have its vote recorded as having been in favour of the draft resolution.

⁹ The delegation of Gabon subsequently informed the Secretariat that it wished to have its vote recorded as having been in favour of the draft resolution.

people must be regained. The cause of the Arab and Palestinian peoples is entirely just, and a just cause is bound to triumph in the end no matter what difficulties and twists and turns it may encounter. We are deeply convinced that, by persevering in militant unity and protracted struggle, the Arab and Palestinian peoples will certainly frustrate all the conspiratorial schemes of the super-Powers, defeat the Israeli aggressors, recover their lost territories, regain their national rights and finally accomplish the sacred cause of national liberation.

155. Mr. GALLARDO MORENO (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The fact that the Mexican delegation was obliged to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/31/L.26 compels us to place on record the reasons for our position.

156. First of all, by way of general comment, we should point out that our essential reservation in regard to that text is due to the fact that the text does not maintain a balance between the necessary elements for the attainment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East as defined in Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which continues to be the basis for my delegation's attitude in respect of the serious Middle East problem.

157. It may be remembered that that resolution lays down as basic conditions the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the territories occupied at the end of the six-day war and the termination of all states of belligerency, as well as recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all the States in the region and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.

158. However, we repeat that we continue to be strong champions of the principle according to which conquest does not bestow any rights and all conflicts should be settled by one of the peaceful means set out in Article 33 of the United Nations Charter with the participation of all the parties directly concerned, which in this case necessarily includes the PLO as the representative of the interests of the Palestinian people, as decided by this Assembly in its resolution 3210 (XXIX).

159. Mrs. RANA (Nepal): We voted in favour of draft resolutions A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27 because we find that as a whole they are in conformity with our understanding of the Middle East problem.

160. One cannot ignore the fact that the Middle East problem is explosive, and as long as Israel continues to occupy the Arab territories and to take measures to change the demographic character of the area tension is bound to rise. We have always urged Israel to withdraw from the territories occupied since 1967 and we hold the view that the Palestinian problem constitutes the crux of the Middle East problem.

161. However, we strongly hold the view that, while fulfilling the aspirations of the Palestinian people, including their right to an independent homeland, is a realistic way to solve the problem, the recognition of the State of Israel to exist within boundaries that are secure and recognized by the other parties is as essential to the solution of the

problem. We are therefore of the opinion that Security Council resolution 242 (1967) has not lost its relevance and still provides the basic framework for the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

162. Since we continue to recognize the State of Israel and its right to existence we are of the opinion that it has rights similar to those enjoyed by other States, that is, to receive co-operation and assistance from other States as well as to co-operate and assist others. Therefore, we do not interpret operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/31/L.26 as asking that a general economic sanction be applied to the State of Israel, but as asking that States desist from assistance that might be used by Israel to perpetuate its illegal occupation of the Arab territories. This call is justified, and since we have never approved of the act of occupation and have pleaded for immediate withdrawal we do not find any difficulty in supporting the draft resolution as a whole.

163. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation has voted in favour of the draft resolutions presented to the General Assembly today because we believe that they constitute an important step towards the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Draft resolution A/31/L.26 constitutes, in our view, a new, strong and clear reaffirmation of the position of the General Assembly as regards the Israeli occupation of Arab territories and Israel's continued defiance of United Nations resolutions. Israel has to realize that the General Assembly is not going to give up its position with regard to the arbitrary measures taken against the Palestinian people and the exploitation of the resources of the occupied territories.

164. The second important draft resolution, adopted by the General Assembly, A/31/L.27, set forth the proper framework for establishing a just and lasting peace, and in our view it reaffirms an important principle on which we have, from the beginning, insisted, namely, that all steps towards peace should be taken within the framework of the United Nations and under its full supervision. Therefore the General Assembly's call for the early convening of the Peace Conference not later than the end of March 1977 was appropriate. This is so because any slackening in the attempts to seek peace would undoubtedly lead to a deterioration of the situation in the Middle East and pose a threat to international peace and security.

165. We should like to express our deep gratitude to members of the General Assembly because they have reaffirmed the importance of the role played by the Secretary-General, whose unanimous re-election was an extremely happy event in order to enable him to resume contacts with all the parties to the conflict in preparation for the early convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East. The almost unanimous support given to this draft resolution is clear evidence of the firm resolve of the international community as a whole to continue the march towards peace until that peace is realized and the Palestinian people regain their legitimate rights, including their right to establish an independent State of their own.

166. Israel's attitude is no surprise to us. Three days ago [90th meeting] the representative of Israel appealed from

this rostrum to the General Assembly to test Israel's intentions. Yet he has not ceased over the past few days, or even today, hurling accusations and insults at the members of this Assembly. In spite of the fact that the Assembly has given numerous chances to Israel, over the past 30 years, including yet another today, to put its intentions to the test. The General Assembly generously wished to give Israel another chance at this session to prove to the world that its talk of peace was not just empty words but expressed a true desire for peace. But Israel, as usual, wanted to continue in its intransigence and arrogant defiance of all resolutions of the United Nations by taking the position it did this morning. Although this position comes as no surprise and was expected, still it proved to anyone who had any doubts as to Israel's real intentions that its true desire is to continue its aggression and its occupation, to continue to persecute the population of the occupied territories and to plunder the resources of the territories and to continue to challenge our international Organization. This also proves to anyone who suspects the truth that all the talk of peace on the part of Israel's leaders is intended only to mislead world public opinion and that they want to continue their defiance of those who seek peace.

167. I should like to announce here once more that Egypt is very keen to maintain peace and that it will continue its march towards the achievement of that goal in spite of all actions by Israel. At the same time we are not ready to give up our determination to regain our occupied territories and to enable the Palestinian people to regain their legitimate rights.

168. In conclusion, I should like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the friendly countries that supported us and positively and effectively contributed to the debate on the Middle East item this year, a contribution that, in our view, will no doubt help advance the wheel of peace and help to confirm the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

169. U TIN LAT (Burma): The delegation of Burma has voted in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.26 as well as of draft resolution A/31/L.27. Burma favours a peaceful settlement of the problem of the Middle East based on respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States in the region, as well as the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, and negotiations within a suitable framework.

170. However, we would like to place on record our reservations concerning the text of operative paragraphs 2, 4 and 5 of draft resolution A/31/L.26.

171. Mr. EL SHEIBANI (Libyan Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The delegation of the Libyan Arab Republic did not participate in the debate on the situation in the Middle East, nor did we participate in the voting on draft resolutions A/31/L.26 and A/31/L.27 in accordance with our previously declared position, which is based on the fact that Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) cannot serve as a basis for the settlement of the Middle East question, particularly after the adoption of the General Assembly resolutions which recognized the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and condemned Zionism as a racist movement. Those resolutions constitute

an important and radical development in the United Nations, on the basis of which we have to reconsider the whole issue and its treatment.

172. Mr. TEMPLETON (New Zealand): My delegation is very pleased this year to have been able to support one of the two resolutions adopted by the Assembly on this item. We are, of course, conscious that what is needed in the Middle East today is not more Assembly resolutions—especially tendentious and condemnatory ones—but the early resumption of peace negotiations.

173. New Zealand's vote for draft resolution A/31/L.27 was cast in faith and hope that there are better prospects today that there have been for some time, that serious negotiations will begin in the near future for a Middle East settlement, and that all the parties directly concerned will have the opportunity to take part in them through their chosen representatives.

174. As we have said in the past, we would wish such a settlement to take full account of Palestinian rights and aspirations. The acceptance of the State of Israel and provisions to ensure the security of its borders are also essential elements of any settlement.

175. Draft resolution A/31/L.26 is one-sided; in view of its lack of balance it cannot be regarded as a helpful contribution to the resumption of peace negotiations. My delegation was therefore obliged to abstain in the voting on that resolution.

176. It is our hope that the polemics which have disfigured our debates on Palestine and the Middle East in the past can now be put aside in favour of hard and serious negotiations on the real substance of the problem.

177. Mr. MORENO MARTINEZ (Dominican Republic) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Today may well be an historic day for the United Nations: the day on which draft resolution A/31/L.27—which should be the last United Nations resolution on the Middle East—was adopted, and the day marking the beginning of the solution. We are not trying to minimize the importance, past or present, of United Nations resolutions, or their role in the consideration of the Middle East question; but the resolution stage must come to an end—and let us hope it is now coming to an end—and give way to negotiations.

178. The value of draft resolution A/31/L.27 lies in the fact that it guides us towards a solution which, we repeat, only the parties will be able to achieve and that only through negotiations. Other countries may remove, or even place, obstacles along the road to peace, but all the parties must embark upon that road.

179. At the entrance to the General assembly hall there is a slab of green marble which quotes an immortal phrase by that great Mexican, Benito Juárez: "Respect for the rights of others is peace". The understanding and application of that idea is vital, nay essential, for the achievement of peace in the Middle East, for the recent painful history of that region has shown that there will be no peace in the Middle East so long as Israel does not recognize and respect the rights of the Palestinian people and the Palestinians do not recognize and respect the rights of the people of Israel.

180. The Dominican delegation, which is a true friend of all the countries in the Middle East, wishes to express its view that, in order to solve this problem, we must consider it as a whole, with moderation and goodwill.

181. The PRESIDENT: The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic has asked to speak in explanation of vote after the vote. I must say, quite frankly, that it is most unusual for a delegation to explain its vote both before and after the vote, and had I been inclined to interpret the rules strictly and to make a choice, I would have refused the request. But I do not wish to do so.

182. Mr. SIBAHI (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolutions adopted by the General Assembly a few minutes ago. By its affirmative vote, my delegation wished to reaffirm its full confidence in the international Organization as well as its belief in the need for the competent organs of the United Nations to promote the realization of a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East question. Among those organs the Secretary-General occupies a foremost place and we were among those who supported his re-election to that high office that he deservedly occupies in the world Organization.

183. My delegation believes, and has so stated during this constructive discussion of the item on the situation in the Middle East, that resolutions 31/61 and 31/62 constitute a single whole. The Syrian and Egyptian delegations co-operated in drafting the texts and in preparing working papers on this subject, as explained by the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic at the beginning of the debate on this item [87th meeting].

184. In this connexion, my delegation would like to express its thanks to the representatives who have supported those two resolutions and to the countries members of the non-aligned movement, and to the overwhelming majority of friendly countries in this Assembly.

185. The Syrian Arab Republic is as anxious to preserve peace as it is to resume the struggle for the liberation of its occupied territory. In this respect it is co-operating with the Arab nation as a whole, from the ocean to the Gulf.

186. The olive branch has once again, as always, been placed in the hands of the international Organization. The Syrian Arab Republic is ready to co-operate with the Secretary-General in all the efforts he will exert to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The Syrian Arab Republic does not need to give any further evidence of the confidence it has vested in the international Organization. The Syrian Arab Republic was foremost among the countries which signed the Charter in San Francisco.

187. The PRESIDENT: The representative of Sri Lanka has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I do not think it is necessary to remind the General Assembly that at its 4th plenary meeting it decided that the duration of rights of reply should be limited to 10 minutes.

188. Mr. KANAKARATNE (Sri Lanka): I am sorry to take even less than five minutes of the Assembly's time at this late stage, but I believe I owe it to the delegations

which sponsored the amendments to the Israeli draft resolution.

189. This morning Mr. Herzog, the representative of Israel, in his remarks withdrawing the Israeli draft resolution contained in document A/31/L.24, made certain observations about the sponsors of the amendments contained in document A/31/L.25 which I, on behalf of all the sponsors, must reject out of hand.

190. Mr. Herzog is not now in this hall, but I hope that the representatives of Israel who are seated here will convey this message in clear terms to the Chairman of their delegation.

191. The representative of Israel stated from this podium that the amendments were introduced by the sponsoring delegations at the behest of and "on the instructions of the Arab States".

192. That is not an observation which any self-respecting delegation here representing a sovereign Government can permit to go without comment. The delegations of India, Malta, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Yugoslavia, which sponsored those amendments, represent independent, sovereign Governments—and I make bold to say that those Governments are perhaps more independent of other nations than the Government of Israel. I think everyone in this hall will agree that it is a transgression of the decencies of international diplomacy and of the proprieties and protocol that we observe in this hall for any one single nation, however arrogant it may be by reason of certain situations, to question the motives that prompt our delegations to introduce draft resolutions, move amendments, vote or abstain as we do.

193. We hope the representatives of Israel will bear in mind that they are part of an international community, and if they wish to continue to be a part of that international community they must subscribe to the norms of decent international intercourse.

194. It is not for any one delegation in this hall—however powerful, however well connected and whatever influential friends it may have in the world—to sit and question and arrogate to itself the right to impugn the motives of other delegations.

195. We take instructions from our respective Governments only. We are here to explain the respective policies of our Governments, and the whole purpose of this Assembly is to try to harmonize the differences that exist among our various Governments. I hope and sincerely believe that every single nation represented here and every single representative representing those nations will be entirely with me when, on behalf of the delegations of Sri Lanka, India, Malta, Senegal and Yugoslavia, we want registered in the records of this meeting our strongest protest and condemnation of the words used this morning by Mr. Herzog of Israel.

196. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Saudi Arabia, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

197. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia): I feel constrained to exercise my right of reply, and I shall do so, as suggested to us all, without taking 10 minutes, or even five.

198. First of all, Mr. Herzog, having said that he had known that the draft resolution he submitted on behalf of his Government would be rejected, should not have submitted it. If he wanted to call the bluff of the majority of the General Assembly, he has failed. Here we are not bluffing one another. Therefore, *a priori*, he should not have submitted that draft resolution.

199. Secondly, I should like to tell Mr. Herzog, through those who are here from his delegation—because he is never here when I am speaking—that the *raison d'être* of the concern of the Arab countries, in particular Saudi Arabia and other Arab States which are not with Israel, with this question is the Palestinian people because the Arab people are one, from Morocco to the Persian Gulf. Anything that affects one Arab affects the whole Arab world. Therefore it is not a question of the Arab Governments, which represent the Arab people, accepting or not accepting anything. It is a question of whether Israel will recognize the rights of the Palestinians inside Israel.

200. Apropos of this matter, I was present in 1947 when pressure was brought to bear on the Latin American countries by a prelate, whom I do not wish to name, in order to get the necessary votes for the creation of the State of Israel. Even the late Warren Austin, the representative of the United States, with whom I spoke on behalf of the Arabs, was willing to postpone the question of the partition of Palestine until we could find an equitable solution. As God is my witness, Mr. Austin was reasonable; but it was the President of the United States, the late Mr. Truman, who wanted by any means available to him to create the State of Israel.

201. In reply to my good friend Governor Scranton, the representative of the United States, I should like to say that it will not always be possible for the American people to bear the brunt of funnelling billions of dollars to Israel and antagonizing not only the Palestinians but all the Arabs with whom they have great interests in common. At one time the Americans told us that they had made a mistake, and that was about 25 years ago. They have been repeating that mistake ever since then.

202. Far be it for me to want to see the people of Israel, who are Jews and many of whom happen to be Arab Jews, hurt. But it seems that their leaders do not know what they are doing. There will be no future for the State of Israel unless its leaders accept the fact that they are an alien body, an alien element in the body politic and body social of the Middle East. They should recognize this. It is not the

Palestinians that should do the recognizing; the Palestinians are outside their country and some of them are living like refugees in the occupied lands. If Israel would accept all those who would like to return to their homes and agree that there should be a sovereign State, I am sure, or almost sure, that that would be accepted. I cannot speak for the Palestinians because they are a people, but I for one would tell them: "If Israel recognizes you and you can return to your homes, at least be positive." But it is Israel that is negative all the time. Israel wants to deal only with the Arab States, as if the Palestinian people had never existed. But they do exist. They have an identity of their own.

203. As a last word to the Western world, I want to say that their leaders once told us years ago that if we did not play the role of accepting anything which they imposed, then the Russians, the Communists, would occupy our lands. Let me assure them that we can take care of ourselves, and the Russians have never expressed any will to occupy the Middle East. Of course they follow the policy of spheres of influence and, whether we like it or not, the Western world would like to consider us as being in the Western sphere of influence. But there are limits to our patience—not as Governments, because Governments are expendable—but it is the people who will overthrow our Governments if we leave the Palestinians, who are part of the Arab world, to their fate.

204. Therefore, my humble advice to the United States and to Israel, the only two countries which the red lights on the voting panel show have voted negatively, is for the United States to advise Israel to seek acceptance, to allow the Palestinians to return to their homes and to recognize them as an entity. Then there will be no problem. Otherwise, should there be a war Israel knows that it would dissolve like a pinch of salt in a kettle of boiling water. Eventually we will absorb the Israelis and assimilate them, and the Palestinians will return to their homes. We hope that that can be done without any war. We hope that one day there will be no such strong nationalism, when even the Zionists will accept the fact that they are citizens of the region rather than subscribing to a narrow nationalism based on religious fanaticism. Peace can prevail only when a strong country like the United States comes to its senses regarding this matter. If the Zionists have permeated the United States by means of their mass media and through their financial fabric, that is the business of the United States. But please, United States, we do not want our people to be your foes; we want to be your friends. When will you wake up? And Israel, when will you wake up? You have no chance unless you adapt yourselves to seek acceptance in the area and live in peace with your neighbours.

The meeting rose at 2 p.m.