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President: Mr. Gaston THORN
(Luxembourg).

AGENDA ITEM 27

Question of Palestine: report of the Secretary-General
(continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Before calling on the first speaker, I should like to remind members of the Assembly that, in conformity with the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 2390th meeting, yesterday morning, the list of speakers wishing to participate in the debate on this item will be closed at 5 p.m. today.

2. I should also like to remind representatives that, at its 2353rd plenary meeting, the General Assembly decided that statements in exercise of the right of reply on days when two plenary meetings were held would be made at the end of the afternoon meeting. Of course, if there is only one meeting on a given day the right of reply will, in principle, be exercised at the end of that meeting. In that respect, yesterday's situation was exceptional in that a morning meeting only was provided for and until 1 p.m. we thought there would not be an afternoon meeting. That was why, as an exception, the right of reply was exercised at the end of the morning meeting yesterday.

3. Mr. SHARAF (Jordan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Once again the General Assembly is considering the question of Palestine, but the discussion this time differs in context and circumstances from the preceding ones. Today the Palestinian question is well known throughout the world. Palestinian rights have been determined and have become the subject of a unanimous international recognition as the basis of any peace in the Middle East and as the essence of any solution aimed at ending the physical and moral haemorrhage in the region. The past few years have witnessed a basic change in the international context of the Palestinian cause, which reached its peak last year, and the international community is now entering the phase of serious and positive action to restore the rights of the Palestinians and fulfil the universal commitment to ensure the implementation of Palestinian rights.

4. That constitutes a basic difference between the circumstances surrounding the present General Assembly debate on the question of Palestine and the

debates that took place during the past two or three decades when this question was considered in the United Nations under a variety of agenda items.

5. When, in 1946, the question of Palestine was first considered in the United Nations the situation was completely different. Then, Palestine was under a British Mandate, which was about to be terminated; but the previous almost 30 years of foreign domination had exhausted the Arab people of Palestine, disarmed them and shattered their political organizations. At the same time, it had enabled the political and military Zionist organization established by that same foreign Power in the land of Palestine to become the nucleus of a State to be established on the remains of the Arab people of Palestine living peacefully in their own homeland. This is what in fact happened between the end of 1947 and the close of 1948.

6. The State of Israel was established on the land from which the peaceful Arab people of Palestine had been driven by force and violence. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were forced to evacuate their country and to leave their properties and lands. Uprooted, the Palestinian Arabs were to scatter around the world.

7. By giving legality to injustice in its resolution on the partition of Palestine in November 1947 [*resolution 181 (II)*], the United Nations participated in creating the Palestine tragedy. At that time the United Nations was under the influence of the big Powers. Ever since, however, the ghost of the Palestinian tragedy has been haunting the conscience of the world Organization in each of its organs and every year.

8. From 1948 to the present, the General Assembly has been dealing with the consequences of this unique historic tragedy. But the General Assembly has remained the prisoner since that date of a partial, limited and distorted concept of the Palestinian question. That concept was behind the consideration of the Palestinian question as a matter of Palestinian refugees. Driven by a guilt complex, or by the influence of the dominant big Powers which in the early days of the United Nations used the Organization to achieve their own ends, the United Nations remained the prisoner of this narrow and distorted view. Thus in the United Nations records and documents of the two decades following 1948 the Palestinian question was reduced to one of securing relief and physical and health care for hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees. As a result, the international community failed to understand the essence of the question, namely, the rights of the Palestinians, and to view the Palestinians as a distinct people with a personality and an existence of its own.

9. That narrow and incomplete outlook continued unchanged until last year, when the United Nations opened the file of the Palestine question as a whole

and decided to adopt a resolution correcting that view, recognizing basic rights and calling for a sound and radical solution to the problem of the Palestinian people. Following that decisive discussion, General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX) was adopted, recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination without any external interference and to national independence and sovereignty and affirming the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and properties, from which they had been expelled. That historic resolution also considered respect for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to be indispensable for the solution of the Palestine question and recognized the Palestinian people as a principal party in establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and its right to struggle to regain its rights by all means in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

10. That resolution reflected a radical change in the way the international community viewed the Palestinian question and in the world's understanding of its dimensions and future development. It was also the beginning of the assumption by the international community of its historic responsibility as regards the cause of the Palestinian people.

11. That, then, is the basic difference between the question of Palestine as it is being considered now in the United Nations and the Palestinian question as it used to be debated two or three decades ago.

12. The international community now knows that, when it speaks of the Palestinian question and endeavours to find a solution to it, it is not talking about the issue of refugees and how to provide them with food, clothing or education by means of international charity. Rather, it is discussing helping the Palestinian people, a people with a distinct personality, to achieve its historic and established right to be reunited on its territory and soil, the soil of Palestine, as a national entity comprising all Palestinians, in freedom and dignity.

13. That is what is new in the United Nations debate today. However, it is a status that the Palestinian cause has not attained easily, nor has it been achieved without suffering and set-backs.

14. It all began at the turn of this century when the Western colonial Powers decided to impose their domination over the Arab world, as they had done during the last century in Africa and most of Asia. It was in the course of such colonialist manoeuvres in the Arab world that the Arab homeland was divided between the colonialist Powers. The programme of the Zionist movement for creating an exclusivist political entity was adopted by Britain and was imposed on Palestine at the expense of its Arab people. That programme took shape in 1948 with the establishment of the State of Israel in the area from which hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were forcibly expelled. Those Palestinian Arabs had lived there uninterrupted—in their homeland—for dozens of centuries. Suddenly those peaceful, well-established people became refugees driven away from their homes and property. Yet Israel refused even to recognize their right of return, their right to restoration of their property or even to compensation.

15. Israel has acted towards the rights of this people and its brethren in the other neighbouring Arab countries with a racist, aggressive mentality, relying on military might and disregarding any other consideration whatsoever. The United Nations has spent 20 years calling on Israel to enable the Palestinians—those who had been rendered refugees—to exercise their right to return, but to no avail. That racist mentality and militaristic arrogance became the basis of Israel's policies and its view of the peoples of the region and of the rights of those peoples. Accordingly, Israel closed its mind to every solution or call for a solution based on the recognition of Palestinian rights and on coexistence on the basis of equality and equity.

16. For almost three decades Israel was able to ward off every kind of international pressure by employing two major weapons. The first was the militaristic and chauvinistic mentality which closes itself to any realistic assessment of the problem based on respect for the rights of others and on consideration of the changing realities around Israel both in the Arab world and in the world at large. The second weapon that Israel used was the exploitation of certain social, psychological and political realities in many powerful and developed countries of the world, especially the Western countries.

17. In most of these Western States there exists a deep feeling of guilt regarding the barbarity with which the Jews in Europe have been treated, particularly during this century. The highly efficient and well-established Zionist organization in these Western societies was quick to exploit this guilt complex, converting it into blind support for Israel's policies regardless of how unjust or aggressive or contrary to normal international standards those policies might be. A wall was established around policy-makers in the powerful and developed Western nations by the Zionist organization, preventing them from viewing the Arab-Israeli conflict objectively and imposing on them a view of the problem only from the Israeli standpoint. It thus closed their eyes to the rights of the Palestinian people and to the moral bankruptcy of Israel's stand. Hence the unconditional support of certain countries and major Powers for the reckless and near-sighted Israeli policies.

18. World realities, however, are not static; they are dynamic and changing. So the past years have witnessed a fundamental change in the international framework of the cause of the people of Palestine.

19. In Africa and Asia national movements have emerged. Latin America has awakened to the impulse of change and rejuvenation. The peoples of the developing world have begun to unite in their struggle to liberate their future and change the existing conditions of international injustice. The iron curtain around Palestinian rights in the Western information media and in the circles influencing world public opinion has been dissolving. A wave of awakening and determination to restore their identity and build up a unifying political movement has emerged among the Palestinian people. The Arab States have stood by the Palestinian people in these efforts. They unanimously recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] as that people's legitimate representative. Finally, the United Nations recognized the full rights of that people and it

is now considering ways of restoring these rights to their possessors.

20. It is a historical irony that Israel should have contributed to a large extent to that deep change in both the international situation and the legal conditions in the Middle East. For the logic of disregard for the rights of others and the use of military force as a major and primary instrument is one that knows no limits.

21. Therefore, the year 1967 witnessed a historic Israeli decision emanating from that logic. That year the Israeli leadership decided to attempt to solve its problems resulting from Israel's 1948 aggression with another major aggression against the peoples of the area surrounding it, particularly the Palestinians settled on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, in addition to the peoples of Syria and Egypt. Israel succeeded in achieving its direct military objective by occupying territories of three Arab States and refusing to withdraw even within the framework of a political settlement, and it continued to deny the Palestinians their rights. Yet that Israeli decision proved to be self-defeating. That aggression revealed Israel's military arrogance and the emptiness of the myth of its peaceful intentions and its struggle for survival and peace. From that point on, the international political isolation of Israel began, especially in the struggling third world. At the same time, that Israeli aggression triggered a movement for change in the Arab world and signalled the start of new Palestinian determination. That is how the question of Palestine has returned to the forefront in the world and in the United Nations.

22. My country, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, is closely linked to the Palestinian question and the rights of the Palestinian people. That close link with the Palestinian people in their agony and their aspirations was there when the Jordanian people stood, with deep feelings and emotions, by the brotherly Palestinian people as they fought against the Zionist programme and foreign domination during the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. When the 1948 tragedy came about, Jordan joined the Arab countries that hastened to assist the Palestinian people in defending itself against the attempt to uproot it from its land by force. The Arab efforts were not successful, however, in rescuing the Palestinians and preventing their displacement. Jordan strove to protect the remainder of Palestine on the West Bank and in Jerusalem from occupation and from the Israeli attempts to empty it of its inhabitants. The unity of hopes and brotherhood culminated in a consensus between the Jordanian leadership and the Palestinian leaders in the West Bank on establishing a political and constitutional unity which was achieved in 1950 by constitutional means and through general elections.

23. That unity was established without prejudice to the full rights of the Palestinian people and it was based on Jordan's belief in the Palestinian people's right to self-determination when circumstances permitted or whenever possible. Jordan remained committed to this principle and this responsibility for over a quarter of a century. While linking its future and policies with Palestinian hopes and interests, it remained keenly aware of the fact that the Palestinian identity and Palestinian personality were established

historical facts that should not be obscured or disguised.

24. Jordan, therefore, rejects the Israeli argument we have heard recently, which attempts to confuse Jordan with Palestine in an attempt to obliterate the genuine and established rights of the Palestinians in the land of Palestine and on Palestinian soil. Jordan is proud to have carried a considerable share of the responsibility for the Palestinian cause for many years, but it rejects the Israeli attempt to distort and reduce the Palestinian question and to turn it into a question between Jordan and Israel. The rights of the Palestinians are in the land of Palestine and there is no way in which these rights can be obscured or in which the responsibility of Israel can be concealed by forcing the Palestinians to seek an alternative homeland. There can be no solution to the Palestinian question unless two aims are achieved: first, ending the Israeli occupation; and secondly, enabling the Palestinians who were driven away from their homes to exercise their right to return thereto. Israel cannot escape its responsibility for displacing the refugees and occupying Palestinian territory by playing semantic games and by alleging that Palestine covers both banks of the river Jordan and that consequently most of the Palestinians were not displaced because they did not leave that area. The historical borders of Palestine are well known, and the vast majority of the Palestinian people are either under Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza or refugees residing in the various Arab countries away from their homes and properties.

25. This is the situation that needs to be corrected. The eagerness of the Arabs to reaffirm their historic unity and the link of brotherhood and partnership with the Palestinian people does not mean that the Palestinian rights in the land of Palestine no longer exist nor does it change the nature or the geographical definition of those rights.

26. This is the objective view of the question of Palestine.

27. In this connexion, I should like to stress that the Jordanian Government is committed to the resolution adopted at the Arab Summit Conference at Rabat in October 1974¹ which defined the responsibilities and joint Arab commitments with regard to this cause.

28. The international community stands today at the threshold of a new and decisive phase in regard to the question of Palestine and the subject of a just peace in the Middle East.

29. As I said at the outset of my statement, this year differs from the preceding ones as regards the question of Palestine [see *para. 3 above*]. The Palestine question is now well known around the world. The Palestinian rights have now been determined and are universally recognized as the basis of any peace in the Middle East region and the substance and the core of any just and lasting solution. The international community has now entered the phase of implementing the commitment it took upon itself by adopting General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX) on this question. The road, therefore, is no longer vague or unknown.

30. The international community is called upon today to give effect to its new and realistic conception and understanding of the Palestinian question. The international community must now begin to implement its

historic resolution of last year. The international community should begin by taking practical steps towards laying the groundwork for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

31. The wound inflicted upon the Middle East has not yet been healed; it has been bleeding for many years. Now the effects of this wound have reached the whole body of the international community. Therefore, the responsibility of dealing with this major international problem is an urgent international duty, to which every country in the world should contribute seriously and positively.

32. If the international community concentrates its efforts in a responsible manner and in conformity with the principles of justice and reality to solve this problem, the solution is within reach and lasting peace in the Middle East is a realistic possibility and not a far-away dream.

33. Mr. ADJIBADÉ (Dahomey) (*interpretation from French*): Speaking in the debate on the question of Palestine on 13 November 1974,² the delegation of Dahomey departed from the traditional framework in which the United Nations has customarily considered this problem and drew the attention of the General Assembly to the essentially colonial character of the question. Indeed, rightly or wrongly, our Assembly had always failed to take into consideration this quite important fact and the inevitable consequence has been the impasse into which the United Nations has got itself, and in which it remains, with regard to its responsibility for what is customarily called "the Middle East crisis". However, the close interrelationship of the two questions no longer requires any proof, since everyone agrees that the first is the consequence of the second. That means that our Assembly should first of all settle the Palestinian question if it is truly animated by the desire to bring about a definitive, reasonable, just and lasting solution to the Middle East crisis.

34. My delegation realizes that, with the twenty-ninth session, an important and necessary step was taken in the search for the true solution when the General Assembly broke with its old habits that were hindering any advance and took two important and historic decisions: one was the authorization or invitation issued to the Chairman of the PLO, our brother, Yasser Arafat, to come and speak directly to the General Assembly [*resolution 3210 (XXIX)*]; and the other, the granting of observer status in the United Nations to the PLO [*resolution 3237 (XXIX)*]. Those two important decisions taken by the General Assembly have without any doubt shed new light on the Palestinian problem.

35. Since the statement of the Chairman of the PLO, Yasser Arafat, in the General Assembly,³ a statement that exposed the grievances of the Palestinian people to the international community, we have to admit that many delegations have begun to get a better grasp of the Palestinian problem, which they had previously seen only as a humanitarian question—in other words it had been voluntarily or deliberately distorted.

36. Who among us does not recall the moving appeal which the Chairman of the PLO, Yasser Arafat, made to our Organization and, through it, to the entire world, when he used that picturesque expression

about having come with an olive branch in one hand and a gun in the other? Who among us can forget his demand that the General Assembly should not compel the PLO to drop the olive branch, the symbol of peace and of a negotiated solution, and to retain only the gun, the symbol of violence and war—in a word, the ultimate solution of despair and revolt?

37. It is clear that since the twenty-ninth session the Palestinian problem has assumed new dimensions to the extent that it is no longer a question of a people reduced to the status of beggars, eternal expatriates, but of a people whose dignity has been wounded by its being compelled to live in refugee camps, vainly waiting for the grants which international generosity will accord it. It is clear that since the twenty-ninth session the image of the Palestinians as uncompromising terrorists animated only by the desire to do as they please, which certain people tried to impose on international public opinion, has fortunately been corrected. Since that time the Palestinian people has proved itself to be a people aware of its identity, its authenticity; it has appeared and has acted as a proud people, driven from its native soil and fighting by every means at its disposal to reconquer its land, in order to become a nation with a fatherland. We must realize that it is a people for whom something must be done, and as soon as possible.

38. That is the new image which the important decisions of the twenty-ninth session have given the Palestinian people. Since then the world community has finally understood that the Palestinians were compelled to resort to acts of violence in order to awaken the conscience of mankind and inform world public opinion of their fate and their position in the face of the apathy of this international Organization concerning their appeals, manipulated and intoxicated as it was by the defamatory and misleading propaganda of the then majority, which made it impossible for the United Nations to act promptly and firmly to put an end to a whole series of injustices to the Palestinian people. Among those injustices, suffice it to mention that, while our community felt it to be just, normal and moral to give land and a fatherland to the Jewish people, it did not feel it necessary to preserve the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to live in peace, at least within the limits of the 45 per cent of Palestinian land that it acquired as a result of partition. If to this intolerable fact we add the passivity with which international public opinion followed the expansionist plans of Israel, which not only appropriated the lands of the Palestinians but even launched wars of aggression and annexation at the expense of its neighbours, it is easy to understand the exasperation of the Arab world in general and the Palestinian people in particular, and thus to see in all its dimensions the problem which has been of such concern to our Organization for decades and which is called the Middle East crisis.

39. It is not necessary to be evasive in order to camouflage the true problem. Last year at this rostrum we said this, and we repeat it again today. The Jewish State was created without our participation. It is a fact that today it exists and that no one wishes to dispute its existence. However, our community must abandon its retrograde concepts of former years and create conditions which favour the emergence of an Arab State of

Palestine. In other words, we must recognize that if, faced with the torture and extermination of the Jewish people by the Nazis, the international community thought it necessary to give the oppressed Jewish people a fatherland, elementary morality and good sense compel us not to drive the Palestinian people indefinitely into the sands of the desert. In other words, our Assembly should and must have no difficulty in understanding the reality of the Palestinian fact, and consequently in extending to the Palestinian people the same right as to the Jewish people, in the interests of justice and equity.

40. If it is clear that our community must not contribute to the death of its godchild, it is no less imperative that it understand that the peace and security without which that child cannot develop properly depend upon the creation of a certain number of favourable conditions. In a word, it is a question of giving the infant an appropriate environment, and that environment cannot be created while ignoring the Palestinian fact. It is thus necessary to restore to the Palestinian people its legitimate rights by giving it a fatherland whose boundaries are definitive and are recognized by the United Nations.

41. In the opinion of the delegation of Dahomey, to proceed in any other way would be to distort the realities voluntarily, with the sole aim of misleading public opinion—like a certain campaign mounted last year and this year as well, in an attempt to make us believe that the creation of a Palestinian State would necessarily involve the disappearance of the State of Israel.

42. If this Organization wishes to prove its seriousness and accept its responsibilities, the General Assembly will undoubtedly find the just, reasonable and equitable solution satisfactory to all States of the region without which the Middle East will never enjoy peace.

43. The Palestinian problem is the Gordian knot of the Middle East question. A just, definitive and lasting solution of that problem would, *ipso facto*, bring about the just and lasting peace we seek for that region. Thus we must meet the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and, to that end, Israel must admit the Palestinian people's right to existence and self-determination. Israel must abandon its expansionist aims and arrogance and withdraw immediately from all the occupied Arab territories as an indispensable and necessary preliminary step in the creation of a Palestinian State, the urgency of which is now realized by the international community.

44. It would have been unthinkable to raise this problem in this way a few years ago because the arrogance and over-confidence of the Israeli State and its military forces would have put it in a position to impose its will on the Arabs. Since October 1973, however, new conditions have permitted the different parties to negotiate on a basis of equality. That is what President El-Sadat of Egypt strikingly demonstrated to us a few days ago when, as a good soldier, he proved that, centuries after Catiline, we can paraphrase Cicero and recognize that the Arabs know not only how to conquer but also how to profit from their victory. President El-Sadat demonstrated to us that the great Arab victory of October 1973 made it impos-

sible for us to persist in the negative attitude of refusing any negotiation and any peaceful settlement.

45. Everyone knows that relative peace has been established in the Middle East since October 1973 thanks to the political will of the principal parties to the conflict to arrive at a peaceful settlement of their disputes, which have unfortunately cost the lives of thousands of men.

46. Certainly, international public opinion welcomed the two disengagement agreements between Israel and Egypt,⁴ and that between Israel and Syria,⁵ but it none the less recognizes that this relative progress towards a settlement of the Middle East crisis, though considerable, contains a number of defects.

47. It is a good thing that Israel has finally understood that it is in the interests of its own security and survival not to occupy the Arab territories obstinately and indefinitely. It is a good thing that Israel has ultimately realized the necessity for a peaceful settlement of the crisis. But Israel would be making a serious mistake and would be short-sighted if it thought it could achieve a settlement with the other Arab countries while continuing to ignore the Palestinian reality.

48. Dahomey is not opposed to the so-called step-by-step policy to the extent that it allows a certain positive evolution towards settlement of the crisis; but Dahomey believes that ultimately the "neither war nor peace" situation which results can only constitute a powder keg ready to go up at any moment, for so true is it that, as President El-Sadat said in the General Assembly, there can be no true peace in the region without a political settlement of the Palestinian problem.

49. Thus my country would certainly look kindly on the achievement of a second disengagement agreement on the Israeli-Syrian front and even on the Palestinian front, if such an agreement could be definitive. However, Dahomey feels that any partial solution could only be a patching-up, a soporific, and that above all the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East must resume its meetings as soon as possible, with the participation of all the parties interested in the Middle East problem. Thus my delegation supports the invitation which, from this rostrum, President El-Sadat extended to the Secretary-General and the super-Powers when he said:

"... I hereby officially request both the Secretary-General and the two super-Powers—the Soviet Union and the United States as Co-Chairmen of the Conference—to begin immediately their consultations with all the interested parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, so that the Conference can be resumed in the very near future and its meetings continue uninterruptedly to deal with the whole problem in all its aspects in order to reach a just peace." [2388th meeting, para. 37.]

50. My delegation also supports the proposal that the General Assembly should adopt a resolution inviting the PLO to participate in the Geneva Conference as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

51. My delegation's attitude is not dictated by what might be called blind solidarity but by the logic of its intellectual and political views and by its firm conviction that that is the only reasonable way of establishing

the just and lasting peace which all the countries of the Middle East so ardently desire.

52. It is true that we cannot have the same views as Israel or the same logic as the United States, but we are convinced that a minimum of objectivity and realism on the part of both those countries will lead them to abandon certain prejudices and to realize that certain indispensable conditions which they impose are implicitly accepted by the Arab countries and even by the PLO, and that it is no longer necessary to proclaim them.

53. If both these countries will abandon their prejudices they will realize that their efforts for peace will achieve concrete results only if they recognize the PLO as the authentic representative of the aspirations of the Palestinian people. Israel and the United States must realize that their efforts for peace will have concrete results only if they agree to sit down with the representatives of the PLO around the Geneva conference table in order to find the true solution that the crisis in the Middle East requires.

54. In conclusion, my delegation proclaims its conviction that the PLO, like all the States of the Middle East, has already suffered too much from costly and ruinous wars not to long now for a just and lasting peace. Dahomey dares to hope that the appeal launched here last year by Yasser Arafat and this year by President El-Sadat will be heard and that the super-Powers, and in particular the United States, will decisively shoulder their responsibilities and will be able to bring about the change of heart that is needed to make Israel admit that it is in its own interest, and in the interest of the security which it seeks, to follow the path of realism, if it is truly animated by a firm desire to live in peace as a good neighbour with the countries of the region. Such realism means, primarily and above all, the withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied Arab territories and the recognition of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to live in its homeland and a willingness to sit down with the authentic representatives of that people, the PLO, in order to find ways and means of permitting the Palestinians to fulfil their legitimate aspirations in the peace and harmony that should prevail among all the people of the Middle East.

55. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): In this same month last year and at this same rostrum,⁶ the representative of the Palestinian people stood to announce to the entire world that he had come before us holding in his hand an olive branch. We heard the echoes of his voice in this very Hall, asking us not to let that green olive branch fall from his hand. Have we responded to his appeal? An entire year has passed, to be added to the other long years which have witnessed the struggle of the heroic Palestinian people, a people beset by one of the worst crises known in the history of peoples, in that its very existence has been denied and its genuine and inalienable rights usurped, in spite of the repeated affirmations by our international Organization of those rights and its demand that they be restored. None of those rights has been restored because of Israel's intransigence and its refusal to recognize the rights of the Palestinian people, which are without doubt the essence, the core, of this problem and of the conflict in the Middle East. I repeat here what President

Anwar El-Sadat said in his speech to the General Assembly on 29 October last:

"... I have no doubt that you agree with me that there will be no peace in the region without a political settlement of the Palestine problem. It is inconceivable—nay, utterly unacceptable—that the Palestinian people should remain homeless and dispersed. They must regain their entity and establish their independent State so that this ancient people can contribute constructively to the development and progress of our international community." [*Ibid.*, para. 33.]

56. It is our firm belief—and this has been unanimously affirmed by the speakers in the General Assembly this year—that there is no further room for controversy or debate about this fact and that unless we reach a just and lasting solution whereby the Palestinian people can regain their genuine and inalienable rights we shall have no hope of establishing peace in the Middle East.

57. It has also become a fact accepted by us and by the international community as a whole that the situation cannot be frozen once more and that we cannot procrastinate in our efforts for a peaceful solution. The responsibility lies with us all and, in the first place, with our Organization. Our Organization is responsible for guaranteeing effective action to produce a just solution of the Palestine problem based on what this Organization has affirmed with regard to the clear rights of that people.

58. Egypt will spare absolutely no effort in order to attain that national objective as soon as possible by any means within its power, whatever the sacrifices it may have to bear and the difficulties it may have to face. Egypt has announced this and has repeated it on every occasion and in every forum. It has been stated by our President. There is no clearer indication of this than the words uttered by President Anwar El-Sadat before the People's Assembly of Egypt and before the General Assembly here, namely, that no Arab land is less dear to us than our own land, that Jerusalem, Nablus, Al-Khalil, Jebel El-Sheikh and Gaza are no less dear and precious to us than are Kantara or Al-Arish [*ibid.*, para. 26]. That is Egypt's clear and consistent policy, and that is our basic starting-point in all our undertakings for peace, in our acceptance of every challenge and in the defence of our rights, whatever the powers of oppression may be.

59. One of the most important truths to emerge after the October 1973 war was the fact that the Palestinian entity had found its embodiment and its crystallization, that recognition of the representatives of that people had increased and that the struggle for the restoration of all their rights had been intensified. Perhaps you may all share my view that the major political victory achieved for the Palestinian cause during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly has clearly shown how fully integrated with their people are its authentic political leaders and how they complement each other; they are clearly in a position to assume their international responsibility and are ready to work within the framework of international legitimacy to attain their national objectives and targets.

60. As a result of this, the international community reaffirmed anew its recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination without any external interference and to the restoration of its right to independence and national sovereignty and the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property.

61. The historic resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 22 November 1974 [resolution 3236 (XXIX)] crowned the determined and persistent political struggle waged by the PLO in the name and on behalf of the entire Palestinian people. It is undoubtedly a source of pride to our entire Arab nation that the Palestinian people is assuming its rightful and natural role in constructing the world of today and that it should have the opportunity to participate in the determination of the destiny and future of the Middle East, in compliance with the text and provisions of paragraph 4 of resolution 3236 (XXIX), in which the General Assembly recognized that the Palestinian people is a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Panguene (Mozambique), Vice-President, took the Chair.

62. Egypt, with its faith and belief that this is the sole logical basis for any attempt that truly aims at providing a peaceful solution to the conflict in the Middle East, considers that it is inevitable and absolutely necessary that the representatives of that people should be called upon to participate in the efforts to establish a just peace in the area on an equal footing with all the other parties concerned. We believe that present international conditions and circumstances and the fundamental changes in the state of affairs in our area resulting from the October war provide us now, in the first analysis, with a singular opportunity for establishing a just peace in the Middle East. It is the full responsibility of our Organization here to seize this opportunity and not to let it pass by or to allow the situation to freeze, because any attempt to do so will be completely rejected by us. Events have proved that such attempts are simply efforts to contain all the explosive factors in the area, with the consequent serious dangers not only to the peoples of the Middle East, but inevitably to world peace and security as a whole.

63. To be frank with ourselves, if we are to assume our responsibility, the question is as I stated it at the beginning of my statement: What then is the obstacle to action for peace? This has become an urgent and fundamental matter, in fact in the opinion of all of us it is the essential factor, particularly since the objective to which we aspire does not lack clarity or affirmation and there is no doubt of its justice. Our determination to achieve peace and to follow the path of peace requires no further proof, and so Egypt affirms the need for effective action on the part of our Organization as well as an intensification of all its efforts to find a means of guaranteeing the restoration of full rights to the Palestinian people. This should be the basic and fundamental target of our work and action, not just during our meetings at this session. We must also set up a practical plan to achieve that objective and to follow it through in all the organs of the United Nations. The question is an urgent and dangerous one and what we request is no less than respect for and

implementation of the resolutions adopted by this international Organization itself. In addition to the fact that the cause concerns an entire people and relates to their inalienable and recognized rights and that we must secure the restoration of those rights to the people of Palestine, the United Nations has had a special responsibility in this matter from the very beginning.

64. For this reason, Egypt and some other countries which share the same vision and the same ideas have decided to submit a draft resolution which would guarantee the implementation of General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX) and ensure the taking of practical steps for peace based on justice. The implementation of the provisions of that historic resolution is a *sine qua non* for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

65. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt had previously called for the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly to be "the session of Palestine", and that in fact was the case. A few days ago, the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, from this very rostrum, made an appeal that we proclaim the year 1976 the Year of the Palestinian People [2388th meeting, para. 41]. We feel sure that this, too, will be accepted and will have the support of all free and peace-loving peoples.

66. We insist on the necessity of establishing in the area a just peace the existence and continuation of which can be guaranteed; and this, in our view, cannot be achieved except through the liberation of all the occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. That, in turn, would provide all the peoples of the area with a better opportunity to make a constructive contribution to and to participate in efforts to achieve security and prosperity for our world.

67. Egypt's position has always been that our international Organization and the international community as a whole should be a party to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in that very sensitive and strategic area of the world, particularly since our Organization has, almost from its establishment, been dealing with the Palestinian question and with the Palestinian people's loss of its right to self-determination. For this reason Egypt decided and was determined from the start that the Geneva Peace Conference should take place under the aegis of the United Nations and that every step towards peace should be taken under its supervision and with its participation.

68. President Anwar El-Sadat expressed that belief very clearly and frankly when he announced in this forum on 29 October 1975 that he found a close organic link between the Geneva Conference and the United Nations [*ibid.*, para. 38].

69. At the first meeting of the Geneva Conference, Egypt affirmed that peace would not be secured and justice would not be restored unless and until the Palestinian people received their full rights; and Egypt has always been the first, in all its international contacts with other countries, to affirm this principle.

70. Egypt believes that any peace we can reach will not be lasting or just unless it has the participation of the PLO. It is not reasonable, it is not logical that there should be peace without our hearing the opinion

of the Palestinian people on the solution of their own problem. In this connexion, President Anwar El-Sadat affirmed this basic and fundamental point when in this forum he called for the convening of the Geneva Conference:

“In connexion with the afore-mentioned official request to convene the Geneva Peace Conference, I invite the General Assembly at this thirtieth session to take an effective step on the road towards a just peace by adopting a resolution on the necessity for the representation of the PLO—the legitimate representative of the Palestine people—at the Conference on an equal footing with the other parties participating in it. Accordingly, I have instructed the Egyptian delegation to submit a draft resolution along these lines, in co-operation with all States which share our view that the key to the solution of the Middle East problem lies in a just solution of the Palestine question. It is inconceivable that the Conference will succeed or make any progress towards peace without the participation of the representatives of the Palestinian people, already recognized as such by the Arab nation at the highest level.” [*Ibid.*, para. 40.]

71. It was therefore not strange that the General Assembly last year, in its resolution 3236 (XXIX), should have affirmed the genuine and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their status as a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, or that in its resolution 3237 (XXIX) the General Assembly should have invited the PLO to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and of all international conferences convened under the auspices of the General Assembly.

72. This year, too, this idea has been expressed in the words of many of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and heads of delegations participating in the thirtieth session when they affirmed that the participation of the PLO in the Geneva Conference was vital and necessary for the attainment of a just and lasting peace. We recall what Mr. Gromyko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, one of the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, said here a few weeks ago in this very forum:

“... The Soviet Union stands for the reconvening of the Conference with the participation of all—and I stress ‘all’—parties concerned, including representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.” [2357th meeting, para. 164.]

73. In the light of what we have just stated, we think that the time has come for the General Assembly at this session to adopt a resolution affirming these proposals and ideas, so that the PLO may contribute to and participate in the work of the Geneva Conference as a principal party. Egypt, together with a number of States which share its views, is submitting a draft resolution to the General Assembly to this effect. I shall read out the draft resolution [A/L.768], which will be submitted to the General Assembly and which will be in the hands of the members this afternoon.

74. The draft resolution reads as follows:

“The General Assembly,

“*Having considered* the item entitled ‘Question of Palestine’,

“*Recalling* its resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, in which it recognized the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian people,

“*Recognizing* the necessity of achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East at the earliest possible time,

“*Believing* that the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations is a prerequisite to achieving a just and lasting peace in the area,

“*Taking into consideration* that the reconvening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East should take place in the near future, with the participation of all parties concerned, to deal with the problem of the Middle East in all its aspects in order to achieve a just and durable settlement,

“1. *Calls for* the invitation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in the work and deliberations of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, held under the auspices of the United Nations, on an equal footing with other participants in the Conference, with a view to ensuring the attainment of their national inalienable rights;

“2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to inform the Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Middle East of the present resolution and to take all necessary steps to secure the invitation of the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in the work of the Conference;

“3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on this matter to the General Assembly as soon as possible.”

75. That is the draft resolution which, together with a number of other sponsors, we shall submit this afternoon to the General Assembly.

76. For the foregoing reasons Egypt believes that, with that draft resolution, it is laying an important, indeed a basic, corner-stone for a just settlement of the Palestinian cause. We hope that the draft resolution will be supported by a very large number of the States Members of our Organization. We believe that the United Nations will understand and appreciate the importance of this initiative and that all the Member States will spare no efforts in supporting this basic step towards peace.

77. We are launching this appeal on the basis of our firm belief that it is a step forward, designed to reaffirm the rights of the Palestinian people and the right of the PLO to play its logical role by representing the Palestinian people and upholding their rights.

78. We call upon the international community to increase its efforts and to assume its responsibilities with regard to the just cause of the Palestinian people not only because of our firm belief in the justice of that cause but also because of our unshakable belief in the United Nations and its purposes and on the basis of our concept of the Organization as the custodian of international legitimacy, the caretaker of the rights of peoples. Hence, we are determined to work within

the framework of the Charter of the United Nations and in conformity with its principles.

79. We ask that Israel respect and implement the relevant United Nations resolutions so that peace may be restored to our region, so that the international community's aim of securing international peace and security may be achieved, so that a world in which justice and equality prevail may be established and so that the path may be opened to a better future in which succeeding generations may enjoy peace and security and may fulfil their aspirations and hopes.

80. Yesterday [2390th meeting] the representative of Israel resorted to allegations and long-since-rejected attempts to sow dissension and to deceive world public opinion. He tried to divert attention from an examination of the very essence of the Palestine question to side issues, in order to hamper the determination and sincere desire of the international community to establish a just peace in the Middle East. The statement by the representative of Israel yesterday contained contradictory elements. That clearly shows the aim behind all this. All the delegations present in this Hall are undoubtedly aware of that aim.

81. In confirming Egypt's attitude I need only refer to the following statement made here a few days ago by the President of our Republic:

"Our first objective, which influences all our Arab or international actions, is the liberation of all occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people so that they can exercise their responsibility and their right to self-determination." [2388th meeting, para. 26.]

That is our national objective, from which we shall not be diverted and in which we are supported by all the free Powers in our world that seek peace and justice.

82. The representative of Israel read out parts of the second disengagement agreement concerning the Egyptian front. The entire agreement was circulated as an official United Nations document as soon as it was concluded.⁷ Moreover, a few days ago the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt made the following clear statement to the General Assembly:

"... the latest move in the Middle East is only limited in scope and effect. It is not an intrinsic solution; it was never intended to be. It is merely a move envisaging the establishment of a proper climate for making progress and for the complete and fundamental review of the problem either with regard to the recuperation of the occupied territories or with regard to regaining the Palestinians' rights." [Ibid., para. 31.]

The President added that:

"... if our people and the Arab nation were to find that this peace was being misinterpreted as capitulation, it would then be imperative to perform our sacred duty to liberate our territories and to restore our just rights by the means stipulated in your Charter, especially in Article 51." [Ibid., para. 34.]

83. Thus, any attempts to cast doubt on the unity and determination of the Arab front are completely self-defeating. It would have been better for the representative of Israel to include in his statement at least one explanation for Israel's failure to implement the

United Nations resolutions designed to establish peace in the Middle East, one explanation for Israel's insistence to this very day on keeping the occupied Arab territories, one explanation for Israel's fear of hearing the Palestinian voice calling for the restoration of the inalienable and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

84. Perhaps it is only logical that fear should fill the heart of every aggressor when he is faced with the realization that those rights must be restored. We all remember how the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel, Abba Eban, said in the face of the whole world that he cared nothing for any resolution adopted by the United Nations even if it was adopted unanimously, but for Israel.

85. Today Israel has nothing with which to face the world and world public opinion but these familiar, open attempts which go to the length of Israel announcing its rejection of the Egyptian draft resolution even before the Egyptian delegation presents it. We can deduce from this, and it is a fact, that Israel refuses to face the truth and fears the challenge of peace.

86. The only inference we can draw from the refusal of the representative of Israel yesterday to agree to an invitation to the Geneva Conference being extended to the representative of the PLO, which is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, is that Israel fears its presence. The Israeli representative was completely wrong when he said that the PLO does not represent the Palestinian people. This is his deduction and we can leave him his illusions; but the truth remains, clear and determined, that our international Organization adopted a resolution which received 105 favourable votes recognizing the fact that the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people [resolution 3210 (XXIX)].

87. With regard to Egypt, our consistent Arab policy cannot be doubted, nor can our efforts and actions, because our organic link with the Arab world is in the forefront of our policy and our relations and has a special place in all our political actions, which are aimed at peace.

88. Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): The delegation of the German Democratic Republic welcomes the fact that the question of Palestine, which is of exceptional significance for peace and security in the Middle East, is being examined in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly as a special item on the agenda.

89. Broad participation in the discussion of this item on the agenda shows that this is one of the key issues in the settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. I should like to express the satisfaction of the delegation of the German Democratic Republic at the participation of a representative delegation of the PLO in the discussions in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly. My delegation listened with great interest to the statement of the leader of the delegation of the PLO in this forum [2390th meeting].

90. Since the adoption of resolution 3237 (XXIX) almost a year ago, the legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine, the PLO, has succeeded in further extending and consolidating its international position. This can be seen both in the opening of new legations in various States and in its active participa-

tion in many international conferences and meetings within the United Nations system and outside it.

91. The increased international support for the just cause of the Arab people of Palestine as a whole and the PLO in particular is seen also in the resolutions adopted by the Sixth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Jeddah in July 1975, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held at Kampala in August 1975, and the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Lima in August 1975.

92. Particular attention should be directed to the fact of the admission of the PLO as a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries [see A/10217 and Corr.1, annex, para. 59].

93. For the German Democratic Republic the struggle for the just cause of the Arab people of Palestine is an important component of its anti-imperialist solidarity. Implementation of the right of that people to self-determination in its own country is at the same time a major pre-condition for a just and stable settlement of the conflict in the Middle East.

94. Since the twenty-ninth session there has been further progress towards peace, security and détente. The results of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, as emphasized by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, Erich Honecker, should further détente in other regions as well. This applies in particular to the situation in the Middle East, where there is still an atmosphere of dangerous tension owing to the persistent refusal of Israel to implement the well-known resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The reason for the disturbing events in that region, in particular the continuing terror against the Arab people of Palestine, is undoubtedly the fact that Israel is still unwilling to agree to the solution of the basic problem necessary for the settlement of the Middle East conflict, as defined by the Security Council and the General Assembly.

95. Individual steps cannot take the place of the necessary settlement of the conflict in the Middle East, as can be seen from the situation today. Recognition of the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine, as demanded by the PLO in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations, is unavoidable.

96. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs, driven from their homes, are living in poverty and need today. They were driven from Israel only because they were Arabs. This is reminiscent of the most terrible times of the past, but Tel Aviv must understand that the balance of forces in the world has changed and that the aggressor cannot count on success. This is true also for terrorist and aggressive acts, as well as for the plans of Israeli political leaders vis-à-vis Israel's neighbours.

97. The ruling circles in Israel, it seems to us, are still striving to implement a whole programme aimed at perpetuating their expansion and occupation. The sort of ideas that occupy the minds of Israeli political leaders can be seen from the words of the notorious Moshe Dayan who, on 1 March 1969, speaking before students of Haifa Technion, openly and cynically stated:

"All our settlements have been built on the ruins of Arab villages, and we not only are breaking down their walls but are striving also to erase their names from the history books."

98. Thirty years ago, during the solemn signing of the Charter of the United Nations, one of the most noble goals of the world Organization was declared to be that of once and for all putting an end to such theories and to attempts to carry them out.

99. When anyone speaks of the aggressive plans and designs of the Israeli ruling circles, he is declared to be an anti-Semite. As the representative of a socialist State, I should like to stress that in our society there is no room or basis for racial prejudice, and that includes anti-Semitism. We are opponents of anti-Semitism and struggle against it just as we struggle against Zionism.

100. Israel is not the State of all Jews and does not have the right to speak on their behalf. The Jews of the German Democratic Republic, being citizens of our socialist State, will not permit any of the Israeli aggressors to take upon himself the right to speak in their name. Furthermore, I should like to stress that Israel's right to statehood cannot be considered as a licence for aggression and annexation. This realistic point of view, by the way, is shared by many political figures, including some in Western countries. For example, we have heard the statement of the Austrian Federal Chancellor, Mr. Kreisky:

"I reject the racist point of view, as well as the pretensions of Israel to be the only homeland of all Jews. This pretension is based on a historical fiction."

101. Israel also has some forces which are struggling against political Zionism, understanding its true basis and its true aims. The decision of the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Israel states:

"Israel is not the same thing as Zionism, just as Jews are not the same as Zionists. Zionism is a reactionary, bourgeois, political and ideological current among Jews, with ties to international reaction which is very harmful to the people of Israel, the Jewish workers and Jewish society throughout the world."

102. By continuing its policy of aggression, Israel is increasing its international isolation. Furthermore, its internal political difficulties will continue to multiply. Israel will not be helped either by the many promises of modern weapons, including rockets, from the United States, as was stated in the American press at the beginning of September. Even the conflict in the Arab world, instigated by imperialist circles—and how that is done can easily be seen from the American press—will not be any kind of life-saver for the aggressive Israeli politicians.

103. The delegation of the German Democratic Republic calls upon Israel finally to agree to the immediate recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as set forth in resolution 3236 (XXIX). The German Democratic Republic repeats what it stated in the General Assembly on 15 November 1974,⁸ namely that the lawful national rights of the Arab people of Palestine fully include as well the right to national independence. We confirm here our

view that the key conditions for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East are: the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab territories occupied in 1967; the securing of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including the right to independent national existence of the Palestinian State; and the guaranteeing of the rights of all States and peoples of this region to independent existence and development.

104. The delegation of the German Democratic Republic considers that the PLO should be able to participate with equal rights in any action whatsoever relating to Palestine and the Middle East as a whole. Anyone sincerely desirous of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot fail to recognize this necessity.

105. In conclusion, I should like, on behalf of my delegation, to express our confidence that the United Nations will strive for implementation of the resolu-

tions adopted on the Palestinian question even more actively in the future.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

NOTES

¹ Seventh Conference of Arab Heads of State, held at Rabat from 26 to 29 October 1974.

² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2283rd meeting, paras. 1-24.

³ *Ibid.*, 2282nd meeting, paras. 3-83.

⁴ *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-ninth Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1974*, document S/11198, annex.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Supplement for April, May and June 1974, document S/11302/Add.1, annex I.

⁶ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2282nd meeting, paras. 3-83.

⁷ *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirtieth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1975*, document S/11818/Add.1.

⁸ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 2287th meeting, paras. 149-170.