



General Assembly

Seventy-second session

65th plenary meeting

Wednesday, 6 December 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Lajčák (Slovakia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Saikal (Afghanistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 130

Investigation into the conditions and circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Dag Hammarskjöld and of the members of the party accompanying him

Draft resolution (A/72/L.19)

The Acting President: I should like to inform members that action on draft resolution A/72/L.19 will be postponed to a later date to allow time for a review of its programme budget implications by the Fifth Committee. The Assembly will take action on the draft resolution as soon as the report of the Fifth Committee on its programme budget implications is available.

I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.19.

Ms. Schoulgin Nyoni (Sweden): I am proud to introduce today, on behalf of all the sponsors, the draft resolution contained in document A/72/L.19, concerning the investigation into the conditions and circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Dag Hammarskjöld and the members of the party accompanying him. We are grateful to all the delegations that have joined us in that endeavour, and I would like to thank all the sponsors for their support.

Let me start by expressing my gratitude to Judge Othman and his team for their work on the matter and

to all Member States that have collaborated with and contributed to the investigation. Since 2015, first as Head of the Independent Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 69/246 and most recently as the Secretary-General's Eminent Person, Judge Othman has overseen major progress in the investigation. We now have a unique opportunity to shed light on what happened in Ndola on the 17 September 1961. Judge Othman concludes in his latest report (see A/71/1042) that it is plausible that an external attack or threat was a cause of the crash. That conclusion alters the balance of probabilities, and thus additional follow-up is warranted.

In light of that, and in firm support of the Secretary-General's recommendations on the way forward, Sweden, together with partners, is introducing the draft resolution before the Assembly today. The draft resolution has eight operational elements, the most important of which are contained in paragraphs 1, 4 and 5.

Paragraph 1 requests the Secretary-General to reappoint Judge Othman to continue his work. This extensive investigation benefits immensely from continuity, and we firmly believe that no one is better placed than Judge Othman to take this issue forward.

Paragraph 4 requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the United Nations reviews its own specific records and archives for possible declassification of information relevant to the case. We understand that work is already well under way regarding that matter,

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and we thank the Secretary-General for his timely efforts in that regard.

Judge Othman also notes that it is likely that important additional information that has not yet been made available does exist. Judge Othman has thus concluded that the burden of proof has shifted to Member States to show that they have conducted a full review of records and archives in their custody or possession, including those that remain classified. Therefore, paragraph 5 encourages all Member States that may hold relevant information to appoint, without delay, an independent and high-ranking official to conduct a dedicated internal review of their intelligence, security and defence archives to determine whether relevant information exists. We count upon the full cooperation of all Member States in that regard. It is our shared responsibility to pursue the full truth in this matter.

As the draft resolution contains a small programme budget implication, adoption will take place once the Fifth Committee has considered the matter later this month. In the meantime, the list of sponsors will remain open, and we encourage all Member States to join us and our partners in this endeavour.

The United Nations and all its Member States must now do everything possible to ascertain what happened with flight SE-BDY. We owe it to the families of those who perished 56 years ago, many of whom are watching this meeting from various parts of the world. We owe it to the United Nations as an Organization and to all in the Assembly who strive to continue to work in the spirit of Mr. Hammarskjöld. As Secretary-General Guterres put it, Dag Hammarskjöld not only believed in the United Nations, he inspired so many others to believe in it too.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 130.

Agenda item 176

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

Draft resolution (A/72/L.10)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.10.

Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): In my capacity as representative of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and Chair of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and as Chair of the group of States members of the OIC in New York, I have the pleasure to introduce draft resolution A/72/L.10, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation".

The draft resolution is in keeping with the spirit and the objectives of resolution 3369 (XXX), of 10 October 1975, and with the purpose set out in the text, whereby the Assembly decided to invite the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and of its subsidiary bodies in the capacity of observer.

In its preambular paragraphs, the draft resolution reaffirms the common objectives of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations with regard to conflict prevention, confidence-building, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, post-conflict rehabilitation, mediation and preventive diplomacy, including conflict situations involving Muslim communities.

The draft resolution emphasizes that the two organizations wish to strengthen their cooperation in the political, economic, social, humanitarian, cultural and scientific fields, as well as in the joint search for solutions to global problems, such as questions related to international peace and security, disarmament, self-determination, the promotion of a culture of peace through dialogue and cooperation, decolonization, fundamental human rights, social and economic development and the fight against international terrorism. The draft resolution welcomes the initiatives for interfaith dialogue undertaken by the two organizations and the existing cooperation between the OIC and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

In its operative part, the draft resolution welcomes the strong commitment of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the fight against violent extremism and terrorism. It also welcomes the fact that the two organizations share the common goal of promoting and facilitating the Middle East peace process and of cooperation between the two organizations to combat

intolerance and stigmatization against certain people because of their religion or beliefs.

Today, we note the increasing importance and usefulness of the dynamic cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC. It is clear that, in the face of old and new conflicts, cooperation between the two organizations is of strategic importance.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the delegations that have diligently worked to develop the draft resolution. I now request all States members of the General Assembly to adopt by consensus the draft resolution issued as A/72/L.10.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Chatzisavas (European Union): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

The European Union and its member States support the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (A/72/L.10), and we encourage further cooperation between the two organizations.

With reference to the language contained in the draft resolution, which notes the adoption of the 2025 Programme of Action of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the EU stresses that such language is without any endorsement of declarations, decisions or resolutions adopted by OIC forums, which should be fully consistent with General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and in full respect of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, including, notably, the principle contained in Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. In that regard, we wish to put on record that the provisions of the OIC 2025 Programme of Action related to Cyprus are not consistent with the Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

We urge the OIC to refrain from adopting positions that would undermine international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Alhakbani (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continues to make great efforts aimed at achieving the goals of peace and security to which we all aspire. We want to promote understanding among religions and cultures, advance the culture of peace and confront ideologies embodying

hatred and extremism. Indeed, our aim is to bring about peace, security and stability throughout the world.

The fact that our world today is witnessing many crimes and security challenges represents a real danger and threat to international peace and security. We therefore need to have greater cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and various regional and international organizations and groupings.

After the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the second largest intergovernmental organization, with 57 member States from four continents, and represents nearly 1.5 billion people. It speaks as one voice for the Muslim world in its work to protect members' rights, ensuring cooperation among all countries of the world with regard to settling conflicts, as well as regional and international disputes. It plays a vital role in settling and preventing conflicts, as well as providing humanitarian assistance in various parts of the world, for example, in support of efforts related to the primary issue for which it was established, namely, the Palestinian question and defending the Palestinian people so that they can regain enjoyment of their legitimate rights and establish a State within the pre-June 1967 borders.

In addition, members of the OIC have recently cooperated with States Members of the United Nations to introduce a draft resolution in the Third Committee, entitled "Situation of human rights in Myanmar" (A/C.3/72/L.48), in order to stop human rights violations directed against the Rohingya minority in that country and ensure a dignified and secure livelihood and a safe and decent life for them. We also provide humanitarian assistance to refugees in every corner of the globe.

The OIC plays a vital role in addressing many international issues and supporting work in various areas, including peace and security, the Palestinian question and East Jerusalem, alleviating poverty, combating terrorism, investing in and financing projects, food security, science and technology, climate change, sustainable development, moderation, promoting harmony among religions, empowering women, underwriting international joint Muslim initiatives in the humanitarian sphere, and good governance, inter alia. Various specialized institutions are working under the auspices of the OIC, as are a number of ad hoc committees dedicated to technology, investment, trade and economic development and other fields, while other OIC-affiliated entities play

complementary critical roles in addressing various other issues.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC in a variety of fields, including peace and security, humanitarian assistance, refugees and the dialogue among civilizations and religions, plays a very important role in promoting tolerance and defending and upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We encourage cooperation among all specialized agencies within the two organizations, which can potentially play a vital role in building upon the values of peace and the prevention of conflicts, by supporting greater efforts aimed at combating intolerance, terrorism and hateful narratives, thereby raising awareness through dialogue of the range of values shared by humankind as a whole.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the security, cultural, environmental, health and other challenges that we are facing throughout the world today make it incumbent upon us to encourage cooperation with various regional and international organizations so as to address them.

Mr. Al Arsani (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): As a founding State Member of the United Nations, Syria would like to express its views on this agenda item, as well as on draft resolution A/72/L.10, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation".

First of all, we recall that the Syrian Arab Republic is also a founding member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), which was established in 1969 in response to an extremist terrorist arson attack carried out against the Al-Aqsa mosque. Accordingly, since its establishment, the OIC has been committed to defending Jerusalem and Palestine, while assuming the role of speaking for the Muslim world as a whole.

The Syrian Arab Republic has always maintained friendly and brotherly relations with the majority of States members of the OIC. We therefore appreciate the support provided by many of those States' peoples and Governments to Syria in the context of the struggle against terrorism that has been forced upon us. Nonetheless, it seems as though there are strange practices afoot that run counter to the Charters of both the OIC and the United Nations. It is therefore necessary to reconsider the role and activities of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

It is no secret that many States members of the OIC have been voicing their profound disagreement with and discontent at because of undemocratic practices within the organization that do not respect the principle of joint working methods, owing to the fact that the host State continues to impose its point of view and will upon the other members of the organization. Against that backdrop, an illegal resolution was adopted with a view to suspending the Syrian Arab Republic's membership in the OIC, which occurred during an extraordinary plenary meeting held in Saudi Arabia.

At that time, the host State exerted pressure on other members of the OIC — by which I mean political and financial pressure — so as to force the adoption of the illegal resolution without the least amount of consideration for the organization's normal procedures. I wish to recall that the presidency of the organization issued a communiqué in April in which it welcomed American military aggression against Syria.

We were informed by 15 States members of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation that the OIC presidency issued that communiqué in April 2017 without prior consultation with OIC member States and despite the fact that many member States had already expressed their disagreement with the declaration and its content. The communiqué shows a lack of respect for proper ethical behaviour. Exercising such pressure and bringing about such outcomes is unacceptable for the presidency of an organization such as the OIC. How, in a political declaration, is it possible to welcome military aggression against a founding member of the organization?

For several years, my country has suffered and continues to suffer the fallout of a terrorist war. For seven years now we have been waging this fight against terrorism, and certain OIC member States have been directly involved and implicated in this war against terrorism. They have financed and armed terrorist groups fighting on Syrian territory. They have also facilitated tens of thousands of foreign terrorist fighters joining the terrorist war in Syria and Iraq.

The host State of the OIC is one of the leading financing parties of terrorism in Syria. Certain other Governments, but also the Saudi State, bear the chief responsibility today for extremist and terrorist violent activities around the world, not just in Syria. It is the Saudi State that fuels the extremist Wahhabi line of thought. It is that State which has created and is financing

religious centres around the world to disseminate the extremist Wahhabi theology among young people. This is a direct threat to international peace and security and undermines the image of Muslims around the world. It also runs directly contradicts the OIC's stated mandate of promoting peace, dialogue and tolerance among religions and civilizations.

The Government of the host State is also directly responsible today, through what is called the Arab Coalition, for an unparalleled humanitarian tragedy that has led to hundreds of thousands of innocent people in Yemen facing massacres and famine. The war in Yemen, which has often been overlooked, has led to an outbreak of cholera and other scourges in the country, which is now teetering on the edge.

Moreover, the host State of the OIC is also responsible for several wars and conflicts in the world today being waged on a religious basis, which threaten to rend asunder the very unity of Muslims. We know that they are prosecuting these wars for selfish and destructive political purposes, transforming the Middle East region into a theatre of conflict and conflagration.

Saudi Arabia is not innocent. Quite the contrary, Saudi Arabia has chosen to overlook the objectives and principles of the OIC to push and cajole many Islamic and Arab States to set aside the cause of Jerusalem and Palestine and thereby ignore the needs of millions of displaced Palestinians and Syrians suffering under Israeli occupation.

We are at a critical and historical turning point. The United States Administration seems to have the intention of moving its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, which is a unilateral and illegal decision that we denounce and reject. This intended move is illegal because we know that the Palestinian people have a historic right to make Jerusalem their capital and to live in Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian State.

What is the OIC doing today on behalf of Jerusalem? What is the OIC doing today in response to the serious threats to the holy city of Jerusalem and its status? The United States President's decision on Jerusalem reflects the belief that it is possible to ignore the collective voice and conscience of Muslims and Arabs. He has shown himself capable of engaging in questionable transactions that show at a minimum a lack of respect for the rights of Palestinians and for Arabs in the broadest sense. We are talking here about inalienable rights that cannot be bartered away. As an Islamic State

and a State at the heart of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, we bear a historic responsibility today to withstand and push back against this stated intention.

Finally, the position of the Syrian Arab Republic as pertains to the draft resolution entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation" is also based on the notion that the rights of Christian and Muslim Palestinians must be upheld and defended. We promote their rights alongside the rights and status of the city of Jerusalem. We want to preserve and uphold the rights of all of the Palestinian people without distinction.

We want to make sure that the Islamic religion continues to be seen as blameless. It cannot be stereotyped as being linked to terrorism. We need to preserve and uphold democratic standards, as well as transparency and equality among member States in terms of the rule of law, and ensure that we uphold the principle that all members of the OIC stand on the same footing. That is why the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic calls for draft resolution A/72/L.10, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation", to be put to a vote.

Ms. Mammadova (Azerbaijan): Azerbaijan aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Côte d'Ivoire on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

We have the pleasure to co-sponsor draft resolution A/72/L.10, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation". As one of the largest intergovernmental organizations with 57 member States from four continents, the OIC plays an important role in promoting peace and security and fostering a culture of peace at the regional and global levels. More significantly, the objectives of international peace and security and understanding and dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions are enshrined in the OIC Charter.

Because of the vast geographical expanse of the OIC, which spans many regions and subregions, it is clear that the OIC and the United Nations should strive to collaborate closely to realize the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. Both organizations are working closely to advance a shared agenda on conflict prevention and resolution, counter-terrorism, human rights, humanitarian cooperation and sustainable development. The OIC has

proved to be an important partner of the United Nations. It works closely with the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, all of which are partners of the United Nations. It networks successfully with the African Union and the European Union on various issues of common interest and concern.

Some OIC countries continue to live in conflict and post-conflict situations, under foreign military occupation and alien domination and are exposed to complex security challenges. These conflicts remain serious threats to international peace and security and impede socioeconomic development in affected countries and regions. Through various political, diplomatic, humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts, the OIC has greatly contributed to the promotion of international peace and security in many OIC countries.

Azerbaijan greatly appreciates the long-standing commitment of the OIC to conflict resolution and welcomes the fact that the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation share a common goal of promoting and facilitating the Middle East peace process so that it can reach its objective of establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. They also share a common objective of fostering peaceful and political solutions to other conflicts, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the Security Council, as set out in resolution 69/317 and the draft before us. It is important that the two organizations continue to work together towards the realization of this common objective.

The rise of anti-Muslim rhetoric is a matter of serious concern. The OIC and the United Nations should continue to work to fight Islamophobia and foster understanding, dialogue and tolerance. Azerbaijan rejects any attempt to equate Islam with violence and terrorism. As stated by the President of Azerbaijan, His Excellency Mr. Ilham Aliyev,

“We are one of the countries most active in fighting against Islamophobia and attempts to connect Islam with terror”.

Against this background, Azerbaijan perceives intercultural and interreligious dialogue as a very powerful tool to combat intolerance and promote cultural diversity and explores all possible avenues to foster peace and tolerance among nations and cultures.

We will continue to make our modest contribution to the benefit of the OIC and the international community.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this agenda item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/72/L.10, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation”. I wish to inform the Assembly that the draft resolution has been closed for e-sponsorship.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed on the document, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Pakistan have also become sponsors of A/72/L.10.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Sudan, Sweden, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Armenia, India, Israel, Syrian Arab Republic

Draft resolution A/72/L.10 was adopted by 92 votes to 0, with 4 abstentions (resolution 72/74).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Bulgaria, Malta, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Nepal had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: I shall now give the floor to those delegations that wish to speak in explanation of vote after the voting.

Ms. Meitzad (Israel): Resolution 72/74, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation”, refers to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation 2025 Programme of Action adopted in 2016. We would expect this Programme of Action to focus on cooperation and mutual understanding, and we are astonished to see that in fact it presented another attack on Israel. It seems that no matter what we discuss — be it cooperation, conflict prevention, development or mediation — some member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation insists on injecting poisonous and false language about Israel into every forum and resolution. This does nothing to encourage dialogue and does even less for peace.

Owing to our strong bilateral relations with some OIC members, Israel did not vote against resolution 72/74. I therefore put it on official record that Israel disassociates itself from the fourth preambular paragraph of the resolution,

“Noting the adoption by the Islamic Summit Conference at its thirteenth session, held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 14 and 15 April 2016, of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation 2025 Programme of Action and the adoption on 14 March 2008 by the Islamic Summit Conference at its eleventh session, held in Dakar on 13 and 14 March 2008, of the amended Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference”.

That is why Israel could not, unfortunately, vote in favour of the draft resolution and abstained in the voting.

Mr. Kendrick (United States of America): Although the United States voted in favour of resolution 72/74, in the spirit of maintaining consensus on this item,

we are forced to dissociate ourselves from the fourth preambular paragraph, just cited by the representative of Israel, which reads:

“Noting the adoption by the Islamic Summit Conference at its thirteenth session, held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 14 and 15 April 2016, of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation 2025 Programme of Action and the adoption on 14 March 2008 by the Islamic Summit Conference at its eleventh session, held in Dakar on 13 and 14 March 2008, of the amended Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference”.

The United States disassociates itself from this paragraph owing to unacceptable statements about Israel in some of the referenced products, specifically the 2025 Programme of Action.

Ms. Green (Canada): Canada strongly supports resolution 72/74 and its objective of strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. However, we dissociate ourselves from the fourth preambular paragraph, as Canada opposes initiatives at the United Nations and in other multilateral forums that unfairly single out Israel for criticism. Canada rejects one-sided resolutions and any politicization of the issues.

Mr. Yardley (Australia): We have voted in favour today of resolution 72/74, a useful and important resolution. However, Australia dissociates itself from the fourth preambular paragraph, which notes the adoption of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation 2025 Programme of Action. Australia does not accept the Programme of Action’s characterization of Israeli actions.

Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia): Armenia proudly shares a long history of friendship, cooperation, deep mutual respect and civilizational interaction with the overwhelming majority of States members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). With some of them our common history stretches back many centuries. Armenia enjoys and will spare no effort to further deepen its most cordial bilateral relations with those States.

With respect to resolution 72/74 on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Armenia regrets and considers unacceptable the negotiating method chosen by the OIC and its representation in New York. In fact, there were

no negotiations as such on the draft of the resolution. This is most disrespectful to the larger membership of the United Nations. Therefore, the resolution lacks credibility and genuine support.

Since there have been no opportunities to engage in negotiations on the resolution, Armenia reiterates that the OIC has no mandate to foster the resolution of disputes outside its mandated area. Such claims can only undermine efforts for peaceful resolution of conflicts within internationally agreed negotiating formats.

Furthermore, Armenia notes with regret reference to the OIC 2025 Programme of Action in the preambular part of the resolution. The OIC 2025 Programme of Action contains formulations that blatantly contravene the basic agreed principles of the settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. In the light of the foregoing, Armenia abstained in the voting on the resolution.

Armenia calls on the member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to reject the abuse of their very respectful organization by Azerbaijan as it pursues its efforts to undermine the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, which is taking place within the internationally mandated format of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group co-Chairmanship.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

Several delegations have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Radwan (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Our country would like to exercise the right of reply to respond to the statement made by the representative of the Syrian regime. We regret the illegitimate, unsubstantiated accusations that have been made against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We recall that all of the attempts against us by the Syrian regime, which fails even to acknowledge its aggression against its own people, leading to the suspension of its membership in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, have made it impossible for us to support resolution 72/74. Nonetheless, I would like to thank all Member States that voted in favour of it.

Ms. Mammadova (Azerbaijan): My delegation is taking the floor to exercise its right of reply to respond to the comment made by the representative of Armenia.

First of all, we would like to thank the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire for having skilfully facilitated the negotiations on resolution 72/74, in which all Member States had the opportunity to contribute to the negotiation process and to the harmonization of the text.

Paragraph 4 of the resolution states that

“the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation share a common goal of promoting and facilitating the Middle East peace process so that the process can reach its objective of establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and also share a common objective of fostering peaceful and political solutions to other conflicts in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council”.

There is nothing surprising in the unsuccessful and senseless attempts of Armenia to challenge this language or the other provisions of the resolution that make reference to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) framework document.

We thank the OIC for its principled position on the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Since the eruption of the conflict, the OIC has, on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions, explicitly characterized the actions of Armenia on the territory of Azerbaijan as aggression and condemned in the strongest possible terms both the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories.

In 2016, the OIC established a contact group on the aggression of the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan. The establishment of the OIC Contact Group and its effective functioning are of great importance, considering the urgent need for more concerted efforts to force Armenia to comply with its international obligations and the persistent calls of the OIC on its member States and the international community to use effective political and economic measures so as to put an end to Armenian aggression and occupation of Azerbaijani territories. We believe the deliberations within the Contact Group and the OIC will complement and contribute to the implementation of the relevant OIC resolutions and help harmonize

individual and joint efforts of OIC member States to this end.

As has been expressed on previous occasions, Azerbaijan looks forward to working closely with the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and other partners in achieving the earliest possible resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict based on the aforementioned position and to bringing peace and stability to the region.

Mr. Margaryan (Armenia): I have requested the floor to reply to the statement made by the representative of Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani statement is a testament to its policy of abusing various formats, in this case, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation-United Nations cooperation framework, in relation to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. Azerbaijan should rather reconfirm its adherence to basic principles of the resolution of the conflict provided by the co-Chairs of the Minsk Group on multiple occasions, including the principles of the self-determination of peoples, the non-use of force or threat of force and territorial integrity. Instead, Azerbaijan continues to deviate from previously reached agreements on the strengthening of the ceasefire regime by obstructing the increase in the number of monitors to observe the ceasefire violations on the border with Nagorno Karabakh.

We hope that Azerbaijan will show the political will needed to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflict, thereby contributing to durable solutions and bringing peace to the region.

Ms. Mammadova (Azerbaijan): The remarks we just heard from the representative of Armenia are full of falsifications, distortions and misinterpretations and demonstrate how far Armenia has gone from engaging in a constructive quest for peace in our region. In reality, by disregarding the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, by continuing to unlawfully occupy Azerbaijan's territory, by deliberately denying the right of more than a million Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons to return to their homes, by pursuing racist ideologies and misinterpreting fundamental norms and principles of international law, Armenia clearly demonstrates yet again who is actually responsible for undermining peace, security and stability.

Mr. Margaryan (Armenia): I regret taking the floor in exercise of our second right of reply, in response to the remarks by the delegation of Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani delegation, in its typical manner, is portraying reality upside down and trying to deceive the international community in relation to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. Azerbaijan consistently misrepresents the essence of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, trying to conceal its policy of ethnic cleansing and violence conducted against the people of Nagorno Karabakh from 1988 to 1991, as well as against Armenians in the cities of Baku, Sumgait, Kirovabad and elsewhere. These actions subsequently developed into open aggression and large-scale hostilities against the population of Nagorno Karabakh, which also involved mercenaries closely linked to terrorist organizations and ultimately claimed the lives of thousands of civilians.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group co-Chairmanship, the internationally mandated format to negotiate the resolution of the conflict, has called numerous times for the establishment of mechanisms to investigate ceasefire violations. It has been reiterated by the co-Chairs that, without such mechanisms, the sides will continue to blame each other for initiating deadly attacks on the line of contact on the Armenian and Azerbaijani border.

Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh have agreed to such a mechanism, but Azerbaijan has continuously refused to implement confidence-building measures of any kind. The systematic use of heavy weaponry and artillery and missiles make it unambiguously clear to the international community why the Azerbaijani leadership has been rejecting the creation of such a mechanism.

Against a backdrop of hostilities on the border of Nagorno Karabakh, it is unacceptable to allow Azerbaijan to continue its current practice of regularly violating the ceasefire. We call on Azerbaijan to renounce violence and commit to implementing proposals aimed at a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 176?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.