



General Assembly

Seventieth session

64th plenary meeting
 Tuesday, 24 November 2015, 3 p.m.
 New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Lykketoft (Denmark)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Gumende (Mozambique), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 38 (continued)

Question of Palestine

Draft resolutions (A/70/L.10, A/70/L.11, A/70/L.12 and A/70/L.13)

The Acting President: Before the Assembly takes action on the draft resolutions one by one, I should like to remind members that they will have an opportunity to explain their votes on all four draft resolutions before and after action is taken on all of those resolutions.

The representative of Israel has asked to speak in explanation of vote before the voting. I should like to remind her that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Meitzad (Israel): For the past three months, Israeli citizens have been terrorized on a daily basis. Men, women and children are being attacked all over Israel — on the streets of Tel Aviv, Beersheba and Jerusalem and in cities throughout the nation. Over the past week alone, the onslaught of terrorist attacks against Israelis has claimed the lives of nine people. Two were stabbed in the street on the way to afternoon prayers at the synagogue; two were shot on their way to a wedding; and all were murdered in cold blood while going about their lives. Yet despite the horrific

events, we have not heard any strong condemnation of the attacks on Israelis during these discussions. The Assembly must condemn all types of terrorism in the strongest possible terms and state clearly that terror is terror, wherever it takes place and whoever the victims are. Unfortunately, at the United Nations, it is business as usual. Once again, the Assembly is about to vote on a package of draft resolutions that serves those who prefer to ignore the facts.

The six draft resolutions that are being considered today under agenda items 37 and 38 not only fail to promote dialogue or build trust but also have wasteful budgetary implications. First, they fail to address the recent rise in terrorism and to acknowledge the fact that Israelis are being attacked and murdered on a daily basis. They also conveniently ignore Hamas, an internationally recognized terrorist organization, which continues to oppress its own people in Gaza and to actively impede the efforts to reconstruct Gaza by using building materials intended for civilians to enhance its militant capabilities. If the Assembly truly wants to have an honest debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it must stop ignoring the facts and demand that the Palestinian leadership answer the following questions. Why does it fail to condemn acts of terror committed by Palestinians? Why, over the past 20 years, has it preferred violence over dialogue and incitement over negotiations? Why does it continue to refuse to assume responsibility for the Gaza Strip? Why were the peace proposals offered by several Israeli Prime Ministers repeatedly rejected by the Palestinian leadership? Lastly, why does President Abbas continue

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to ignore Prime Minister Netanyahu's repeated calls to resume negotiations?

Much has been said on the subject of the Temple Mount today and yesterday. Israel has repeatedly affirmed its commitment to maintaining the status quo. We do that out of a deep and abiding respect for the principle of the freedom of religion and the historic connection of the three monotheistic faiths to the Temple Mount. Yet it is clear that that respect is not mutual. Recently, the Palestinians asked to submit a proposal to UNESCO to include the Western Wall, the site of Jewish prayer for millenniums, as part of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. It is evident that Palestinian leaders are determined to deny any historic connection between the Jewish people and our holy sites, and we can see that the same approach is evident in the draft resolutions that we have before us today. While Israel continues to recognize the connection that Muslims have with their holy sites, these draft resolutions completely disregard the connection of other religions to Al-Haram Al-Sharif. They even fail to include its Jewish and Christian name, the Temple Mount — in case it has been forgotten.

The complex reality of the Middle East demands full attention and appropriate financing on the part of the United Nations. As political transformation and violence wreak havoc in the Middle East, and as the world deals with one of the biggest and most serious humanitarian crises in its history, the Assembly is about to decide, yet again, to adopt draft resolutions and divert precious financial resources to inefficient programmes and units whose only purpose is attacking Israel. They include the special information programme on the question of Palestine and the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat, which alone in the Secretariat are dedicated to one specific conflict or — more precisely — to public relations activities on behalf of one side of the conflict. And for its part, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is a hotbed of anti-Israel activity. It is quite baffling to learn that the United Nations is spending approximately \$6.5 million every year on bodies that are dedicated solely to promoting the Palestinian narrative, while it admits to suffering from a severe budgetary deficit. I ask the question: Why does the United Nations divert that money to further a purely anti-Israel agenda instead of allocating it to those who are in dire need of humanitarian assistance?

The bitter reality is that the draft resolutions offer a one-sided account of the situation and will perpetuate a zero-sum approach to the conflict. That sends a message that the only way to support the Palestinians is by criticizing Israel. Let no one delude himself or herself. Supporting these draft resolutions will not advance the cause of peace. It will only make peace harder to achieve. I call on the members who genuinely wish to assist in achieving a durable solution for Israel and the Palestinians to take a stand against these draft resolutions and to take steps to facilitate direct negotiations, without preconditions, between the parties.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take decisions on draft resolutions A/70/L.10, A/70/L.11, A/70/L.12 and A/70/L.13.

We turn first to draft resolution A/70/L.10, entitled “Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/70/L.10: Brunei Darussalam, Cuba, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Senegal, South Africa and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic

Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/70/L.10 was adopted by 102 votes to 8, with 57 abstentions (resolution 70/12).

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: We turn next to draft resolution A/70/L.11, entitled "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department of General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and

in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/70/L.11: Brunei Darussalam, Cuba, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Senegal, South Africa and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland,

Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/70/L.11 was adopted by 99 votes to 8, with 59 abstentions (resolution 70/13).

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: We now turn to draft resolution A/70/L.12, entitled “Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department of General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/70/L.12: Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Cuba, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Senegal, South Africa and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran

(Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Honduras, Nauru, Paraguay, South Sudan, Togo, Tonga

Draft resolution A/70/L.12 was adopted by 155 votes to 7, with 7 abstentions (resolution 70/14).

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/70/L.13, entitled “Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department of General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft

resolution A/70/L.13: Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Cuba, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Senegal, South Africa and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia, Cameroon, Honduras, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, South Sudan, Tonga

Draft resolution A/70/L.13 was adopted by 155 votes to 7, with 7 abstentions (resolution 70/15).

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to the speakers in explanation of vote, I would like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Maes (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU).

The European Union thanks the Palestinian delegation for the successful outcome of our negotiations on a number of resolutions on which the General Assembly took action. As an outcome of those negotiations, the European Union confirms its consolidated voting pattern on those resolutions. At this time, we would like to put on record that, with regard to all resolutions that are adopted during the General Assembly at its seventieth session, the European Union and its member States consider that whenever the term "Palestinian Government" is mentioned, this refers to the Palestinian Authority. Furthermore, the use of the term "Palestine" in any of those resolutions cannot be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine, and its use is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on that issue, and hence on the question of the validity of an accession to the conventions and treaties mentioned therein. We also point out that the European Union as a whole has not expressed a legal qualification with regard to the term "forced displacement", which is used in a number of resolutions submitted under agenda items 38 and 55.

Finally, some of the texts adopted today also refer to the ongoing tension over the holy sites in Jerusalem. I wish to stress that the European Union is concerned about the worrying developments in that regard and the recurrent violent clashes at the Al-Haram Al-Sharif/

Temple Mount. We fully acknowledge the special role of Jordan in relation to the Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem. We welcome the agreements that have been reached between Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority on that issue last month. We recall the agreements previously reached in October 2014, and we call for their full implementation.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): The United States of America remains profoundly troubled by the repetitive and disproportionate number of one-sided General Assembly resolutions designed to condemn Israel, amounting to a total of 18 this year. That one-sided approach damages the prospects for peace by undermining trust between the parties and the kind of international support critical to achieving peace. All parties to the conflict have responsibilities for ending it, and we are disappointed that States Members of the United Nations continually single out Israel without acknowledging the responsibilities and difficult steps that must be taken on all sides. It is manifestly unjust that the United Nations, an institution founded upon the idea that all nations should be treated equally, is so often used by Member States to treat Israel unequally.

Of these annual resolutions, three are particularly troubling: those concerning the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. Those resolutions renew mandates for United Nations bodies established decades ago, wasting valuable resources and reinforcing the systemic United Nations bias against Israel.

All Member States should evaluate the effectiveness of supporting and funding those bodies. The United States remains firmly committed to advancing a two-State solution. We continue to urge all sides to take steps to stop the violence, improve conditions on the ground in the West Bank and Gaza and move the diplomatic process forward. That means reversing current trends where terrorism, violence, settlements and demolitions are increasingly creating a one-State reality and imperilling the viability of a two-State solution. It means resuming the Oslo transition to greater Palestinian civil responsibility. We believe that doing so will enhance security and stability for the Israelis and the Palestinians alike.

United States Secretary of State John Kerry is currently in the region meeting with the senior leadership on both sides to discuss how to help stabilize the situation and show meaningful progress towards a two-State solution. Those are the same goals expressed in the 30 September Quartet statement, goals that are shared by our partners. We believe it is past time for the genuine advancement of a two-State solution. In mid-November, Prime Minister Netanyahu discussed with President Obama and Secretary Kerry concrete ideas for stopping the violence, improving conditions on the ground in the West Bank and Gaza and moving the diplomatic process forward.

We condemn all acts of violence directed at unarmed civilians, including stabbings, shootings, arson and vehicular attacks. The victims of those attacks have included American citizens, most recently 18-year old Ezra Schwartz, who was killed by terrorists less than a week ago. The United States will support Israel's right to defend innocent civilians against terrorism, and we mourn any loss of innocent life. It is critical that every possible effort be taken to show restraint and de-escalate tensions.

I would like to reiterate that the United States has consistently opposed every effort to delegitimize Israel or undermine its security at the United Nations, and we will continue to do so with vigour. Our continued opposition to the resolution entitled "Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan", however, should not be understood to mean that we support settlement activity. On the contrary, we view Israeli settlement activity as illegitimate and counterproductive to the cause of peace. During the past year, we have been deeply concerned by Israel's advancement of plans for thousands of additional housing units in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. We have made clear that such action only draws condemnation from the international community, poisons the atmosphere and undermines the prospects for peace.

While the United States of America unequivocally rejects Israeli settlements in territories occupied in 1967, that does not justify the repetitive and one-sided General Assembly resolutions facilitating the condemnation of Israel. Those resolutions set back our collective efforts to advance a peaceful resolution to the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and they damage the institutional credibility of the United Nations. Biased resolutions will not advance peace. Only hard choices

made in the context of bilateral negotiations will do that. The cause of peace would be well served by more balance and less bias in the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Mr. Teo (Singapore): I have the honour to speak in explanation of vote after the adoption of resolutions 70/12, 70/13, 70/14 and 70/15. Singapore voted in favour of resolution 70/12, entitled “Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People”, on the understanding that the reference in paragraph 2 to the achievement of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders should be interpreted in the same manner as set forth in paragraph 1 of resolution 70/15, “Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine”, namely, the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 38.

Agenda item 37 (continued)

The situation in the Middle East

Draft resolutions (A/70/L.14 and A/70/L.17)

The Acting President: Members are reminded that they will have an opportunity to explain their votes on the two draft resolutions before and after action is taken on each.

We turn first to draft resolution A/70/L.14, entitled “Jerusalem”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/70/L.14, the following countries have become co-sponsors: Brunei Darussalam, Cuba, Ecuador, Malaysia, Mali, Senegal and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia,

Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia, Cameroon, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, South Sudan, Togo, Tonga

Draft resolution A/70/L.14 was adopted by 153 votes to 7, with 8 abstentions (resolution 70/16).

The Acting President: We now turn to draft resolution A/70/L.17, entitled “The Syrian Golan”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of draft resolution A/70/L.17, the following countries have become co-sponsors: Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Mali.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/70/L.17 was adopted by 105 votes to 6, with 56 abstentions (resolution 70/17).

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Ja’afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic expresses its heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to the General Assembly for adopting again, as it has every year without exception since 1981, when Israel imposed its illegitimate laws on the Syrian Arab Golan, the resolution entitled “The Syrian Golan” (resolution 70/17) and other draft resolutions under items 38 and 37, “Question of Palestine” and “The situation in the Middle East”, respectively. Once again, my country expresses its thanks to all the States that sponsored the resolution entitled “The Syrian Golan” and to all delegations that voted in its favour.

The ongoing support of the majority of member States for those resolutions shows that they are attached to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, that they reject foreign occupation and that they support our inalienable right to recover the Syrian territories that have been occupied by Israel since 1967. There is no doubt that the overwhelming vote in favour of those resolutions sends a clear message to Israel that the international community rejects its occupation of territory, its massacres and its policies and practices of expansion, aggression, racism, settlement-building, fait accompli and the annexation of land by force. Such practices violate international agreements and norms, the most prominent of which are the Charter of the United Nations and the Fourth Geneva Convention of

1949. Those practices are therefore condemned by all who truly uphold international law, seek to end foreign occupation, reject the acquisition of land by force, and wish to punish all those whose actions run counter to international law and the provisions of the Charter.

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

Mr. Mazzeo (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the delegations of Argentina and Brazil in order to explain our vote, as we have done in previous years, on the resolution on the Syrian Golan, which has just been adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 70/17.

Brazil and Argentina voted in favour of the resolution because we believe that in its essence it is linked to the illegal nature of the acquisition of territory by force. Paragraph 4 of Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of any State. At the same time, I wish to clarify the position of our delegations with regard to paragraph 6 of the resolution.

Our vote does not prejudice the content of that paragraph, particularly the reference to the line of 4 June 1967. Brazil and Argentina believe that it is important to make progress in the search for a solution to the conflict between Syria and Israel in the Middle East with a view to ending the occupation of the Golan Heights. Therefore, on behalf of the Governments of Brazil and Argentina, I highlight the importance of resuming negotiations to find a permanent solution to the situation in the Syrian Golan in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and the principle of land for peace.

Ms. Meitzad (Israel): In the past two days, the United Nations has once again ushered in its annual anti-Israel festival, which is characterized by the adoption of outrageous and outdated resolutions. This charade has only been made worse by the preposterous remarks made by several representatives, which clearly demonstrate their increasing detachment from reality.

I was deeply moved by the Lebanese representative's call to fight terror and injustice (see A/70/PV.62). If only Lebanon would take its own advice. It is a fact that

the Lebanese Parliament is dominated by Hizbullah, a terrorist group that assists Al-Assad regime in slaughtering civilians in Syria. The blatant insincerity of Lebanon's statement is also evident in its call for accountability for injustice. One need only look at the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, which have some of the worst conditions in the region, to see the hypocrisy of its words. Palestinians in those camps are subject to continual violent, extreme discrimination and economic and social oppression. Talk about injustice! I would therefore suggest that that representative take a good look at his own country before he decides to preach to others.

It is unfortunate that the Syrian representative believes that he is in any position to lecture others in this Hall. The statement that he made earlier today was as empty as the legitimacy of the regime he represents. I would like to remind him that the repetition of baseless accusations and continuous lies, even when uttered in his overly lengthy manner, will not make his words valid or true.

We have heard some outrageous statements from countries — such as Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua (see A/70/PV.62) — that can only be construed as demonstrating a complete lack of familiarity with all matters pertaining to the situation in the Middle East. Indeed, it seems that their geographical distance from the region is as large as the gap between their perception of the situation and the actual facts. As for Venezuela, I was amazed that its representative was not ashamed to justify acts of terror committed against innocent Israelis. Such a statement by a member of the Security Council undermines the credibility of the entire Council.

The representative of Pakistan arrogantly stood before the Assembly and talked about victimizing civilians (see A/70/PV.62). Might I suggest that Pakistan take a good, hard look at itself and that it address the continuing violations committed by its Government against innocent Afghan civilians. Police brutality against Afghans in Pakistan have resulted in the death of 145 people, including 132 children, in the past year alone.

Yesterday, the representative of Libya delivered a series of accusations against Israel (see A/70/PV.62). As I listened to him, I had to wonder which of the Governments and groups that control Libyan territory he represents. Regardless of the answer to that question,

I can say with confidence that every party to the conflict in Libya is guilty of the repression of human rights and indiscriminate killing of civilians. Serious abuses and violations of international law have been reported, including indiscriminate shelling, abduction of civilians, as well as torture and execution.

Mr. Mounzer (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I apologize for asking for the floor at this late stage. However, I must reply to the lies of the representative of the occupying Power, who has tried to divert our attention from the subject matter under consideration today — the Israeli violations in the occupied Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Golan, and how we can end that unjust occupation, which has been ongoing since 1967.

The representative of the occupying Power must understand what my delegations and others have been saying are neither allegations, lectures nor propaganda. These are facts documented in reports issued by the United Nations and human rights organizations around the world, including countries that are allies and supporters of Israel. The result of the voting on resolutions 70/12, 70/13, 70/14 and 70/15 demonstrate that the majority in the Assembly support such resolutions because they contain facts.

There is not enough time for me to talk lay out all the Israeli violations and crimes in the occupied territories. I simply wish to reiterate our statement earlier today (see A/70/PV.63) on the situation in the Middle East concerning an announcement made by an Israeli soldier to the residents of the Aida refugee camp on 29 October. Speaking in Arabic, he threatened the residents of the camp as follows.

“Residents of the Aida refugee camp, we are the Israeli military. If you throw stones at us, we will spray tear gas at you until you all fall dead. Men, women and the elderly — you will all die. We will not leave anyone alive. We have arrested one of you. He is with us now. We have taken him from his home, and we will slaughter and kill him before your eyes. Go back to your homes or else we will shoot you with tear gas until you die.”

The Israeli soldier said that a month ago. He represents the terrorism, racism and hatred inherent in Israeli policies, including Israel’s support for terrorist groups in the occupied territories, including the Al-Nusra Front, which is affiliated with Al-Qaida. That is not an allegation; these claims are documented and

supported in reports of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. The Assembly can review all reports that Israel has been dealing with these terrorist groups in the separation zone.

Mr. Forés Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I apologize for taking the floor again, but unfortunately I am obliged to answer the representative of Israel, who seems to be unaware of the living conditions in her own country in regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I shall read out some statements to bring her up to date.

First, “Every terrorist should know that he will not survive the attack he is about to commit.”

Secondly, “Anyone who stabs Jews or hurts innocent people is due to be killed.”

Thirdly, “You have to shoot to kill whoever takes out a knife or a screwdriver or whatever.”

Does she know who made each of those statements? I shall remind her. The first was the Israeli Minister of Public Security, Mr. Gilad Erdan, who is responsible for that country’s police service. The second was Jerusalem Police Commander Moshe Edri. The third was Mr. Yair Lapid, a member of the Knesset. All are public officials of Israel. The lack of response on the part of the Israeli authorities demonstrates that the country’s policy has tilted to the shoot-to-kill mode — an invitation to violence and extrajudicial killings, which are a fundamental pillar of Israeli democracy and respect for human rights in the purest Israeli sense. Other pillars of Israel’s protection of human rights include targeted assassinations, the repression of protests through the use of snipers and other physical violence, preventive arrests and the detention of minors.

Those are the reasons why, since 1947, our people has defended the cause of the Palestinian people and will continue to defend them. We know what the Palestinian people are suffering. We know about all the trials they have gone through and all the crimes committed against them. That is why we will continue to defend them until the Palestinian people can exercise their right to self-determination and have a State like those enjoyed by the rest of us in the Assembly.

Mr. Vallejos (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation wishes to exercise its right of reply to respond to the Israeli representative, who referred to us with a lack of respect for the intelligence of our people. She argued that because of our distance or our region, we

are unable to feel the injustice being committed against the Palestinian people. What a deplorable argument that is in such a solemn organization as the United Nations.

Fortunately, the majority of the Members of the Organization demonstrated their solidarity when they voted in favour of Palestine's status as non-member observer State. Our Government has not held back. It has been committed to the Palestinian cause since the establishment of the Organization. We have always voted with the majority. It is not we who have isolated ourselves; we believe that it is Israel that, by its actions, has isolated itself.

We therefore call on Israel to end the vicious cycle of aggression and settlement construction that, despite international condemnation, continues with impunity, without regard for the prohibitions of international law, which are not weakened by distance. No country can interpret international law differently from any other country simply because it is located on a different continent. International law has no borders, and that is what makes it possible for our countries to live in peace.

I reiterate that until a resolution is adopted establishing the State of Palestine, within its pre-1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital, as the only genuine solution, there will be no just and durable peace in the Middle East, which we so sorely need.

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

I call on the observer of the observer State of Palestine.

Mr. Mansour (Palestine): At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the State of Palestine and my delegation, to express our gratitude to all those who sponsored the resolutions under the agenda items on the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East, particularly resolution 70/16 on occupied East Jerusalem. We also wish to express our thanks and gratitude to all countries that have voted in favour of those resolutions, reaffirming again this year their strong, principled position in support of the just cause of the Palestinian people and our people in their struggle for the attainment of their inalienable national rights, including their right to self-determination and statehood and the right of the Palestine refugees to return and compensation.

We are very grateful for this strong message from the General Assembly, which reflects the essence

of support for a very principled position upholding international law and sends a very strong message to our people that the international community is not abandoning them. The international community is standing with them in their ongoing struggle to end the occupation, to achieve the independence of the State of Palestine and to save, in a concrete way, the two-State solution. The message tonight to our people will be received with the very positive understanding that the Assembly is not listening to a distorted single voice trying to show that the victims — the Palestinian people living under Israeli military foreign occupation — are responsible for the horrible prevailing situation of foreign occupation.

In that connection, the Israeli representative's position is no different from that of all colonial Powers, especially settler colonial Powers, which throughout history have always blamed the victims for all the evil crimes of the victimizer and occupier. We wonder when the occupying authority will wake up from its denial and face the reality that it is occupying the land of the State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem. The sooner it wakes up to realize that it is an occupier and begins negotiation in a serious way to end occupation in a relatively short period of time, the closer all of us will be to achieving peace.

But if it continues to crush the will of the Palestinian people, it will not succeed in doing so. If it continues to try to besiege our people in Gaza, East Jerusalem and Al-Khalil, it will not succeed in breaking the will of the Palestinian people. We are like all of the peoples who have representatives in the Hall when they voted against colonialism and succeeded in acquiring their freedom and their dignity. We are exactly like the members of the Assembly, and that is why each year they vote overwhelmingly to support our cause and our rights. We are not trying to isolate anyone, except the ruthless occupation system. It should be isolated, it should be exposed and it should be defeated, because the occupation is the source of all of the evils from which all of our people suffer. We thank the Assembly very much for helping us in its own way to uphold international law and for adopting today's resolutions as a contribution to the struggle of the Palestinian people on the ground and everywhere else, and for trying to end the evil occupation and to allow the Palestinian people to enjoy their independence.

When we raised our flag in front of the United Nations, it is not true that it had no meaning. The flag is

a symbol of the rights of the Palestinian people and their eagerness for freedom and an end to the occupation. When members of the Assembly not only voted in favour of raising the flag, but also participated with us in the garden outside this building, in that very historic moment they gave additional strength to our people to continue their just struggle. We are like all the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America that acquired independence after putting an end to colonialism. We are the last outpost to defend the freedom of people who live under foreign occupation and colonialism. We appreciate the efforts of all Member States that are helping us to join them by ending the occupation of our land and allowing the State of Palestine to be independent.

We are very confident that one day, with the struggle of the Palestinian people and the contribution of the General Assembly in adopting resolutions and programmes to help our people against that ruthless occupation, we will reach the moment of achieving peace and putting an end to occupation, with the State of Palestine living in peace and freedom in the Middle East, side by side with all the States surrounding the State of Palestine, including Israel. Then we will be able to open the door to a meaningful new future, not only for us, our people and our children, but for everyone, including the people of Israel.

We are ready and willing to do so not through gimmicks — come and negotiate with us — but through

a meaningful collective process with all Member States, as they have conducted in more than one place, in order to convince the ruthless, stubborn occupier to come down from the top of the hill and negotiate through a collective process, in good faith, the end of occupation and all the final status issues that are known to all: borders, refugees, Jerusalem, settlements, water, security and prisoners.

When that moment is imposed by the collective will of all Member States, then we will be closer to peace. It will not come through invitations to talk while illegal facts are being created on the ground. That will never happen. We have tried it in the past and it pushed us from a bad situation into a worse, catastrophic situation. Those who want to negotiate with us in good faith have to acknowledge that they are the occupier and that they have to end their occupation.

I want to thank the President and this respectable international body, the General Assembly, which reflects the collective will of humankind, for its principled position in support of today's and other resolutions that have been adopted by the various United Nations bodies. None of the lies and posturing can be sold in this Hall, because the General Assembly represents an outstanding group of diplomats that cannot accept lies or distorted stories. Its members know the truth, they advance the truth and justice, and we thank them very much for all that they do.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.