



# SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS

THIRTY-SECOND YEAR

**2041<sup>st</sup>** MEETING: 27 OCTOBER 1977

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#### NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/. . .) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements* of the *Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

## 2041ST MEETING

Held in New York on Thursday, 27 October 1977, at 3 p.m.

*President:* Mr. Rikhi JAIPAL (India).

*Present:* The representatives of the following States: Benin, Canada, China, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, India, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritius, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela.

### Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2041)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. The question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights:  
Letter dated 13 September 1977 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to the President of the Security Council (S/12399)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.*

### Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights:**

**Letter dated 13 September 1977 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to the President of the Security Council (S/12399)**

1. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the members of the Council that I have received a letter dated 24 October from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to refer to the forthcoming meeting of the Security Council on the question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights and to request you to make the necessary arrangements to enable me to address the Council in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People."

2. It will be recalled that when the Security Council dealt with this matter on the last occasion, it extended an invitation to the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. I propose therefore, if there is no objection that the Council should follow the same practice on this occasion

and extend an invitation, under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure, to the Chairman of the Committee.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Fall, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, took a place at the Council table.*

3. The PRESIDENT: I have also received a letter dated 25 October from the representative of Senegal which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to refer to the forthcoming meeting of the Security Council on the question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights and to request that the Palestine Liberation Organization be invited to participate in the debate in accordance with the previous decisions of the Council in this matter."

4. I place before the Council the proposal that the Palestine Liberation Organization should be invited to participate in the debate. It should be noted that this proposal is not being put forward under rule 37 or rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure. If it is adopted, the invitation to the Palestine Liberation Organization will confer on it the same rights of participation as those conferred on a Member State when it is invited to participate under rule 37.

5. Does any member of the Council wish to speak on the proposal that I have placed before it?

6. Mr. LEONARD (United States of America): I wish to state that my Government is not able to agree to the proposal to invite the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in the debate in the Security Council with the same rights of participation as a Member State would have. We considered the terms of the Council's invitation inappropriate on past occasions and we want to repeat our opinion. For this reason we should like the proposed invitation put to the vote.

7. The PRESIDENT: In view of the statement made by the representative of the United States and his request for a vote, I put the proposal to the vote.

*A vote was taken by show of hands.*

*In favour:* Benin, China, India, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritius, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Venezuela.

*Against:* United States of America.

*Abstaining:* Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

*The proposal was adopted by 10 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.*

8. The PRESIDENT: I invite the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization to take the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Terzi and the other members of the delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.*

9. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the members of the Council that letters have been received from the representatives of Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion. I propose therefore, with the consent of the Council and in accordance with the usual practice, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure.

10. There being no objection, I now invite the representatives of Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Abdel Meguid (Egypt) and Mr. Allaf (Syrian Arab Republic) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.*

11. The PRESIDENT: I should like to draw the attention of the Council to the letter contained in document S/12399 addressed to the President of the Security Council by the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, Ambassador Médoune Fall, on whom I now call.

12. Mr. FALL (Chairman, Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People) (*interpretation from French*): Sir, before going into the substance of the debate, I should like to discharge a pleasant duty by conveying to you my warmest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of this important organ of the United Nations. Your well-known, eminent qualifications as a wise diplomat, together with the important role your great country, India, has always endeavoured to play in enhancing the efficiency of our Organization, allow us to hope that this debate will be conducted with equity and wisdom, because what we all need today is not a new and futile debating contest but rather a sincere, calm and well pondered discussion. A fixation with unacceptable faits accomplis, postponements and diversionary tactics must yield to the will to press forward, to the will to make a positive contribution to a restoration of peace in the Middle East.

13. The decision of the General Assembly at its thirty-first session [resolution 31/20] to take note of the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the

Palestinian People<sup>1</sup> and to endorse the recommendations contained therein, as a basis for the solution of the question of Palestine is one of the major steps taken in this field since the introduction of this question into the United Nations over three decades ago.

14. Allow me to recall that those recommendations are based on two fundamental elements: on the one hand, the right of return of the Palestinians, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) and Security Council resolution 237 (1967); on the other hand, the right to independence and national sovereignty as defined in resolution 181 (II) on the partition of former Palestine under British Mandate, and in resolution 273 (III) on the admission of the State of Israel to membership in the United Nations.

15. The sacred principle, enshrined in the United Nations Charter and in contemporary international law, of the inadmissibility of the occupation of a territory through war has also been taken into account in drawing up the recommendations of the Committee, which are based entirely on resolutions or decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council.

16. The General Assembly, in taking its decision on the Committee's recommendations, did not wish to restrict itself to the mere adoption of a text; it also expressed its determination to see those recommendations implemented. Hence in resolution 31/20, paragraph 4, it urged the Security Council

“to consider once again as soon as possible the recommendations contained in the report, taking fully into account the observations made thereon during the debate in the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, in order to take the necessary measures to implement the above-mentioned recommendations of the Committee so as to achieve early progress towards a solution of the problem of Palestine and the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East”.

In the same resolution, the Assembly

“Authorizes the Committee to exert all efforts to promote the implementation of its recommendations and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session”.

17. In order to carry out the mandate of the General Assembly successfully, the Committee first had to proceed to analyse the trends that had emerged from the debate on Palestine in the General Assembly. In that connexion, it noted the agreement of the opinions expressed in that debate with the basic considerations which it had presented in its report. Thus it was able to note that a vast majority of delegations were in agreement in considering the question of Palestine as the central element in the Middle East conflict and that, consequently, a just and lasting peace in the region could be achieved only if the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people were taken into account.

<sup>1</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35.

18. The Committee noted also that most speakers had stressed that a satisfactory and equitable solution to the Palestinian question could not be achieved outside the framework of an over-all settlement of the Middle East problem.

19. Taking those trends into account and on the basis of the General Assembly mandate, the Committee took a number of steps vis-à-vis various United Nations bodies, particularly in the Security Council. Inasmuch as the implementation of most of the Assembly's recommendations requires the active co-operation of the Council, the Committee wished to undertake all necessary efforts in order that the Council's reconsideration of those recommendations might take place in the most favourable conditions and lead to the adoption of positive and just measures with a view to the settlement of the question of Palestine. I speak of a reconsideration because, as Council members will recall, the recommendations of the Assembly had already been submitted to the Council last year. However, although at the time they had the support of the majority of delegations, they could not be adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council. At that time, the recommendations of the Committee were criticized for focusing on only one element of the Middle East question and for neglecting the other two elements—to wit, the question of borders and the right of all States of the region to exist.

20. In response to that criticism, the Committee declared that its mandate was not to deal with the Middle East question in its entirety, but, rather, to seek ways and means of implementing the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. In other words, the task of the Committee consists, above all, in righting the basic imbalance which has always characterized the various United Nations approaches to the Palestine question. Far from being an advocate of partiality, the Committee has tried to redress that regrettable imbalance and to give the question of Palestine its rightful place and its true dimension.

21. Those are the considerations I wished to explain to the members of the Security Council that did not support the General Assembly's recommendations at the time I approached them on behalf of the Committee. Needless to say, at that time I also sought to obtain their views on the question of Palestine, while impressing on them that the Committee's only objective was to make a constructive contribution, within the terms of its mandate, to a settlement of the problem which is now at the heart of the Middle East conflict. In order to do that, the Committee had felt itself in duty bound to obtain the views of all Member States concerning the most efficient way of implementing the mandate given it by the General Assembly.

22. I also tried to draw their attention to the dangers of being selective with regard to United Nations resolutions. Indeed, to ignore an organ or a decision of the United Nations on the pretext that they did not vote in favour of the resolution which brought it into being is dangerous conduct which, if care is not taken, could impair the functioning of the United Nations. Furthermore, we must note that such an attitude is a double-edged sword which

can easily be turned against its advocates, since the theses they support are not based entirely on decisions unani- mously adopted by the United Nations. Moreover, I must admit that, even if the various persons I spoke to did not approve of all my ideas, they all none the less showed attentive understanding.

23. Supplementing these direct contacts with the members of the Security Council, and in order to ensure better understanding between us, the Committee addressed various communications to the Council expressing its views on the basic principles underlying its work and stressing the need for action by the Council. This group of initiatives, of exchanges of views and of explanations was prompted by only one concern on the part of the Committee: to facilitate the Council's work towards the adoption of a positive approach likely to lead to the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights.

24. The Committee is firmly convinced that the Council must take such action, especially since the Committee's recommendations only ask for the implementation of resolutions and decisions already adopted by the United Nations and, at one time or another, accepted by all the parties concerned.

25. At present the problem does not arise in terms of new resolutions; rather, what is required is sincere political will based on the implementation of the decisions that have been adopted and on the feelings that have been expressed by all the parties.

26. Israel's right to exist is no longer challenged by anyone. But Israel in turn must recognize the legitimate rights of its neighbours. The world is now thirsting for peace and security. Israel has no right to continue to pose constant threats to the very survival of our planet for, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Mr. Grömyko, said recently from the rostrum of the General Assembly:

"A great deal of combustible material has been accumulated in the Middle East, and in the event of another outbreak of hostilities no one would be able to predict its outcome."<sup>2</sup>

The present situation cannot go on indefinitely without bringing about dangerously unforeseeable consequences.

27. That was a rather pessimistic statement by the head of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. President Carter of the United States replied to it with similar pessimism during his statement before the General Assembly on 4 October. He said:

"Of all the regional conflicts in the world, none holds more menace than the Middle East. War there has already carried the world to the edge of nuclear confrontation. It has already disrupted the world economy and imposed severe hardships on the people in the developed and the developing nations alike. So true peace—peace embodied

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, *Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 8th meeting, para. 139.

in binding treaties—is essential. It will be in the interest of the Israelis and the Arabs. It is in the interest of the American people. It is in the interest of the entire world.”<sup>3</sup>

28. The inactivity that has been noted in the development of the question of Palestine is even less understandable when we remember that the members of the Security Council—or their Governments—have all at one time or another come out in favour of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

29. Most recently, the leaders of States playing an important role in the Middle East have made statements that the Committee has found most encouraging. As members of the Council are doubtless aware, I am referring to the joint Soviet-American statement issued on 1 October. In that statement we read the following:

“The United States and the Soviet Union believe that, within the framework of a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem, all specific questions of the settlement should be resolved, including such key issues as withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the 1967 conflict; the resolution of the Palestinian question, including ensuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people . . .

“The United States and the Soviet Union believe that the only right and effective way for achieving a fundamental solution to all aspects of the Middle East problem in its entirety is negotiations within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference, specially convened for these purposes, with participation in its work of the representatives of all the parties involved in the conflict, including those of the Palestinian people. . .”

30. On 26 September, Mr. Simonet, speaking from the rostrum of the General Assembly on behalf of the nine States members of the European Economic Community, stated:

“The nine countries also continue to believe that a solution to the conflict will not be possible unless the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to give effective expression to its national identity becomes a reality. This would take into account, of course, the need for a homeland for the Palestinian people.”<sup>4</sup>

I must remind the Council that three members of the Community are seated here, and two of them have the right of veto.

31. In August 1976, the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, meeting at Colombo, approved the Committee’s report and affirmed

“the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right of return and the right to national independence and the establishment of its independent, sovereign State in Palestine, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations”.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 18th meeting, para. 35.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 7th meeting, para. 51.

<sup>5</sup> See A/31/197, annex IV, resolution 10.

That position was affirmed once again by the conference of Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries held in New York on 30 September last [see S/12410].

32. All those statements of position testify to the growing recognition by the international community of the importance of the Palestinian question and to the implicit acceptance of the principles and fundamental considerations on which the Committee’s action is based. That broad international consensus is, in the Committee’s opinion, the platform on which the Council can build a positive approach with a view to the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights.

33. Action by the Council in this sphere is the more imperative because the situation in the field is deteriorating daily. The covert annexationist policy of the Israeli leaders is daily building up fresh frustrations and compromising more and more the chances for a peaceful settlement. The logic that lies behind the establishment of Israeli settlements in the illegally occupied Arab territories is very clear: the intention is to create irreversible situations, by means of faits accomplis, and above all to compromise the possibility of the creation of an independent Palestinian State. This policy, which has been condemned by the entire international community, cannot contribute to peace. But Israel continues to display its complete contempt for decisions of the United Nations and for international law.

34. Once upon a time a distinguished figure, representing a great country in the Council, had the habit of larding his statements with a wealth of personal comments. I am aware that my personal comments will certainly not be as interesting as his. Nevertheless, I shall venture to crave the Council’s indulgence as I make some personal remarks.

35. On 16 August last, I went to Beirut in response—of course with the agreement of the Committee—to an invitation from the President of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Mr. Yasser Arafat. During that journey, I had an opportunity to talk to the most highly placed figures in the Palestinian resistance. I visited refugee camps and homes for war orphans. I also went to southern Lebanon, where I was able to see for myself the dangerous situation prevailing in that region. I talked to the fighters, but I also talked to young people, boys and girls, some of whom were barely five years old.

36. In the course of these visits, contacts and talks, I never detected the slightest sign of resentment or animosity in my interlocutors; on the contrary, I was pleasantly surprised to read the following slogan over the entrance to a pioneer camp: “You shall always fight out of love for the homeland and not out of hate for the enemy”. Nevertheless, I did also find in everyone a fierce determination to struggle unto the supreme sacrifice to defend the sacred rights of his people. All this led me to conclude that no peace is possible in the Middle East without a just settlement of the national rights of the Palestinian people.

37. The tragedy now being played out in the south of Lebanon may well, if we do not take care, ignite the fifth Middle East war. Israel might well emerge the victor, just as it might win the sixth war, and even others. But what is

certain is that it will inevitably lose the final war, which might, unfortunately, be fatal for Israel. For there is no case in human history where a resolute and determined people has been unable to surmount a momentary weakness and to recover, in the longer or shorter term, the force and energy needed to secure the triumph of good and just causes. That is why we consider that it is in everyone's interests, including that of the State of Israel, to search for a peaceful solution to this long and painful crisis which has been going on for over 30 years. The United Nations has all the machinery necessary for resolving this problem which it itself created.

38. Of the some 200 resolutions and decisions adopted on this subject over those 30 years, I should like to mention six: three adopted by the General Assembly and three by the Security Council. I have chosen those six resolutions, not because they are the most important, but because all were adopted with the agreement of Israel or its friends.

39. The General Assembly resolutions are as follows: resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 concerned the future government of the former Palestine under British Mandate; that resolution, the so-called partition resolution, called for the creation in Palestine of two distinct territorial entities, one Arab and the other Jewish; it was sponsored, and voted for, by the United States. Resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948 was adopted following the report of Count Bernadotte, the United Nations Mediator in the Middle East, which called for the return to their homes of the Arab refugees of Palestine or the payment of compensation to refugees not wishing to return home; that resolution too met with the agreement at the time of the United States. Resolution 273 (III) of 11 May 1949, admitted the State of Israel to the United Nations. That resolution is of crucial importance, since it provided that the admission of Israel was contingent on two conditions: (a) the undertaking by Israel to abide by the Charter of the United Nations from the moment of its admission; (b) its acceptance of resolutions 181 (II) and 194 (III) already mentioned. The Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time committed himself on behalf of his Government to observe those two essential conditions.

40. The Security Council, for its part, adopted resolution 237 (1967) on the return of refugees from the 1967 war, as well as resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), of which there has been a bit too much talk of late.

41. Some authoritative and friendly voices will perhaps rightly be raised to reproach me for not mentioning some other pertinent resolutions, particularly resolutions 3236 (XXIX), 3375 (XXX) and 3376 (XXX), to mention only three. But, as I said a moment ago, I wanted to mention only certain essential resolutions which even the most faithful friends of the State of Israel are obliged to regard as valid and binding.

42. But even then, we are far from agreeing with those who consider that resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) are the only resolutions that exist and that those two resolutions by themselves suffice to cover the whole problem of the Middle East. For our part, we consider that the combined implementation of all the six resolutions that

I just mentioned should lead to a comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East problem. That should also logically make possible a genuine resumption of the Geneva Conference for, as President Carter said—and once again I am quoting the United States Chief Executive:

“Negotiations cannot be successful if any of the parties harbours the deceitful view that peace is simply an interlude in which to prepare for war.”<sup>6</sup>

I may add that these six resolutions are binding on the parties, since some of them accepted the resolutions at the time of their adoption and others supported them subsequently.

43. The question today is whether the Security Council will allow Israel, under the false pretext of security, calmly to continue with its policy of territorial expansion, injustice and obvious obstruction of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights.

44. On this question of security, I wish to emphasize the comments made by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, Mr. Owen, who, on 27 September, speaking from the rostrum of the General Assembly, said:

“In the debate about occupied territory, security issues are of central importance and of deep and genuine concern. Hitherto nations have tended to equate security solely with the possession of territories. This is no longer the only relevant security factor. Sophisticated electronic devices can now give a military security which nations had hitherto believed could only come from the physical occupation of territory.”<sup>7</sup>

45. For us, security of boundaries is inextricably tied to the establishment of peace in the region, and peace in the region is impossible without a just settlement of the Palestinian problem.

46. Before concluding my statement, I should like to address an appeal to the members of the Council and in particular to those who did not vote for the General Assembly's recommendations on Palestine, that they should not once again put off to a future dark with storm clouds the adoption of a positive approach to the question of the rights of the Palestinian people. It is no longer enough to recognize in private the reality of those rights; they must be vested with the full weight of the Council's moral authority. In approving the recommendations of the General Assembly as a basis for a solution to the question of Palestine, the Council will considerably increase the chances of a peaceful settlement in the Middle East by demonstrating that the United Nations is firmly committed to a solution that takes due account of the rights and interests of all parties at issue. It is the duty of the international community to help those who are in despair to break out of that situation, to convince them that justice and equity are not just empty words.

<sup>6</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 18th meeting, para. 37.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 9th meeting, para. 118.

47. The Security Council has never met to consider the problem of the Middle East in such favourable circumstances as today. The opportunities with which we are presented must therefore be seized without delay. Historical events always follow one after another, but they are never repeated, and lost opportunities often bring bitter tomorrows in their wake. In the Committee's opinion, the recommendations of the General Assembly, since they do not set out to deny implicitly or explicitly the rights recognized by the Charter of any of the parties to the conflict—particularly the Palestinian and Israeli parties—constitute an important step in the right direction. They would help to create a climate in which all the parties would know that, in a definitive settlement, the fullest account will be taken of their lawful rights. Any action by the Council to that end would be of the utmost historical significance.

48. Mr. KIKHIA (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya): In addressing ourselves to the question on our agenda, my delegation must first thank and congratulate Ambassador Médoune Fall of Senegal and the other members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for their excellent work in the course of the past year, as well as for their efforts in preparing the report.<sup>8</sup>

49. Although there are a number of issues and paragraphs in that report with which my delegation cannot fully agree, there can be no doubt that, in fulfilment of its mandate, the Committee has unambiguously defined and enumerated the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and that it has pointed out the direction that the United Nations must take if these rights are to be restored and if a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and in the whole world is to prevail.

50. The strong interrelationship between peace and security, on the one hand, and the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, on the other, are stated in almost the first substantive sentence of the report, namely, in paragraph 10, which reads:

“The Committee studied and analysed the views expressed in the discussion of its report and recommendations at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. It noted the concurrence of opinion that the question of Palestine was a central element of the Middle East conflict and that, therefore, a just and lasting peace in the area could be achieved only if the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people were taken into account.”

51. These legitimate rights are detailed throughout the report. Among the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people enumerated in the report we stress the following.

52. First, the right to return to their homeland. This right has been repeatedly affirmed in numerous resolutions and, in fact, its principle is embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

53. Secondly, their inherent right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty in their own home-

land. This right has been recognized by the United Nations as well as by other regional and international organizations. The deprivation that the Palestinian people have suffered for over a quarter of a century as a result of the denial of these rights are every day becoming more real and pressing to the conscience of the overwhelming majority of mankind. The changes in public opinion that have been occurring in recent years in regard to the deprivation of the Palestinian people of their exercise of these inalienable rights reflect the increased emphasis not only on the plight of the Palestinian people but also on human rights, on national freedom and on United Nations efforts to combat racism and injustice wherever they may occur. These changes in international public opinion have been reflected in the General Assembly in various resolutions that have affirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty in their homeland.

54. Thirdly, their inherent right to choose their own leadership. This right is recognized today almost universally. The only exceptions are the Zionist racists and imperialist forces responsible for preventing the Palestinian people from exercising all their inalienable rights. These forces seek to destroy the Palestinians and to annihilate the just causes for which they have struggled. Only recently, from the rostrum of the General Assembly, Moshe Dayan indulged in the familiar Zionist defiance of the United Nations and in the use of myth and tortured logic that will deceive no one. The Zionists wish to annihilate the just cause of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian people themselves by, in the words of that statement in the general debate, their resettlement and integration into the societies in which they live as refugees. In the final analysis, however, and because of the determination of the Palestinian people to obtain their rights, no so-called solutions or measures affecting them will become effective unless they are arrived at with their full participation and concurrence through their chosen leaders, namely, the Palestine Liberation Organization. Such solutions and measures will, in the words of the Palestinian National Covenant, be considered null and void.

55. The Palestinian people have for over a quarter of a century demanded and struggled in the cause of the restoration of their inalienable national rights in their own country, Palestine. They were deprived of the exercise of these rights as a result of acts of oppression and terrorism perpetrated by Zionist racist gangs in collaboration with imperialist, colonialist forces. The Palestinian people were expelled from their homes and lands by acts of massacre and the deliberate destruction of their homes and properties. They have been compelled to live in refugee camps and tents, while their homeland has been usurped and plundered by alien racist elements. The situation was well described by the late Count Folke Bernadotte, the United Nations Mediator, who was assassinated by the Zionists. In his report to the General Assembly, as early as 1948, he said:

“It would be an offence against the principles of elementary justice if these innocent victims of the conflict”—the Arabs of Palestine—“were denied the right to return to their homes while Jewish immigrants flow

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 35.

into Palestine, and, indeed, at least offer the threat of permanent replacement of the Arab refugees who have been rooted in the land for centuries.”<sup>9</sup>

56. The Zionist racists and their aggressive expansionist plans have consistently received the full support and assistance of imperialist colonialist forces. It was the British who, in violation of their Mandate responsibilities and obligations, assisted and arranged for the Zionist usurpation of Palestine. It is significant to note and to recall once again that when the Balfour Declaration was proclaimed Jews constituted only 8 per cent of the population and owned only 2.5 per cent of the land. It is also significant to note that this was the same Balfour who considered it acceptable that the indigenous inhabitants of Australia should be exterminated.

57. But the Palestinian people have not surrendered and will not surrender in their just struggle to recover their national rights. Their resolve and determination in their just struggle has not been diminished by the cruelty of their deprivations or by the military might of the racist forces that have usurped their homeland. The Palestinian people are totally committed to their just cause and have total faith that through continuous struggle and national determination justice will eventually be done and their rights will be fully restored.

58. International support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people has in recent years been increasing and widening. Such support is of great significance not only to the Palestinian people but also to all other peoples which are oppressed by colonialism, racism, repression and injustice. At the United Nations this international support has been expressed in a number of resolutions, of which perhaps the most important are General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX), 3237 (XXIX), 3375 (XXX), 3376 (XXX), 3379 (XXX) and 3414 (XXX), especially 3379 (XXX) condemning zionism as a form of racial discrimination. These resolutions recognize and affirm the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland, to self-determination and to national sovereignty. The presence here of the Palestine Liberation Organization as a permanent observer is a recognition of that national liberation organization as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and of the inalienable right of that people to choose its own leadership.

59. The condemnation by the international community of zionism as a form of racism was also a significant development. The fact that zionism and racism are identical is everywhere made manifest, even against Jews themselves. The latest incident was the recent expulsion by the Zionist authorities of blacks of the Jewish faith solely because of the colour of their skin. The Assembly resolution, moreover, has had the effect of enhancing the solidarity of all peace-loving forces struggling against racism, oppression and colonial domination.

60. The Security Council, as the organ of the United Nations primarily responsible for international peace and

security, is confronted with an extremely serious and dangerous situation in the Middle East which threatens world peace and security. It has long been known and is daily recognized that the essence of this situation is the question of Palestine, which arises from the fact that the Palestinian people is being deprived of the exercise of its inalienable rights. International public opinion and the imperatives of international peace and justice demand effective action and programmes for the full restoration to the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights. The continuance by the Zionists of their occupation of Palestine and other Arab territories is but a part of an over-all Zionist policy of a “greater Israel” encompassing a large area in our region.

61. The recent taking of power by the terrorist Menachem Begin in the Zionist entity and his blatant statements in regard to Zionist plans remind us of a description of Begin given in a letter by another racist Zionist, Ben-Gurion, who said:

“Begin is a thoroughly Hitlerite type, ready to destroy all the Arabs for the wholeness of the country, who devotes all his efforts to a holy purpose: absolute rule; and I see him as a great danger to Israel domestically and internationally. I cannot forget the little I know of his activity—and it has clear meaning: the murder of tens of Jews, Arabs and Englishmen—in the explosion of the King David Hotel, the pogrom in Deir Yassin . . . I have no doubt that Begin hates Hitler—but his hatred does not prove that he is different from him . . . when for the first time I heard Begin on the radio, I heard the voice and the screeching of Hitler. . .”.

62. Optimism arose among some parties when the new United States Government showed special interest in human rights principles and when President Carter used the phrase “homeland for the Palestinians” in his speeches and statements. This was considered to be a sign of change in the American policy, which has continuously sponsored the Zionist aggressor and given the Zionist entity the assistance and money it needs in implementing the policy of aggression, annexation, occupation and expansion which it has undertaken against the Arab people in Palestine and the neighbouring areas.

63. That optimism increased following the publication of the joint Soviet-American statement at the beginning of October 1977 in which those optimists saw positive aspects, especially in what it said about the solution of the Palestine problem in a manner which would guarantee the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and in the statement that the Palestinian people should be represented at the Geneva Conference on an equal footing with the other participants.

64. However, immediately after the publication of that joint statement another American statement was issued in which it was stated that the expression “national rights” had been omitted from the joint statement on the insistence of the Americans because that expression would include the right to self-determination and the right to establish a State. Thus the substance of the Soviet-American statement was made void.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Third Session, Supplement No. 11, Part One, chap. V, para. 6.

65. In addition, only one week after the Soviet-American statement, a joint American-Israeli statement was issued which made the first joint statement completely meaningless. In clarification I will quote the first and last paragraphs of the joint American-Israeli statement:

“The United States and Israel agree that Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) remain the agreed basis for the resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference and that all the understandings and agreements between them on this subject remain in force.

“... ”

“Acceptance of the Joint US-USSR statement of 1 October 1977 by the parties is not a prerequisite for the reconvening and conduct of the Geneva Conference.”

66. Moreover, one need hardly mention President Carter's speech in the General Assembly, which came only one day before the American-Israeli statement and in which he definitely and clearly showed America's protection of Israel and their common ties. It is enough to quote one sentence of President Carter's speech to demonstrate this special relationship and this protection: “The commitment of the United States to Israel's security is unquestionable.”<sup>10</sup>

67. The American pull-back from its position shattered the optimism which some parties had cherished. We, for our part, are the last to be optimistic here, since we know only too well the extent to which the Zionist influence dominates the American establishment and the extent to which American policy-makers succumb to that influence. *The Christian Science Monitor* might have told part of the truth when it recently published an article which stated that Menachem Begin could obtain more votes in the American Congress than the United States President himself.

68. Zionist influence is also responsible for preventing the United States till now from recognizing the Palestine Liberation Organization as the legitimate representative of the people of Palestine. It has been recognized as such by the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the non-aligned countries and the Conference of Islamic Countries.

69. It can be seen from all this that the interests, resources and freedom of will of the American people are dominated by Zionist influence.

70. America's unlimited, unreasonable and totally unjustifiable commitment to the Zionist entity is well known. The Zionists want us to accept it as a fact of life and also to conduct our actions and policies in accordance with it. We are among those who will never accept that America's policy towards the Middle East on the question of Palestine is irreversible and a sacrosanct reality of international policy. We believe in the American people and in the American masses, and we fight along with our Palestinian and Arab brothers not only to liberate our land and people

but, indirectly, also to liberate the Jewish majority and the American masses from the dictatorship of the unholy alliance of Zionist and imperialist financial circles represented by the arch-reactionary elements of the transnationals.

71. We are aware of the fact that America's policy as a whole is focused and geared in servitude to the Israeli-Zionist establishment. United States policy is in an embarrassing quandary in many parts of the world and on more than one issue, solely because of a blind commitment to the Zionist movement. Because of that commitment to fulfil the dictates of Zionists, the United States has been involved in problems with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; because of that commitment, the United States has problems in the International Labour Organisation, in the Conference against *Apartheid* and with regard to the Arab boycott of Israel. They have gone so far as to intervene in the internal affairs of other countries. Even the policy of détente with the other super-Power encounters many difficulties because of Zionist pressure and the propaganda campaign on the so-called problem of Jews in socialist countries.

72. The activities of the United States in the third world and its dealings with the African States have been gravely influenced by the commitment to the Zionists. Part of United States activities has been directed towards pushing the third world—in particular Africa and Latin America—into working for the Zionist-Israeli cause and against the solidarity of third-world people with the Palestinian people. In some instances we have been left with the impression that United States policy is wholly in bondage to the Zionist-Israeli cause. We have even seen instances when the so-called safety of Israel has taken priority over and surpassed vital American interests.

73. An eminent and highly respected United States ambassador, as reported by the mass media, twice this year declared that African countries were not really against Israel but against the United States; they opposed the American policy in Africa but were unable to do anything against a super-Power like the United States; hence they took out their frustrations on Israel. However, when the United States normalized and improved its relations with those countries, he said, they in turn would do likewise with the Zionist entity. The last time that that strange and dangerous logic was reported was on 28 September 1977 in the *Jewish-Telegraph*.

74. Further supporting evidence of Zionist control and influence was recently illustrated in *The New York Times*, which justified the visit of a highly respected leader of a friendly country to Israel by the sole fact that he only wanted to gain support in the United States for a certain draft treaty with the United States.

75. We have been told again and again that America's most vital interests, even those relating to its neighbours, must first be cleared and given the stamp of approval by the Zionist entity in Tel Aviv before American legislation will get the green light to proceed.

76. We feel it is both frightening and highly dangerous that a super-Power, namely the United States, is using its

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, *Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 18th meeting, para. 39.

huge possibilities, influence and might to serve the illegal and irresponsible dictates and goals of the Fascist Zionist entity in occupied Palestine.

77. In conclusion, my delegation would like once again to thank the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its efforts and its report. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has consistently given moral and material support to the brotherly people of Palestine in their just struggle to restore their inalienable rights. We shall persevere in our total unequivocal support until the total victory of the Palestinian people has been achieved, and the struggle will continue to that end.

78. Mr. AKHUND (Pakistan): My delegation has listened with attention to the statement made by the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. I should like to place on record our appreciation and gratitude for the lucidity and comprehensive manner with which he has spoken for the Committee and for his dedicated stewardship of that Committee.

79. I cannot fail to express disappointment and regret at the fact that a group of States continues to shun membership of the Committee and declines to co-operate with it in any manner. Despite that handicap, the Committee—of which my country is a member—has approached its task in an objective and constructive spirit, bearing in mind the need to consolidate positive trends towards a peace settlement in the Middle East.

80. In the words of the Committee's report of last year, the question of Palestine is at the heart of the Middle East problem and no solution can be envisaged which does not fully take into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people.

81. Palestine was partitioned by a resolution of the United Nations, its people were rendered homeless 30 years ago and their country parcelled out to alien occupants. This world Organization, if for no other reason than that, bears a heavy responsibility to redress the injustice and suffering which the Palestinian people have endured over these decades.

82. Three wars have taken place in the Middle East since the establishment of Israel in Palestine and the consequent displacement of the Palestinian people from their ancestral homes and homeland. The continued occupation of Arab territories conquered in the 1967 war, the attempt to consolidate this occupation through the establishment of illegal settlements, and the measures taken by Israel to alter the status, character and demography of the occupied territories have superimposed additional complications in the way of a just and durable solution of the Middle East problem. But the fundamental issue remains the failure of the world community to persuade or oblige Israel to deal with the Palestinian people on a basis of justice and equity and the failure of the United Nations itself to address with determination the task of restoring to the Palestinian people the national and legitimate rights which they lost by the creation of Israel, rights which were enunciated in the resolution establishing Israel and which have been reiterated in numerous subsequent resolutions.

83. The injustice done to the Palestinian people in 1948 and the deprivation which they have suffered since then are in no way mitigated by the fact that the alien immigrants and occupants who displaced them from their homes are themselves descended from victims of discrimination and injustice over the centuries in the countries of their origin. The persecution and ill-treatment of the Jewish people in the past provides no justification for Israel's present persecution and ill-treatment of the Palestinian Arabs. Israel's defiance of the United Nations resolutions on the subject is not only morally reprehensible but also legally indefensible. The decision which made possible the establishment of a Jewish State on Palestinian soil certainly did not envisage the disappearance of Palestine as such and provided explicit guarantees for the protection of the rights of the original inhabitants of the country. In defying United Nations resolutions and decisions on the subject, Israel cannot but raise questions about the legitimacy of its own existence. The truth is that Israel's policy from the beginning has been one of territorial expansionism, and so it remains. Today the conquered territories of the West Bank are being described as "liberated lands" and claim is laid to them, no longer on grounds of security, but on the ground that these were sites of ancient and long vanished Biblical kingdoms. Such assertions are totally untenable in law, morality or good sense.

84. Resolution 242 (1967), adopted in the aftermath of the 1967 conflict and of Israel's military victory, stated in the clearest terms that the acquisition of territory by war was inadmissible. The resolution called for the withdrawal of Israel from occupied Arab territories as one of the essential elements of a peaceful settlement. Whatever may be the ambiguities of the wording of that resolution, by no stretch of imagination can it be interpreted as giving Israel the right to appropriate and annex any part of the occupied territories on any ground whatsoever. It gives Israel no say on how the people of the West Bank, when Israeli forces have withdrawn, may organize their national existence. The resolution calls for acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and of their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, free from threats or acts of force.

85. It will be noted that the security of boundaries is related to the idea of the recognition of boundaries and to abstention from threats or acts of force. The injunction is by no means addressed only to one side, although in view of past history it is Israel which needs to be emphatically reminded of the need to respect the independence, sovereignty and security of its Arab neighbours.

86. Above all, Israel must be made to face the fact that, despite all its attempts over the 30 years, the name of Palestine cannot be obliterated from the world's map. The Palestinian, cast out from his home, living as a refugee in international camps, or an alien in his own homeland, denied recognition, for long refused even a hearing, has reached out for such means as he could find, and has made his voice heard and his presence felt.

87. The vital importance of dealing with the Palestinian question is now recognized by all except Israel. We

welcome in this context in particular the joint statement made on 1 October by the United States and the USSR, in which the resolution of this question, including the ensuring of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, was enunciated as an essential condition to a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem. We welcome also the agreement that all parties involved in the conflict, including the representatives of the Palestinian people, should participate in the Geneva Peace Conference. For its part, the Security Council must take cognizance of the fact that the problem of Palestinians cannot be dealt with as a refugee problem, but is one concerning the destiny of an entire nation. It must be made clear that the aim of negotiations for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East must include the achievement of the legitimate and national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to return to their homes and properties, the right to national self-determination, which includes, of course, the right to establish an independent and sovereign State of their own. Nor can a negotiated settlement in the Middle East take place without the active and direct participation of the Palestinian people through their recognized and legitimate representatives on a basis of equality with other participants.

88. The feeling exists today that conditions are ripe for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. Israel's refusal to deal with the rightful and recognized representatives of the people of Palestine and to acknowledge their right to a national homeland should not be allowed to blight the hopes for peace. In considering this item, the Council should, in my delegation's view, take cognizance of all the elements essential for a settlement and seek to exercise, to the fullest measure, its responsibility for promoting a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People have been drawn up with a view to contributing to the achievement of a peaceful and enduring settlement of the conflict. The Council will, we hope, find it possible to endorse these recommendations and guidelines in the interests of peace, stability and justice.

89. Mr. DATCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): This is not the first time the Security Council has been called upon to consider the question of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights. If the Council is today obliged to reconsider this question, it is because previous initiatives calling on it to exercise its responsibilities under the Charter and to make a positive, active contribution to the solution of the Palestine problem have not yielded positive results. However, the current debate is taking place at a moment that could mark a turning point in the development of the situation in the Middle East. Indeed, efforts at clearing the way for negotiations are now being made at several levels and in various ways by all the interested parties.

90. It is now unanimously acknowledged that a peaceful, just and lasting settlement is hardly conceivable in the Middle East unless there is a solution of the Palestinian problem and unless the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people are duly taken into account. That is the general opinion that emerged from discussions devoted

to this question at the last session of the General Assembly. During those deliberations, it was also stressed that a satisfactory and equitable solution to the problem of the Palestinian people could be achieved only within the framework of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

91. Developments over the past months have, for the first time, led to a convergence of opinion among all members of the Council on certain essential aspects of the Palestinian problem. This convergence of opinion relates in particular to public recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to be represented at peace negotiations. Indeed, recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination as well as the acceptance of this question as one of the fundamental elements of a peaceful settlement in the Middle East requires that every effort should be made to ensure that the Palestinian people is represented, on an equal footing with other parties, at all peace negotiations.

92. In our view, the authority which should represent it is the Palestine Liberation Organization, recognized by the United Nations and by the vast majority of the States of the world as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. I wish to note on this occasion that recent developments in the Palestinian question merely confirm the basic ideas which guided the Committee on the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in formulating the recommendations which it submitted to the General Assembly at its last session and which the Assembly adopted. This year too, the Committee, under the competent chairmanship of my colleague and friend Ambassador Fall of Senegal, who has just opened this Council debate, has attempted to make its own constructive contribution to the efforts aimed at bringing about a negotiated peace in the Middle East.

93. We are deeply convinced that the true interests of all States and of all peoples of the region, as well as the interests of world peace, call for a contribution enhanced and inspired by a sense of political responsibility on the part of all those able to play a constructive role, in order that the present opportunities for a resumption of the Geneva negotiations should not be missed. The true security and stability of each of the countries and peoples of the Middle East can be ensured only if there is mutual recognition of the legitimate rights and aspirations of all to peace and prosperity.

94. I take this occasion to voice once again our appreciation of the untiring efforts of the Secretary-General, who, through his continuous, discreet and patient contacts with all interested parties, continues to play a considerable role in the attempts to overcome the difficulties and to help the parties to the conflict come to the negotiating table at the earliest possible date. The Romanian delegation considers that the United Nations, above all the Security Council, in the exercise of its responsibilities under the Charter, is in duty bound to take further and more resolute action to contribute to a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the Middle East conflict.

95. My country's position on the Palestinian problem and on the establishment of a Middle East peace is well known. In the view of the Romanian Government—and I wish to reaffirm this—the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region can be founded only on Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied after the 1967 war, on a settlement of the problem of the Palestinian people in keeping with its legitimate aspirations, including the creation of a free and independent Palestinian State, and on the guarantee of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all States of the region.

96. Romania, as always, remains ready to co-operate fully, here and elsewhere, in the achievement of a peaceful, equitable settlement of the present problems in the Middle East, a settlement that would lead to the final establishment of peace and understanding among all peoples of the region.

97. Mr. TROYANOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Security Council is today discussing one of the main questions of a Middle East settlement: the question of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The Soviet delegation has listened attentively to the detailed statement by Ambassador Fall, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

98. The position of the Soviet Union on the question of Palestine and its attitude towards the work of the Committee, towards its report and its recommendations, have been set forth in detail in the Security Council and in the General Assembly; indeed, they are well known. The Soviet Union regards the question of Palestine as one of the principal aspects of the Middle East problem. The experience of recent years and the events now taking place in the Middle East show that there can be no peace in the region until the consequences of Israeli aggression have been eliminated—above all, Israel's continuing occupation of Arab territories—and until the Arab people of Palestine is secure in the exercise of its lawful national rights.

99. We consider it necessary to state once again that the Soviet Union, as in the past, will lend all possible support to the Palestinian people in its just struggle for its inalienable rights. The Soviet Union consistently favours a just solution of the Palestinian problem on the basis of the exercise of the lawful national rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination and the creation of its own State.

100. The Soviet Union has supported and will continue to support the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and as the universally recognized leader of the Palestinians in their struggle for their inalienable national rights. We note with satisfaction the relations of close friendship and fruitful co-operation that are being forged between the Soviet Union and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

101. We stand for the establishment of a just and lasting peace for all States and peoples of the Middle East. This, of course, applies also to Israel. But an essential prerequisite to such a peace is an end to the intolerable, unnatural and

explosive state of affairs in which the Palestinian people, 3 million strong, is deprived of the inalienable right to self-determination and to the creation of an independent State and is reduced to the status of an exiled people.

102. It is the conviction of the Soviet Union that favourable opportunities for progress towards the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East are now taking shape, opportunities which should be used. This requires the earliest reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference, which represents the only correct and effective path to a radical solution of all aspects of the Middle East problem in its entirety, including of course the Palestinian question, one of the key issues in such a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East.

103. In this connexion, the Soviet delegation notes the positive importance of the joint Soviet-American statement on the Middle East of 1 October last.

104. Speaking at a luncheon on 21 October of this year in honour of Mr. Morarji Desai, the Prime Minister of the friendly country of India, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, made the following remarks concerning the search for a settlement in the Middle East:

“In recent months serious efforts have been made to advance towards a comprehensive settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. We would hope that the parties directly involved in the conflict, with the assistance of the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, would avail themselves of the new opportunities that are opening up.”

105. The Soviet Union stands for a Middle East settlement on a lasting and just basis, as do many other States of the world. This wish is reflected in the Soviet-Indian declaration signed only yesterday in Moscow by the Prime Minister of India and the President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. The declaration states:

“The parties again declare their support for a just political settlement in the Middle East on the basis of the withdrawal of Israel's troops from all the Arab territories occupied by Israel in 1967, the satisfaction of the just demands of the Arab people of Palestine, including its lawful and inalienable right to create its own State, and the exercise by all the States of the Middle East of the right to an independent existence and development. To this end, they firmly favour the earliest reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference with the participation of all interested parties, including representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.”

106. The Soviet delegation expresses the hope that our common efforts in the Security Council and the United Nations in general will contribute to progress towards a comprehensive settlement within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference, including the solution of the Palestinian problem on the basis of the exercise of the lawful national rights of the Palestinian people.

107. Mr. CHEN Chu (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Resolution 3236 (XXIX), adopted by the General Assembly in 1974, is a resolution of signal importance. It affirms, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty without external interference, recognizes its right to regain its national rights by all means and appeals to all States to extend their support to the struggle of the Palestinian people. Resolution 3376 (XXX) reaffirmed resolution 3236 (XXIX). These two resolutions reflect the just demand of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and are the result of their protracted struggle undertaken with the support of the people of the world. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people was established in pursuance of resolution 3376 (XXX). We are in favour of the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee which reaffirm or conform to those two resolutions. Basing itself on this position, the Chinese delegation voted in favour of resolution 31/20, adopted at the last session of the General Assembly.

108. The Palestinian question is an important, integral part of the whole Middle East question. The rivalry between the two super-Powers over this region is the crucial reason why the question of Palestine and the Middle East has remained unsettled for so long. While each of them is trying to outdo the other in clamouring for an over-all settlement of the Middle East question, in essence neither of them wants to have a genuine settlement. Instead, both of them are working hard to maintain the state of "no war, no peace" in the Middle East so as to facilitate their control over the Middle East, motivated by the needs of their respective global strategies. That is why each of them, in its own different ways, is encouraging, supporting and abetting the Israeli Zionists as well as exerting pressures on the Arab countries and Palestinian people. In this respect, the super-Power which styles itself the "natural ally" of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples is even more cunning and contemptible in its tactics. However, the Palestinian and other Arab peoples are heroic peoples who have been long tested in the raging flames of struggles, and in the end it is only the Arab and Palestinian peoples themselves, and not the super-Powers, that will determine the destiny of the peoples of Palestine and the Middle East.

109. The Chinese Government and people have always firmly held that Israel must withdraw from all the Arab territories it has occupied and that the Palestinian people must regain their national rights. We strongly condemn the super-Powers' rivalry in the Middle East. We stand firmly on the side of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and support their just struggle against Zionism and hegemonism and for the recovery of their lost territories and the restoration of their national rights. All the super-Powers' schemes to sacrifice the basic interests of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and to write off and emasculate the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people are impermissible and doomed to complete failure.

110. Miss LOPEZ (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The reading of the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has led us to think once again about the fate of that

people, about the responsibility of the United Nations and about the lack of results, despite efforts made by the Organization and the overwhelming opinion in favour of the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

111. A range of interests surrounds the Palestinian question and prevents the finding of a solution to the regrettable situation which two generations of Palestinians have now endured in all its tragic dimensions.

112. Those of us who are considering this item in the Council for the first time find it difficult to apportion blame, because we have all been the victims of historical circumstances. However, we do find it possible to reach certain conclusions on the basis of the report which we want to put forward in all sincerity.

113. We believe that Palestinians have the same rights as all peoples: rights to self-determination, independence and national sovereignty. We also believe that those rights have been denied them. Together with many other members of the international community, we hope that under the relevant resolutions of the Organization the exercise of those rights will be granted to the Palestinian people. To that end, we need only mention General Assembly resolutions 181 (II) and 194 (III), as well as other legal instruments which embody those rights for the Palestinian people and which guarantee its right to return to its homes and to receive compensation for loss of its property.

114. We wish to thank members of the Committee for the work they have done and to say that we agree with the way in which they have approached the Palestinian problem. We hope to see their conclusions lead the parties at issue to find a solution to the suffering and degradation which has been inflicted on the Palestinian people.

115. Mr. RIOS (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I would first pay tribute to the members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, established under General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX). The Committee has submitted its second report and there may be disagreement with specific parts of it. But that does not detract from its merits, as we recognize.

116. Speaking of merits, it is only fair to mention the indefatigable efforts of the Secretary-General in his incessant search for peace in the Middle East. His constant travel, his personal contacts, the tenacious work of his envoys, all speak eloquently of someone who is devoted and zealous in the work of avoiding a new outburst of armed struggle in that highly explosive region. The Secretary-General and his advisers and assistants understand that the Middle East holds all the elements of a potential conflagration, and that is why they have spared neither word nor deed in trying to avoid such a tragic outburst.

117. For those who have followed events in the Middle East with close attention, the present moment seems extremely dangerous, full of ominous signs. The amount of weapons which have been accumulating in the region for warlike purposes are not exactly signs of peace. On the

contrary, they point to war, with the aggravating factor that the weapons are becoming increasingly lethal, increasingly destructive, and therefore more likely to involve a larger number of parties in the conflict. Never before have we been able to say with more certainty that a situation of conflict was a danger to international peace and security.

118. After these remarks, and in keeping with the policy followed by the delegation of Panama with regard to the Middle East conflict, we wish to present our position. We wish to define and to reaffirm the policy of Panama with regard to all aspects of the conflict in the Middle East.

119. Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) contain the fundamental elements on the basis of which peace in the region must be established. We reaffirm our recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people. We consequently declare that, in order to be effective, a just and lasting peace in the Middle East must, according to the terms of resolution 242 (1967), be based on the following principle:

“Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.”

We also reassert our conviction that that peace entails, as one of its essential elements, full acceptance of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as set forth in the relevant Security Council resolutions.

120. With the support of the world community and the participation of the parties directly involved, the Geneva Conference is, in our view, the competent instrument to open the way to that just and necessary peace. That is why we must unanimously decide to encourage the Co-Chairmen of the Conference—the United States and the Soviet Union—to put aside every political or hegemonic consideration and to endeavour, in full compliance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, to resort to all available means of persuasion to make an effective contribution to bringing about peace in the Middle East, thus ending this tragic and unduly long chapter in modern history.

121. Mr. BOYA (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation is happy that the Security Council has at last met today to consider the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

122. My delegation listened attentively to the statement of the Chairman of the Committee who was kind enough to introduce to us the report. My delegation would like to thank the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Fall, and all the other members of the Committee for the excellent work done in conformity with the mandate they received from the General Assembly at its thirtieth session. The Committee's report is an outstanding piece of work, thanks to the objectivity of the investigations and debates reflected in it. As my delegation said in 1976 when the

Council had the report of the same Committee before it, this is the first time that collective efforts have been undertaken with a view to arriving at an objective and non-partisan definition of the real nature of the Palestine problem, which some people have always tried to complicate and bury in hazy historical references.

123. It became necessary in our Organization to formulate a historical definition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in order to make clear to a busy minority, given to blackmail so as to hide the truth, that certain stubborn realities will not go away.

124. The overwhelming majority of the Members of the Organization recognizes the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as they are indicated in the Committee's report. However, the definition of those rights within the United Nations opens up a new dimension in the search for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, since the Palestinian problem lies objectively at the very heart of a settlement of the Middle East crisis. Not to recognize this reality would be to display a grave political shortsightedness.

125. The manoeuvres of the imperialists and their puppets with a view to preventing the Security Council from recognizing the rights of the Palestinian people are doomed to failure. The determination of the Palestine Liberation Organization in its legitimate struggle against the oppressors is an invincible weapon. Sooner or later the Palestinian people will triumph. My delegation reaffirms its militant support of the struggle of the Palestinian people for effective recognition of its rights within the objective framework proposed by the Committee. In other words, my country entirely approves the pertinent and very wise recommendations of the Committee. Those recommendations are made with a view to achieving a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East crisis for the sake of peace and security in that troubled region where, in the final analysis, the sordid manoeuvres of international imperialism are aimed at the political domination and economic exploitation of the peoples and the immense resources of the region.

126. If, since 1976 when the report was submitted to us, the Council has been unable to take a decision, it is because of the diversionary tactics adopted by the enemies of peace in the Middle East. In my delegation's view, the report of the Committee deserves the conscientious and objective consideration of the Council, and that consideration must be based on the principle of the equality of the inalienable rights of the peoples of the world. My country, the People's Republic of Benin, would welcome a thorough study of this question and we hope that authorized voices will be heard so that the Council may be enabled to take a decision in complete freedom. Nevertheless, it would seem that, in order to satisfy certain private arrangements, the Council, subjected as usual to inadmissible pressures, is holding this meeting just for appearances and that no positive result is to be expected from this debate. My delegation, as a member of the Council, sincerely regrets being involved in this tragicomedy. The struggling Palestinian people will know whom to hold responsible.

127. Mr. HOSSEN (Mauritius): My delegation has listened attentively to the statement of the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and we cannot but agree with and fully support the contents of the report of the Committee. We congratulate Ambassador Fall of Senegal and his colleagues for this comprehensive report, which has shed more light on the plight of the Palestinian people in their selfless determination to secure their right to national self-determination.

128. The world at large can ill afford, at this critical juncture in history, to ignore the legitimate rights of the people of Palestine. We feel that the time has now come for a negotiated settlement, and this in the interest of peace and security. The views of the Mauritius delegation on this issue are well known and have been expressed at the United Nations on various occasions. At this stage, we wish to reiterate strongly and reaffirm our position regarding the just and legitimate struggle of the people of Palestine for an independent homeland. We are happy to note that efforts are under way to secure a comprehensive settlement on a lasting and just basis, with the participation of all parties concerned. The Mauritius delegation will endeavour in its own humble way to contribute towards securing such a settlement.

129. The PRESIDENT: As there are no other speakers, I should like to make a brief statement as the representative of INDIA.

130. I do not share the impression of the representative of Benin that we are participating in some sort of tragedy. On the contrary, it seems to me that we have had a very serious discussion, at least by those who have spoken on the item before us.

131. My delegation wishes to express its deep appreciation of the tenacity and devotion with which Ambassador Fall

has been carrying out his duties. I do not wish to say more because India, as a member of the Committee of which he is the Chairman, is a party to the report which he has presented. The views of the Indian delegation were placed before the Security Council [1928th meeting] when the Council considered this matter in June 1976. We have nothing new to add to our substantive support for the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine. Their rights remain inalienable and are protected by international law, although the question of their exercise has yet to be resolved.

132. In that connexion, my delegation has read with interest the text of the Soviet-American statement of 1 October on the joint efforts being made by the two Co-Chairmen to reconvene the Geneva Conference on the Middle East. The two Co-Chairmen have made an appeal to all parties for careful consideration of each other's legitimate rights and interests. We hope that positive responses to that appeal will facilitate the success of the current diplomatic initiatives to reconvene the Conference. We have every confidence that nothing will be prejudged, that all options will be kept open and that the legitimate rights and interests of all parties, including those of the Palestinian people, will be adequately ensured. Any other course of action would not result in a peace settlement that was just and enduring.

133. Resuming my role as PRESIDENT of the Council, I should like to thank Ambassador Fall once again on behalf of the Council for his very comprehensive statement.

134. I may say that, after prior consultations with members of the Council, it has been agreed to adjourn the debate on this question for the present. The next meeting of the Council on this question will be fixed after consultations among members.

*The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.*