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President: Mr. Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA
(Algeria).

*Tribute to the memory of Mr. Erskine
Hamilton Childers, President of Ireland*

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): It is with profound grief that we have learned of the death of the President of Ireland, His Excellency Mr. Erskine Hamilton Childers. The Secretary-General and I have already sent a message of condolence to the Government and people of Ireland on this sad occasion. On behalf of the General Assembly, I should like now to extend our deepest and most sincere condolences to the Government and people of Ireland, as well as to the family of the deceased.

2. I invite the Members of the Assembly to rise and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Childers.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

3. Mr. INGVARSSON (Iceland): On behalf of the group of Western European and other States, I wish to extend to the delegation of Ireland profound sympathy on the tragic death of the President of Ireland, Mr. Erskine Childers. I request the delegation of Ireland to convey our sincere condolences to the Government of Ireland, to the Irish people and to the family of the deceased.

4. Mr. PENJOR (Bhutan): The tragic news of the passing away of Mr. Erskine Childers, President of Ireland, has been received with a deep sense of sorrow by all of us.

5. On behalf of the Asian group and on behalf of my own delegation, I wish to convey through you, Mr. President, and the representative of Ireland our heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the Government and people of Ireland on their bereavement.

6. Mr. TYLNER (Czechoslovakia): On behalf of the group of Socialist States, I should like to express our deepest condolences on the death of Mr. Erskine Childers, President of Ireland.

7. Mr. PÉREZ DE CUÉLLAR (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the Latin American group, it is my sad duty to express the deep condolences of all the members of that group on the death of the eminent statesman, Mr. Erskine Hamilton Childers, President of Ireland.

8. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): On behalf of the Arab group, I wish to express our heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Ireland.

9. Mr. HARMON (Liberia): On behalf of the African group and on behalf of my country, Liberia, I wish to extend our deepest condolences to the representative of Ireland and, through him, to the Government and people of Ireland.

AGENDA ITEM 108

Question of Palestine (*continued*)

10. Mr. MAGHUR (Libyan Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*):* We have heard the sad news of the passing away of Mr. Erskine Hamilton Childers, President of Ireland. On behalf of the delegation of the Libyan Arab Republic and on my own behalf, I should like to express heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Ireland, to the members of the Irish delegation and to the family of the deceased.

11. After many years, the General Assembly has finally embarked upon the discussion of the question of Palestine under its proper title. This time it is the question of Palestine which prevails. Despite the constant attempts that were exerted to obliterate this issue, it has emerged as an issue of man's liberation: that is, the liberation of the Arab Palestinian from his refugee status and state of homelessness and his liberation from the grip of foreign and alien occupation. It is therefore, an issue of man and a land; that is the Palestinian Arab who was subject for more than a quarter of a century to all kinds of oppression and to all forms of terrorism. It is the issue of the land of Palestine, which has been occupied and exploited after being purged of a great part of its population while its remaining population is under alien occupation of foreign Powers. This, then, is the concept of the new item on the agenda of which we are now seized. As soon as the item was placed on the agenda under its proper and true title, which is Palestine, it automatically led to the invitation of the Palestinian people in order to hear its legitimate voice within the international community. Thus the organic link between the whole land of Palestine and its people, represented in its liberation movement, has been realized. The true

* The English version of Mr. Maghur's speech was supplied by the delegation.

moving force behind this new course is the people of Palestine, who have long asserted and who continue to assert themselves by means of their continued struggle for their freedom and their legitimate rights.

12. No useful purpose can any longer be served by continuing the manoeuvres with the purpose of obliterating or sidetracking the issue. For such manoeuvres, together with policies of expulsion, slaughter, and false propaganda, could not deny the people of Palestine their existence, nor have those manoeuvres been successful in making them forget their homeland. It is high time that the General Assembly should thoroughly discuss this issue setting demagoguery apart. It must know the origin, cause, and the dimensions of the issue. It should know the factors that led to it and should comprehend the consequences that have resulted. It is illogical for the General Assembly to indulge itself in listening to monotonous, empty statements aimed at misleading world public opinion and preventing the General Assembly from seeing the truth.

13. Herzl said in a letter addressed to a member of the Ottoman Parliament:

"I have presented to his Eminence the Sultan our general proposals, and I trust that he will accept in principle our idea and in the future will discuss the details of its execution."

Herzl continued in his letter:

"Believe me, we will find another place satisfactory to our desires. And in this case Turkey will lose the last card in her hand to organize her finances and to promote her economy."

14. So we can say that, if developments had been different and Herzl and his friends had been able to find some other place as he indicated, the representatives of another people might have been standing here.

15. Yet the conspiracy was Zionist and colonialist in the first place. It was not the dream of a so-called intellectual. It was and still is a demonstration of imperialistic ambitions in our homeland. The dimensions of the plan were not restricted, as they claimed, to a national homeland, but it was rather an ambition which is expanding every day. Anyone who doubts the truth of this statement has only to look at the changes in the map of the Middle East that have taken place since 1947 and to look carefully into the other conspiracies surrounding the Middle East. And thus the execution of the horrible plan began. A promise was given by a Power having no right to give such a promise. It was for the realization of an ambiguous idea adhered to by a group of people who were hoarded together and trained in terrorism and assassination. Funds were raised so that imperialistic support could be purchased to help exterminate the Palestinian people. Then the Mandate was concluded by an imperialistic Power in the interests of Zionism. It is a Mandate which has thus been described by Sir Eric Drummond, Secretary-General of the League of Nations: "It was not made by the League, it was rather made by the British Government in collusion with the Jews." The Mandate officials, who were mainly Zionists planted by Britain in Palestine, enacted laws which imposed restrictions on Palestinians and at the same time opened the door for Jewish immigrants from all

over the world. The so-called Constitution of Palestine at that time provided that the principles of common law, justice, and equity in Palestine would not be implemented except as far as the circumstances of Palestine and the conditions of the people permitted. So, as you can see, even the principles of common law, justice, and equity were conditioned to the circumstances of Palestine. Such circumstances were promoted by imperialism in collusion with Zionism.

16. One look at the series of laws and circumstances created by Britain in collaboration with Zionism is sufficient to show the ugly face of the situation in which the principles of justice and equity were not implemented. The main features of the prevailing policies in Palestine at that time were: the impoverishment of the Arab Palestinian people through the levying of very high taxes and through mass fines; the British economic expert, Mr. Simpson, stated at that time that "the Arab farmer suffers heavy burdens of debts and taxes. Many people were forced to sell their lands either to pay their debts or to pay the government taxes"; the intimidation of the Palestinian people by the enactment of severe laws, such as the common penal law, which imposed mass punishments; deprivation of the Palestinian Arab people of national leaders, who were exiled or imprisoned without specific charges; free immigration into Palestine, where the immigrants were given all economic and social facilities and other privileges; the appointment of Zionist officials to implement these policies, most notorious of whom was Herbert Samuel, who was described by Weizmann as follows:

"Samuel is the product of our Judaism and we have appointed him High Commissioner. I am responsible for the appointment of Herbert Samuel in Palestine. He did not want to carry out such a difficult task except in response to our wish. Samuel is our Samuel."

17. Are not all these matters a lesson to us? History repeats itself. Now the General Assembly, under your wise leadership, Mr. President, has discussed another usurpation, that of the territories of the people of South Africa by the white people. Was not Zimbabwe sold out to Ian Smith's junta in the same manner?

18. Can we not rightly say that the representatives of the Palestinian people, speaking from this rostrum, actually represent all liberation movements, and expose the collaboration of imperialism and Zionism all over the world?

19. When the conspiracy was fabricated and finalized, a General Assembly of 51 Member States only, including South Africa, was called into session. That General Assembly was used as a rubber stamp to approve the unjust schemes devised under the cover of darkness. The Assembly was, at that time, discussing a matter that was contradictory to the Charter and to everything honourable and noble in human life and in the international community.

20. The Charter was based on the rights of peoples to self-determination. Yet the Palestine question was submitted to the General Assembly, at that time, in a manner contradicting that very basic principle. The first step that should have been taken by the Mandatory Power in Palestine, assuming that the Mandate was legal, was to allow the people of Palestine to

exercise their right to self-determination, rather than to request the General Assembly to decide the future of that people *in absentia*.

21. A member of the British Technical Committee, Mr. Reid, labelled the partition resolution as "a coup d'état that is not permitted to be undertaken by trustees without the approval of the people of Palestine, who are not so primitive as to lack leadership, nor are they incapable of taking a decision in this regard".

22. It was possible at that time for a General Assembly, which did not even represent the peoples of the United Nations, to violate its Charter; and it was possible, at that time, for the imperialistic Powers to maintain their majority in order to pass a resolution, at their will, even if it was at variance with the most important principles of the Charter.

23. Therefore, the voices that now lament the implementation of the Charter by the Assembly should be silenced. The expulsion of the racist representatives is a literal implementation of the Charter. The invitation of the representatives of the liberation movements, being representatives of the peoples of the United Nations on whose behalf the Charter was issued, is another literal implementation of the Charter. Allow me, Mr. President, to express pride in the fact that the Charter was upheld under your guidance, as you and your compatriots have been pioneers in the liberation trend.

24. Perhaps this brief summary of how the Palestine issue was handled since its inception is true proof that in the past the question was grossly mishandled and placed in an improper context. Whatever is established on invalid grounds is in fact invalid and deceptive. The proof of this is that today the General Assembly is becoming more universal and more representative of the peoples of the United Nations, that it has taken up once again the discussion of this issue in the presence of the Palestinian people, the principal party in the Palestine question. Perhaps this will set a precedent to extend invitations to the liberation movements to participate in the work of the United Nations. The vacant seats of the racist representatives of South Africa while this issue is debated is another example of the fact that the course of this Assembly has changed. There is now a new trend in this Organization bringing it increasingly closer to the peoples of the international community.

25. The Palestinian people have come to this Assembly without having to use the means of pressure that have been employed against them. They were not assisted by an international imperialistic Power that provided them with weapons and means of destruction, or put funds of thousands of millions at their disposal to make it possible for them to occupy a homeland of another people. Rather they have come to this Assembly without having to use any threat or to show any scorn to you, Mr. President, or to this Assembly, and without having asked you to act at variance with the Charter. They have come without any covetous desires for the homeland of another people. They have come burdened with the suffering of hunger and destitution of the camps to which they have been confined for more than a quarter of a century and in which they were subject to the falling of bombs burning their

tents, and the indiscriminate slaughtering of men and women alike. The representatives of the Palestinians have come, upon your kind invitation, to ask you that the principles of the Charter be implemented. They have come to ask for their own land, neither coveting the land of others nor asking for the partition of a land that does not belong to them. They have come representing a people who have struggled on despite their wounds and despite the hunger of their children, women, and their elderly in order to preserve the most noble ideals of mankind. It is now up to you to make a decision based on the principles of justice and equity. For we know that whatever is established on justice will be durable and everlasting; as durable and everlasting as the land of Palestine, Jerusalem, and the people of Palestine and the people of Jerusalem.

26. Mr. CHATTI (Tunisia) (*Interpretation from Arabic*): It is with regret that I begin my statement by expressing on behalf of Tunisia, its people and its President, our condolences to the Government of Ireland on the occasion of the death of its President.

27. What we are experiencing today is without doubt a decisive turning point in the history of the United Nations and a dangerous stage in the struggle of the peoples against colonial domination.

28. The Tunisian delegation has more than one reason for expressing its profound satisfaction with the present evolution of the question of Palestine, since Tunisia in recent years has called for consideration of the question of Palestine as a nation as being a problem distinct from that of the Middle East, of which it is the basis and the origin. Is it not, in fact, the true cause of all the tensions and wars in that area, and a permanent threat to international peace and security?

29. For more than a quarter of a century Israel has tried to distort this fact, pretending that the problem was not a quarrel between Israel and the Palestinian people, but a border conflict with its Arab neighbours. Even more, Israel has gone so far as to deny the existence of the Palestinian people, claiming that Palestine was a land without a people for a people without a land.

30. But if such lies and ruses can for a time mislead, they always collapse in the end, and the international community has today become aware of its error in creating the State of Israel, in view of the weight of the evidence arrayed before it through the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people in defence of its identity and its dignity.

31. The fact that the question of Palestine is today being debated here as a separate question is a firm repudiation of Israel's allegations, and a faithful reflection of the determination of the international community to discharge its obligations concerning a problem for which it has primary responsibility.

32. The decision adopted by this august Assembly to invite the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] to participate in this debate has enabled us to place the problem of Palestine in its true context, because it is both illogical and unjust to ignore the party directly concerned when there is no doubt as to the futility of any solution that does not take into account the rights of the Palestinian people.

33. It is an honour for this Assembly to have welcomed the representative of Palestine and the leader of its revolution, who declared that:

“... our people proclaims its faith in the future, unencumbered either by past tragedies or present limitations.” [2282nd meeting, para. 22.]

34. The broadmindedness, the nobility and the tolerance that characterized the statement of Mr. Yasser Arafat, the Chairman of the PLO, are tangible proof of the political maturity and the sense of responsibility of the great Palestinian people, despite the injustice and the dispersal of which it has been the victim.

35. What was the response to this message of peace and tolerance? The Assembly has heard the representative of Israel express his hostility, reiterate the threats against women, children and the elderly in the refugee camps of the south of Lebanon and deny the Palestinians their right to self-determination and to a return to their homes.

36. The colonial arrogance always deeply rooted in the minds of the advocates of Zionism does not allow them to conceive of means other than the use of force and oppression in responding to the voice of justice.

37. And now Israel, after having expelled the Palestinian people from its land and harassed its representatives, directs the worst kind of calumnies at them by calling them terrorists.

38. To listen to the Israeli representative, the PLO is but a group of terrorists having no other goal than that of shedding innocent blood. Such allegations no longer surprise us, as we have heard them from colonial forces when speaking of national liberation movements in countries of Africa, Asia and elsewhere.

39. How many nationalist leaders tried and condemned on the basis of such accusations are today leading the destinies of their people, while the colonial countries, having regained their senses, have had to recognize these very same formerly persecuted leaders as the only valid spokesmen, with whom they have established relations.

40. Who is the terrorist? He who has come bearing an olive branch, appealing for peace, reaffirming his respect for the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, or he who persists in distorting the truth and falsifying history, and who threatens to continue his criminal acts and to trample underfoot the principles of our Charter?

41. No one can have forgotten the massacre of Deir Yassin, the assassination of the United Nations Mediator Count Bernadotte, the shooting down of a Libyan civilian aircraft, the attack of Abou Zaabal, the constant acts of aggression against Lebanon and so many other acts of State terrorism, which gave rise to indignation and condemnation throughout the world. It is certainly not for a State built on terrorism, a State that has developed through terrorism and has adopted terrorism as a State doctrine, to level such accusations against a liberation movement struggling to realize the aspirations of its people to freedom and dignity. If the Palestinian people has resorted to armed struggle, it is for the only purpose of opposing repression, protecting life and property, and defending its just cause.

42. The situation in Palestine is no different from that of the countries which suffered from foreign occupation and freed themselves after a long struggle. Mr. Yasser Arafat recalled to us the various stages by which Zionist colonialism was enabled to seize Palestine and to expel its people by force.

43. There is no example of this more painful than that of South Africa, where Africans are enduring the most appalling sufferings, after having had their rights taken by the colonialists, and being scattered in reserves. The fate of the Palestinian people is even worse because the only objective of Zionist colonialism was and still is to seize all of Palestine by provoking other Palestinian Arabs, through persecution, to leave the area.

44. In March 1946, President Bourguiba gave an analysis of colonialism in Palestine in his testimony before the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry investigating the Palestine question. He said:

“All the characteristics of colonialism have come into play in this case: occupation and domination by force of a territory by a foreign minority, a degree of force used by the usurper which is obviously out of proportion to the resistance of an economically and socially weak and under-developed people, the essentially selfish character of the demands of the colonizer on the fallacious pretext that the right to living space justifies all forms of aggression, and tribute exacted for the realization of its objectives.”

Subsequent events have confirmed the aptness and the truth of this analysis, made by a man who suffered under colonialism and its methods and who nevertheless did not hesitate to establish frank and friendly co-operation with France as soon as the latter gave proof of its sincere will to liberate itself from the actions of the past. To the extent that he suffered imprisonment and exile during the time of struggle, he was all the more respected and esteemed by the French leaders as soon as the spirit of hegemony and domination yielded to equality of rights in relations between the two countries.

45. But Israel refuses any dialogue and flouts the noble principles of the international community.

46. How can we trust the words of its representative when he declares that his country is ready to negotiate with Jordan, when for more than seven years Israel has made use of delaying tactics in order to avoid evacuating the occupied Arab territories. Did not the Jarring Mission and the good offices of the committee of African “wise men” fail in their attempts to convince the leaders of Israel of the need to comply with United Nations decisions and withdraw their forces from the West Bank of the Jordan, the Sinai and the Golan Heights?

47. A year has elapsed since the October war, and Israel has hardly changed its attitude or drawn any lesson from the past. Quite the contrary: its arrogance and stubbornness have increased, and it is preparing for a fifth war in order to consolidate its territorial gains. When Palestinians and Jordanians agree to restore the Palestinian identity under the direction of the PLO, the representative of Israel sees no other solution for the Palestinian people than its integration into Jordan. As regards the return of the Palestinians to their homes, in keeping with the United Nations

resolutions adopted since December 1948, there is no place for that in the logic of Israel and far less any question of these people exercising the right to self-determination in their own land. The demonstrations conducted by the Palestinians on the West Bank for almost one week are proof that Israel has failed to isolate the population of the West Bank from the national movement. These demonstrations prove also that the Palestinian people are united, wherever they are, with the PLO because their goals are the same. The Palestinian people is a reality that Israel will have to recognize sooner or later, however stubbornly it tries to ignore that reality at present. Israel will eventually have to recognize this reality and to act accordingly. We know that the Palestinian people is united under the PLO. The Palestinian people has its identity, and this is a reality Israel will have to recognize. Israel will have to take that reality into account and will have to act on that basis.

48. It has been said that the seventh Conference of Arab Heads of State, held at Rabat, in recognizing the PLO as the only representative of the Palestinian people, has complicated the situation. That is an allegation without foundation in our view. Quite the contrary is true. Such a decision has only enshrined a reality incontestable in the eyes of the world. It is necessary to clarify and consolidate the situation in order to encourage an equitable solution. This is precisely what the heads of the Arab States intended, as they are persuaded that the Palestinian people has the right to assume its responsibilities, express its aspirations and hopes and define its position in complete liberty through its legal organization. Thus, the problem is clearly before us, all ambiguities having been dispelled. Does not any peaceful solution rest on the basis of this reality, taking into account and guaranteeing the rights of the Palestinian people to return to their lands, to self-determination, to independence and sovereignty? Any search for peace that ignores this fact is doomed to failure. This is the new situation, resulting inevitably from the struggle of the Palestinian people, which the international community recognizes today.

49. Just as yesterday it was not possible not to take account of the dialogue with the National Liberation Front of Algeria, the Néo-Destour of Tunisia, the Kenyan African National Union [KANU] and the Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, today it is not possible not to follow the same path to settle the Middle East crisis, which has persisted for more than 25 years.

50. The PLO has proved its capacity to assume its responsibilities both nationally and internationally. Yasser Arafat was right when he said:

"The PLO has earned its legitimacy because of the sacrifice inherent in its pioneering role, and also because of its dedicated leadership of the struggle. It has also been granted this legitimacy by the Palestinian masses, which in harmony with it have chosen it to lead the struggle according to its directives. The PLO has also gained its legitimacy by representing every faction, union or group as well as every Palestinian talent, either in the National Council or in people's institutions. . . ." [2282nd meeting, para. 63.]

51. The international community recognized this legitimacy when, by an overwhelming majority, it decided to invite the PLO to participate in our debates. There is no doubt that it is only a question of time before countries which did not vote in favour of that proposal will bring their position into line with the present reality. In any case, the PLO is the party directly concerned in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

52. As for the underlying principles of peace, the United Nations resolutions constitute an international legal order, which Israel has ignored, even though Israel would not have been able to exist had it not been created by the United Nations at the expense of Palestine and the Palestinian people. But the Zionist leaders have been publicizing their ingratitude vis-à-vis the United Nations by flouting its recommendations and resolutions.

53. The history of the United Nations knows of no examples of the flouting and flagrant violations of the principles of the Charter other than those of which Israel has been guilty since its creation. Moreover, has Zionist propaganda not alleged that the United Nations is bowing to the third world and doing its bidding? Such is the strategy used by Israel to shirk its responsibility towards the United Nations, mislead public opinion and distort the truth.

54. We urge Israel to implement all United Nations resolutions, whether they were prior to or after the 1960s, when the United Nations was strengthened by States that had recently freed themselves from the colonial yoke, whom Israel fears because of their attachment to universal principles. The United Nations resolutions consecrated the Palestinian identity that Israel is trying to abolish. Christians, Muslims and Jews have co-existed in Palestine since time immemorial, until zionism sowed hatred and racism—zionism, which represents the most abject racism, similar to the *apartheid* practised in South Africa. There is no doubt that that racist doctrine will collapse and it is then that Israel will free itself of its superiority complex. Within Israeli society there are signs that very soon Muslims, Christians and Jews will co-exist again in Palestine.

55. The international community has become increasingly aware of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. A Tunisian poet, Abou El-Kassim El-Chabbi, has said:

"When a people aspires to life, it forces the hand of fate.

Just as day follows night, it will break its shackles."

56. World public opinion, so long misled by Israeli propaganda, has today become increasingly aware of the enormity of the injustice visited upon the Palestinian people and the urgent need to return to the principles of justice. This awareness is a great victory over the forces of evil that have tried to bury a people alive, as indeed it is a victory for the United Nations, for whose principles Israel has tried to substitute the law of the jungle. It is a victory for peoples struggling for their dignity and freedom.

57. The Chairman of the PLO came bearing an olive branch. He asked that the olive branch not be allowed to fall from his hand. Let us try to prevent this, let us ensure that he does not despair, let us not

leave him with no choice but armed struggle, with all the consequences it would have for the region as well as for international peace and security. Let us heed this appeal of a martyred people, who are nevertheless filled with charity and free from any anger. Let us try to help build a better future for this land where a people believing in God and seeking universal values is living.

58. Mr. KELANI (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): On behalf of the Syrian Arab Republic and its President, I should like to express sincere condolences to the Government and delegation of Ireland on the death of the President of Ireland.

59. The cause of Palestine is once again being discussed in the United Nations, and so it is that this issue has again emerged in the very setting in which it came up for the first time 27 years ago. The Palestinian people has suffered much because zionism, imperialism and Israel have plotted against Palestine and because they have tried to avoid the issue of Palestine, believing that in so doing they could wipe away any traces of the Palestinian question except, of course, the human traces represented by the problem of the refugees.

60. Year after year that problem is discussed in the United Nations and the Organization invites various Member States to come to the assistance of the Palestinians expelled from their homeland. If the question of Palestine is being discussed today, if the entire scope of all its elements is being discussed—the whole tragedy that has existed ever since the Balfour Declaration—it is because today we are aware of the responsibility of the United Nations, and of the General Assembly in particular, to the people of Palestine and its problems.

61. The present situation of the Palestinians, who have been victims ever since 1947, is one in which the basic principles of the United Nations have been violated. That has happened because the United Nations and the General Assembly created Israel. In 1947, when the United Nations had existed for only two years, it was faced with this issue, and now, almost a quarter of a century later, we can say that the issue, as it has been discussed in the United Nations, in a sense reflects the very tragedy of the United Nations itself.

62. In accordance with the Charter and the humanitarian principles of justice, the Palestinian question must now be discussed in a new context. The General Assembly must learn some lessons from what it has gone through for more than a quarter of a century. That is, perhaps, particularly true because the Palestinian question is the only matter the General Assembly has ever discussed at such length.

63. There has been much suffering, and doubtless the problem poses a real threat to international peace and security. From 1947 to 1973, a period of 26 years, the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Commission on Human Rights, the Economic and Social Council, WHO and UNESCO adopted a total of 289 resolutions, 67 of which concerned the rights of the Palestinian people. Those figures may not be entirely accurate, but I can say they do not include the many resolutions adopted by a number of international conferences and specialized agencies.

64. The sum and substance of the Palestinian issue is, after all, all the rights of a people, from the right

to exist to the right to self-determination. It is only natural that zionism and Israel should deny the Palestinian people its rights, for had they not done so zionism could not have created Israel as the first stage in the over-all plan to seize control of the entire Middle East. Israel's ambitions are not confined to what has been done so far. We are familiar with Zionist doctrine. We are familiar with its policies, which shed considerable light on the ambitions of zionism. For the past 27 years we have had much evidence of its ambitions. The dialogue we are entering into today on the question of Palestine is but a way of opposing those Zionist ambitions.

65. I do not wish to take up the time of the Assembly by discussing Israel's doctrine and Israel's thinking, but if we are to understand thoroughly how Israel was created through expansion, terror, the expulsion of the Palestinian people and the settling in Palestine of foreigners from all over the world instead of the people who belong there, one need only mention three documents.

66. On 10 May 1973, the newspaper *Yediot Achronot* published a statement by Moshe Dayan, the then Minister of Defence, in which he said that Israel had been created at the expense of the Arab. He said:

"We did not come and settle in a vacant, empty land. The land had been inhabited by Arabs, and today we are settling Jews where Arabs lived before. We are changing an Arab country into a Jewish country."

Moshe Dayan made another statement, published by the *Jerusalem Post* on 30 September 1968, in which he said:

"We are trying everywhere to possess the land. We are settling Jewish elements. The inhabitants of the land have been deprived of their rights. The Arabs do not approve of our acts, but if we wish to pursue our action on Israeli soil against their will, then we need only annihilate them. Our destiny in fact requires that we be at war with the Arabs."

The third document from which I should like to quote is an article written by Ian Gilmour, the Minister of Defence of the United Kingdom. It was published in *The Times* and quoted by *Yediot Achronot* on 28 January 1974:

"The expansion of Israel, by occupying Arab lands, is a fact which has emerged from Zionist doctrine. Those who expect zionism not to expand territorially are very much like those who feel that the water will not run off. The expulsion of the Arabs, the settling of Israelis, is a plan which has been carried out in minute detail."

67. The existence of the Palestinian people has alarmed the Israeli and Zionist leadership. They wish to deny the existence of the Palestinian people and they have said that Palestine was a land without people. So it was that Israel started successive wars, which every one is well familiar with, all in an attempt to realize one of their aims, the aim of making people forget entirely the tragedy of the Palestinian people, the aim also of including the name of the Palestinian people in the list of those peoples who indeed no longer exist. But the facts of history are there regardless of what Israel claims, regardless of what the imperialist and Zionist Powers say.

68. The Palestinian people have resisted the injustices of which they have been the victims for many long years, all in the hopes that the resolutions of the General Assembly will ultimately be implemented. Israel and the imperialist forces supporting it are obstructing the will of the international community. That is why the people of Palestine have proclaimed their revolution, the aim of which is to recover their rights, of which they have been deprived, over their land, a land which belongs to them and to no one else.

69. The position of the people of Palestine, as regards their rights, has been unequivocal from the beginning of this century, as shown in the various stages of the struggle of the people of Palestine. Ever since the creation of the Zionist movement in 1897 right up to the First World War, the people of Palestine have had doubts about Jewish immigration. In the second stage, that is, from the end of the First World War until the creation of Israel in 1948, the people of Palestine were well aware of the danger of the alliance between Zionism and colonialism symbolized in the Balfour Declaration. The Palestinian people rose up then to defend their homeland against Zionism and colonialism.

70. So it was that Palestine became the arena for an unrelenting Arab struggle. So it was that the Palestinians had to resort to arms to recover their rights and their lands. So it was that in 1920, 1921, 1929, 1933 and until 1936 a number of revolutions broke out in Palestine, which continued right until the beginning of the Second World War. After the end of the Second World War, when the determination of Zionism created its usurping State, the Palestinian people, in 1947, threw itself into a fight against British and Zionist imperialism.

71. The people of Palestine did not confine themselves to those measures which showed their determination to assert their rights. They resorted to what was in a sense a negative action, for they refused to sell their land and refused to acquiesce in what Zionism wished at the time to force on them.

72. So it was that, during 30 years of British occupation, for that entire period when Zionist settlements were encouraged, Zionism put a plan slowly but surely into effect. As the General Assembly knows, the Palestinians refused to sell their land to the Jews. The statistics published by the British Government have proved that the area of the land obtained by Zionists since 1920, at a time when Zionist acquisitions were beginning to be recorded, up to 1948, when the Arabs were forced to leave their country, was less than 4 per cent of the entire area of Palestine. Part of the land that became Jewish property was land that had been sold by non-Palestinian, non-Arab owners.

73. Hence, ever since the creation of Israel, the Palestinian people have been dispossessed of all they owned. Palestinian resistance and the sacrifices made over more than 30 years were not able to prevent a national catastrophe. The Palestinian people then became a people of refugees, victims of imprisonment and of oppression. And today, part of the Palestinian people are subjected to occupation, whereas the rest of the Palestinians are refugees.

74. So today the Palestinians have decided to take the initiative, to defend their homeland, to defend their national rights, resorting to all means, resorting to

force as much as to words and actions. The representative of the PLO has only recently set forth their cause. Now the PLO has spoken to the General Assembly from this rostrum and that is because the Palestinian people, through the PLO, have continued to resist and to defend their rights.

75. The revolutionary momentum that has been much in evidence in Jordan recently, and has also led to a very serious situation, is such that the Palestinian people in Jerusalem rose up and opposed the Jewish army. That proves the determination of the people of Palestine to win their freedom and gain their independence, giving unwavering support to the PLO. The Palestinian people who are fighting lawfully and justly, because they have been deprived of their rights, act in accordance with the same logic as the Jewish terrorist Menachem Begin who said, "I struggle, therefore I exist". The Palestinian people have been struggling and have been active in a just struggle, therefore they exist.

76. Israel must make a choice between two things: either it must recognize all the rights of the Palestinians, all their rights and all that that entails in terms of consequences; or it must continue to suffer the consequences of maintaining a myth, a legend, continue to force the Palestinians into exile and to deprive them of their rights; in that case, it must accept the consequences of its actions and of that exile.

77. The Palestinian people, like every other people of the entire world, has inalienable rights—rights set forth unambiguously in the United Nations Charter, in international conventions, declarations and commitments, including General Assembly resolutions. The Palestinians have rights, which are set forth in the Charter and recognized by international law and in the many documents and resolutions of the United Nations.

78. Those rights, whether those of Palestine or the people of Palestine, may be described as follows: fundamental, inalienable rights—rights that cannot be denied or usurped; the right to equality—equality with all other peoples; the right to self-determination in Palestine, the land of the Palestinians; the right to freedom and national liberation; the right to sovereignty, sovereignty over the Palestinian homeland, and the right to national independence; the right to return to one's home; human rights and fundamental freedoms; civil, political and religious rights; economic rights; social and cultural rights; the right to Palestinian nationhood; the right to private property; the right to compensation for properties seized or forcefully expropriated; the rights of Palestinians in Palestine; the right to seek all forms of moral and material assistance to be able finally to exercise the right to self-determination; the right to struggle by all means to assert one's right to self-determination, and, like all other peoples that have suffered from colonialism, to exercise one's right to self-determination.

79. These are inalienable rights; they constitute the very essence of the Palestinian problem. The denial of these rights has been the root cause of the conflict between the Arabs and the Israelis. I shall not discuss all these rights, but I should like to touch on a few of them.

80. These rights have been successively violated, the first violation having been the Balfour Declaration, made by Britain in 1917, in which it promised to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine, provided that the Jewish national rights did not violate the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish Groups in Palestine. That Declaration was the very basis of the problem, and it has no legal value; for Britain in making that promise had no right to do so—no sovereignty whatsoever over Palestine.

81. Furthermore, from the point of view of international law, Britain could not grant what it did not possess to those who did not have any right to it. The proportion of Jews in Palestine at the time was 8 per cent of the total, mostly Arab, population, and the Jews had but 2.5 per cent of the land in Palestine.

82. The King-Crane Commission concluded that that was an unlawful violation. That Commission, appointed by President Wilson, was sent to Palestine to investigate the wishes of the population. In its report, published on 29 June 1919, it stated, among other things:

“For ‘a national home for the Jewish people’ is not equivalent to making Palestine into a Jewish State; nor can the erection of such a Jewish State be accomplished without the gravest trespass upon the ‘civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine’.”¹

83. That Commission also declared that it was not possible to implement the Balfour Declaration, because the conditions necessary for a Jewish homeland did not exist and, accordingly, the Declaration had no value.

84. Nevertheless, the British Government tried on a number of occasions to respect the will of the Arab population. In the White Paper of May 1939, it is stated that His Majesty's Government believed that the framers of the Mandate in which the Balfour Declaration was embodied could not have intended that Palestine should be converted into a Jewish State against the will of the Arab population of the country.²

85. That document and those commitments have neither been forgotten nor abandoned. These are facts that must be recognized and borne in mind when one considers the issue of the rights of the Palestinian people.

86. Towards the end of the 1960s the United Nations began to perceive the scope of the tragedy of the Palestinian people as a result of the Palestinian people having been overlooked and deprived of their rights. In 1969, the United Nations broke the first link in that chain of the imperialist-zionist plot: a resolution [2535 B (XXIV)] was adopted on 10 December, at the twenty-fourth session, when the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East³ was being considered. In that resolution the General Assembly recognized “that the problem of the Palestine Arab refugees has arisen from the denial of their inalienable rights under the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”—and I stress “inalienable rights”. That was the first declaration made by the United Nations to the effect that the Palestinian people was not merely a

group of refugees but a people possessing certain inalienable rights.

87. What were those inalienable rights recognized for the first time in 1969 by the United Nations? In 1970, the United Nations spelled out those rights in greater detail when it adopted resolution 2672 C (XXV). The text of that resolution sets forth with the greatest clarity the rights of the people of Palestine. In it, the General Assembly, after recalling its resolution 2535 B (XXIV), and after having emphasized the need to recognize “the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples enshrined in Articles 1 and 55 of the Charter and reaffirmed in the Declaration on the Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations [resolution 2625 (XXV)]”, recognized “that the people of Palestine were entitled to equal rights and self-determination in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations”. This is extremely important, because it relates to Article 1 of the Charter concerning the purposes and principles of the Organization. The text of the resolution also stressed the need to respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination. In that Declaration, the Assembly laid down the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples as part of the entire process of achieving world peace.

88. In the same year, the General Assembly also adopted resolution 2628 (XXV), after it had discussed the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East”. Paragraph 3 of that resolution

“Recognizes that respect for the rights of the Palestinians is an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.”

That recognition by the General Assembly was significant, since it was part of the process of dealing with the entire problem of the Middle East. The Assembly stressed the need to respect the rights of the Palestinian people in order that peace could be maintained in the area.

89. Another resolution adopted in the same year, resolution 2649 (XXV), confirmed what was said in the foregoing resolutions. It made it clear that the problem of Palestine was a problem also of colonialism. It stated, in effect, that the struggle of the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination was a legitimate struggle against foreign colonialism. The General Assembly stressed, in its resolution 2787 (XXVI) in 1971, that the struggle of peoples to throw off colonial and foreign domination and alien subjugation, particularly in southern Africa, as well as that of the Palestinian people, was a legitimate struggle that should be recognized and should be waged by all available means consistent with the Charter.

90. In resolution 2792 D (XXVI), also in 1971, the General Assembly recalled its previous resolutions on the subject and expressed grave concern at the fact that the people of Palestine had still not been permitted to enjoy their inalienable rights and to exercise their right to self-determination. Thus, the Assembly confirmed the right of the Palestinian people to recover what the usurpers had taken away from them.

91. In 1973, the General Assembly again confirmed its previous resolutions. Furthermore, it stated that

there was another condition that had to be met if the Palestinian people were to be able to exercise their right to self-determination. It stated that there was a relationship between the right to self-determination and the right of the people to return to their homeland. In paragraph 3 of resolution 3089 D (XXVIII), the Assembly stated that

“... the enjoyment by the Palestine Arab refugees of their right to return to their homes and property, recognized by the General Assembly in resolution 194 (III) ... is indispensable for the achievement of a just settlement of the refugee problem and for the exercise by the people of Palestine of its right to self-determination.”

92. What I have said applies to past years. This year, the recognition of the rights of the Palestinians has soared, as it were, for the General Assembly decided at this session to inscribe on its agenda a special item on the question of Palestine. In resolution 3210 (XXIX) it recognized that the Palestinian people is the principal party to the question of Palestine and that that people is represented by a responsible organization, the Palestine Liberation Organization, which should be allowed to express its aspirations in the Assembly. The decision was taken that the PLO should participate in our debates, that it was the legal body through which the Palestinians should exercise their rights under the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

93. If it has finally been recognized that the Palestinians have these inalienable rights and if a factor in that recognition has been the struggle of the Palestinians, a tribute must be paid to the thousands of persons who shed their blood for that cause. Despite the conspiracy mounted against the Palestinian question, despite the attempts to drown the question with minor problems, despite the fact that for 22 years the question was treated as a question of refugees, it has now been recognized that the Palestinian people have rights, rights they have never renounced.

94. There are many United Nations documents attesting to that fact. In successive annual reports submitted to the General Assembly by the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, stress is laid on the fact that the Palestinians continue to feel allegiance to Palestine, the land from which they were expelled, and that they have never renounced either their homeland or their rights. I shall confine myself to quoting the following excerpt from the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization, submitted to the General Assembly at its twenty-second session by U Thant, who was the Secretary-General at that time:

“... people everywhere, and this certainly applies to the Palestinian refugees, have a natural right to be in their homeland and to have a future.”⁴

95. The Palestinian people, who were the victims of a particular type of colonialism, were uprooted and expelled from their homes. Their right to return therefore has particular importance. It is a right for which they have struggled, especially since the United Nations recognized that right and accorded it priority in its documents. On 11 December 1948, the Assembly adopted resolution 194 (III), dealing, among other things, with the legal aspects of the refugee problem,

and the rights of the refugees. Since then, it has adopted many resolutions confirming that resolution, setting forth the mandates of the Conciliation Commission and of UNRWA, dealing with economic plans to provide work for the refugees, and so forth. All those texts have stressed paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III).

96. The discussion of the problem of refugees is doubtless of great importance, but the right to repatriation is of even more importance. It is a right that was stressed time and again between 1949 and 1973. In that period, the Assembly adopted 27 resolutions, all stressing paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III). Thus, for 27 years, the General Assembly has constantly referred to this right to repatriation. It has never been a right linked to other conditions. However, Israel, in order to prevent the Palestinians from exercising that right, has maintained its right to confiscate the properties of Palestinians. In that respect, three laws were promulgated between 1948 and 1949: the law on abandoned land, the law on vacant houses and the law on property. Those laws have prevented the Palestinians from returning. An examination of the right to repatriation within the context of the right of the Palestinians to their properties has great importance in view of the injustice done to the Palestinian people.

97. However, the official statistics published by the British Government, which was then the administering Power, and submitted to the United Nations show that in 1947 the Jews owned only 5.6 per cent of the total land in Palestine. The report containing that document includes a map showing the lands owned by Arabs and by Jews in each region. Yet Israeli expansionism has managed by invasion, aggression and occupation to increase the percentage of land owned by the Jews from 5.6 per cent in 1947 to 71 per cent of the area of Palestine in 1949. In conformity with laws it has enacted, Israel has taken the liberty of confiscating Palestinian properties, both movable property and real estate; they also seized other Arab lands whether their owners were living there or had become refugees. I will give an example of the grave injustice suffered by the Palestinians: 370 new Israeli colonies were created between 1948 and 1953, 350 of which were created on the lands of what are called absentee Arabs.

98. According to both ancient and modern historical documents, the rights of the Palestinians to their land, Palestine, are clearly attested to from the historic and legal standpoint. Those rights have been violated by Israel through several means.

99. First comes the Israeli refusal to implement the United Nations resolutions confirming these rights; it has more than once been stated that Arabs have to accept the fait accompli of Israel's conquest. However, between 1947 and 1974 there have been several faits accomplis, all aimed at destroying these rights or at considering them obsolete, in other words, they may be spoken of as a part of history, but they cannot be re-established nor is there any question of a struggle to exercise them. But we wonder, if the fait accompli became the basis for international law and relations among peoples, what would the world situation amount to?

100. I do not want to engage in a legal discussion, but I should like to just say that jurists have said that a fait accompli can never be a precedent recognized by

international law, as long as the victims of that fait accompli do not accept it and as long as they oppose it, for a Government imposed by force or founded on force cannot cancel a right. An invasion can never give the invader a legal right to possess a land by force.

101. I shall quote the following from Philip Marshall Brown's book *Sovereignty in Exile*, published in 1941:

"Occupation in itself is illegal and it cannot amount to possession of a land. A people has sovereignty even if this sovereignty has been diminished or curtailed for a period of time."

102. The fait accompli by Israel can never do away with Palestinian rights, with the right of the Palestinian people who have opposed the fait accompli. Sometimes they have even engaged in a revolution resulting in the shedding of blood. Arab countries have struggled against this fait accompli in four wars, and the United Nations has opposed it by adopting almost 300 resolutions in 27 years. In continuing to deny this fait accompli, in refusing to accept it, the Palestinian people are engaging in an unrelenting struggle, a bitter struggle which is the very source of the Arab-Israeli conflict. That is why the Arab-Israeli conflict can only be resolved when the Palestinian problem, which lies at its base, is solved.

103. It should be said that total respect for the inalienable rights of the Palestinians and their exercise of those rights are essential for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, taking into account the fact that the Palestinians are a party directly concerned, an essential party to this peace.

104. The history of Palestine since the end of the First World War until 1974, and particularly since 1947, reveals to us the tragedy of a people exiled in the course of four wars, a people which has undergone many sufferings. This tragedy invites us to assume our responsibilities and to establish a just and lasting peace, since this is a people which has an inalienable right to self-determination without foreign intervention. It has to exercise its right to its national independence and sovereignty, as well as its right to see all its lands returned to its children, lands from which they were expelled in 1947. The exercise of these rights is essential to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its right to self-determination. To build peace in the Middle East, there are two essential pillars, two parts of a unique, indivisible whole. First, the Palestinian people should exercise its rights. Secondly, Israel should withdraw from all occupied territories.

105. Mr. PUNTSAGNOROV (Mongolia) (*Interpretation from Russian*): Before beginning my statement I should like to express our profound condolences to the delegation of Ireland on the death of the President of Ireland.

106. The Mongolian delegation would like first of all to welcome most sincerely the representatives of the Arab people of Palestine present and participating for the first time in a United Nations debate on a problem of vital importance to their people. We consider that the invitation to the representatives of the PLO to this session of the General Assembly is a significant event. It will contribute to the efforts aimed at the creation of a realistic and reasonable basis for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

107. The Mongolian People's Republic attaches great importance to the consideration at this session of the General Assembly of one of the key problems of the Middle East crisis—the Palestine question. It is noteworthy that this question is being considered at a time when certain promising developments have taken place in the situation in the Middle East, developments that are in turn closely connected with general positive steps in the international arena. A definite move has been made away from war and towards peace; agreement has been reached on the disengagement of troops, which creates favourable conditions for a political settlement of the Middle East conflict. It is well known that the main problems as regards such a settlement concern the complete liberation of all the Arab territories occupied by Israel and the guaranteeing of the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. However, it is of some concern to us that Israel is attempting to avoid solutions to these vital problems, to confine action to half-measures and to reverse the emerging positive trends. Israel's feverish build-up of its military potential, the persistent military provocations against the sovereignty of Lebanon, the annexationist statements and threats of Israeli officials against the Arab States and the increase in tension on their borders attest to the fact that Israeli ruling circles intend to continue on their dangerous course of expansionism.

108. In view of all this, a situation that threatens to lead to a new explosion continues to prevail in the Middle East. The attempt to annex Arab lands and to perpetuate the flagrant injustice towards the Arab people of Palestine undermines the very basis on which normal relations could be established between Israel and its neighbours. In the past quarter of a century, as a result of this aggressive policy of Israeli circles, encouraged by imperialist forces, four wars have broken out. Each new war has been more widespread and destructive, has claimed more victims and has had a greater negative impact on the whole international atmosphere. As a result of these wars, many thousands of people have perished and two million Palestinians have been expelled from their national homeland. This is a crime for which the Zionists of Israel are not alone responsible; responsibility lies also with those who condone the aggression and granted, and continue to grant, political, financial and military support to the Israeli militarists.

109. I should like to emphasize that the fate of the Arab people of Palestine is not of concern to the Arab countries only. No impartial person of any nationality can remain indifferent to the tragedy that has been visited upon an entire people. The actions of Israel against the Arab people of Palestine are a serious defiance of principles that are the very corner-stone of contemporary international relations and the noble aims of the United Nations. That is why the elimination of the consequences of Israeli aggression acquires universal significance and will have a favourable impact on the improvement of the international atmosphere. As developments show, the situation has changed perceptibly in favour of the just cause of the Arab peoples and to the detriment of the underhand intrigues of the occupying forces and the imperialist forces that support them and try to undermine the progressive development of the Arab world.

110. A proof of this is the increased activity of the national liberation movements of the Arab people of Palestine and the growing unity, solidarity, and co-operation among Arab States, as well as the results of the Seventh Arab Summit Conference, held at Rabat,⁵ which reaffirmed the right of the Arab people of Palestine to create an independent national authority under the leadership of the PLO. The liberation struggle of the Arab peoples is resolutely supported by the socialist and other peace-loving States. The course of militarism and war can only increase the international isolation of Israel. Constructive negotiations among the parties concerned in a spirit of realism, statesmanlike wisdom and far-sightedness on the part of all participants are the only means of settling the Middle East problem. The implementation of this reasonable alternative depends in large measure on Israel. Inevitably, sooner or later, the rulers of Israel will have to recognize that the Palestine question is first and foremost a political problem.

111. An important role in organizing the struggle to achieve the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine is played by the PLO, which is one of the arms of the national liberation movement of the Arab people of Palestine. The wide international recognition of the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine means the failure of the attempt of the Zionists to discredit that movement. The attempts of Israel, despite the political reality, to ignore the rights of the Arab people of Palestine have been deservedly rebuffed in the General Assembly by the representatives of Arab and other States. The welcome accorded by the General Assembly to the leader of the resistance movement of the Arab people of Palestine, Yasser Arafat, as well as the prior invitation to his delegation to participate in the present session, is eloquent proof of the increased authority of that organization.

112. The Mongolian people, a people which conquered and consolidated its national independence in a bitter struggle with foreign occupiers, imperialist aggressors, fully understands the purposes and ideals of the liberation struggles of the Arab people of Palestine and the peoples of other Arab countries.

113. Mongolia, together with the countries of the socialist community, firmly and resolutely supports the struggle of the Arab peoples. The position of Mongolia on the question of Palestine is reflected particularly in the joint communiqué on the Mongolian-Yugoslav talks conducted during the recent visit to Yugoslavia of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and the Chairman of the Presidium of the Great People's Khural of the Mongolian People's Republic, Mr. Tsendenbal, a communiqué which states that a full and just settlement in the Middle East is possible only on the basis of the full realization of the legitimate and national rights of the Arab people of Palestine and in the spirit of the well-known resolutions of the United Nations and the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries presupposing the right to self-determination, including the right to the creation of an independent State.

114. We consider that the United Nations is duty bound to further effectively the settlement of the Middle East conflict in order to achieve the implemen-

tation of the resolutions of the Security Council stipulating the measures to be taken in the interest of the security of all States of this region. It is high time to resume the work of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, which has already set the beginnings of a dialogue among the parties to the Middle East conflict. This international body should, in negotiations, discuss the problem in all its aspects and in the interest of its radical solution.

115. The fate of the Arab people of Palestine cannot of course be discussed, much less decided, without the direct participation of its representatives. The PLO must be represented at the Geneva Peace Conference on an equal footing with its other participants.

116. We welcome the recent statement by the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference—the USSR and the United States—in which they supported the speedy resumption of the work of the Conference.⁶

117. Our delegation expresses the hope that the debate on the question of Palestine at this session of the General Assembly will make a contribution to settling the conflict and establishing a lasting peace in the Middle East.

118. Mr. HUANG Hua (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): First of all, the Chinese delegation would like to express a warm welcome to the delegation of the PLO who have come to attend the session. We have listened attentively to the speech delivered at the plenary meeting by Mr. Arafat, Chairman of the PLO. His speech has reflected the just voice of the millions of Palestinian people and their determination to wage a persistent struggle for the restoration of their national rights.

119. On the initiative of the Arab countries, the current session of the General Assembly, having decided to consider the question of Palestine at plenary meetings, also decided by an overwhelming majority to invite the PLO to participate in the deliberations as the representative of the Palestinian people [*resolution 3210 (XXIX)*]. This was a decision of great historic importance. This is the first time in the history of the United Nations that the General Assembly is discussing the question of Palestine as an important political question under a separate item and that the representatives of the Palestinian people have been invited to the General Assembly as the principal party directly concerned with the question. This is the result of the persistent struggle of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and the result of the mutual support and assistance of the third-world countries in the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and hegemony. It provides one more proof that the world situation is undergoing profound changes. The third-world countries are playing an ever greater role in international affairs. The days are gone forever when one or two super-Powers could arbitrarily manipulate the United Nations and control this international forum.

120. The origin of the so-called question of Palestine dates from a distant period. The Middle East, embracing Palestine, has long been an important scene of rivalry among the imperialist Powers for hegemony. As early as the beginning of the First World War, the Palestinian and other Arab peoples started the movement for national liberation. At the same time, the then imperialist Powers began to foster zionism for the

purpose of realizing their scheme of repressing the Arab national liberation movement and carving up the Middle East. In 1948, the imperialists artificially created the State of Israel to be planted as a dagger in the heart of the Arab world. Thereafter, the Israeli Zionists, supported and abetted by imperialism, have incessantly committed acts of aggression and expansion against Palestine and the Arab countries and launched several large-scale wars of aggression within the short space of two decades. They evicted over a million Palestinian people who had lived in their homeland for generations, plunging those people into the dire misery of being homeless and destitute over a long period. Furthermore, they invaded and occupied large tracts of Arab territories, inflicting untold sufferings on the countries and peoples concerned.

121. As is known to all, after the Second World War the United States replaced the influence of the old-line imperialists in the Middle East. Later, the socialist Soviet Union degenerated into social-imperialism. In order to contend for world hegemony, these two super-Powers have been stepping up their rivalry for spheres of influence in the Middle East, which is strategically important and rich in oil resources. One of the super-Powers has long used Israel as its tool for expansion in the Middle East. Openly declaring that it is "committed" to Israel, it is sending an enormous and unceasing supply of sophisticated weapons and economic assistance in brazen support of Israel's aggression and expansion. At times, it also makes overtures of one kind or another, yet, at bottom, it still sides with the Israeli aggressors. The other super-Power, while ostensibly supporting the Arab countries and the Palestinian people, is actually employing reactionary dual tactics. Taking advantage of others' difficulties, it racks its brains to find a way of infiltrating into this region. Through the sale of munitions, it tries to control the source of their supply of arms in addition to extorting privileges and fabulous profits; while at the same time it uses the suspension of arms supply as political blackmail and even resorts to intervention and subversion to force the recipient countries to submit to its policy. In the 1967 war, its activities of betrayal brought setbacks to certain Arab countries.

122. In October last year, when the fight against Israeli aggression had just started, it resorted to the same old trick of obstructing and sabotaging the resistance war of the Arab countries and the Palestinian people against aggression at a critical juncture of the war. On the other hand, it continued to provide Israel with manpower and potential soldiers to bolster up the Israeli Zionists. Not long ago, in a deal with the other super-Power, it further committed itself to multiply the number of emigrants to Israel. Small wonder the chieftains of the Israeli Zionists have gone out of their way to praise this, calling it "perhaps the most wonderful thing that we have heard in the past year". Over a long period, in tune with the other super-Power, it has described the Palestine question as a so-called "problem of refugees" and vilified the persistent armed struggle of the Palestinian people as "riots", in an attempt to wipe out the Palestine liberation cause altogether—all this is a well-known fact. Recently, with the changes in the situation, it has altered its tactics to make itself appear as a most loyal supporter of the Palestine cause. However, in none of the changes of this super-Power has it departed from its ultimate

aim, that is, to maintain a "neither war nor peace" situation in the Middle East for contention with the other super-Power and expansion of its spheres of influence. Its own deeds have revealed the true features of sham support to and real betrayal of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples as characteristic of this super-Power, which styles itself the "natural ally" of the Arab and Palestinian people.

123. In summary, the essence of the Middle East and Palestine questions lies in the Israeli Zionist aggression and the contention between the two super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, for hegemony in the Middle East versus the struggle of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples against aggression and hegemony.

124. Over the past two decades and more, the Palestinian and other Arab peoples have never ceased their fight. Holding aloft the banner of the battle against Zionism, imperialism and hegemonism, they have shed blood, laid down their lives and pressed forward wave upon wave in their heroic and dauntless struggles. They have written a brilliant, indelible and inspiring chapter in the annals of the liberation struggle of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples.

125. In the October war of last year particularly, the Palestinian people, together with the Egyptian, Syrian and other Arab peoples, firmly took up arms to combat the "neither war nor peace" situation imposed on them by the super-Powers, victoriously exploded the myth of Israeli "invincibility" and, through their fighting, obtained excellent results. United against the common enemy, the Arab oil-producing countries used oil as a weapon in their struggle. This just action not only dealt telling blows at Zionism and hegemonism but also opened up a new dimension for the struggle of the third-world countries in defence of national resources against imperialist plunder and exploitation.

126. The situation is developing in a direction more and more favourable to the Palestinian and other Arab peoples, and unfavourable to the super-Powers and Israeli Zionism. Not long ago, the Arab countries held their Seventh Summit Conference at Rabat¹ in an atmosphere of united struggle. The resolution unanimously adopted by the Conference firmly supports the Palestine revolutionary cause and the just struggle of the Palestinian people for the restoration of their national rights. This reflects the further awakening of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and their strong will to uphold unity, persevere in the struggle against Zionism and hegemony, safeguard the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Arab countries and regain the national rights of the Palestinian people. The positive achievements of this Conference have won the praise and support of the third world and all justice-upholding countries and peoples.

127. It is necessary to point out here that, over the years, the United Nations, under the manipulation of the super-Powers, adopted a most unjust attitude on the Palestine question. The United Nations has held many deliberations and adopted numerous resolutions on the Middle East situation and the Palestine question. The one referred to most often is resolution 242 (1967) adopted by the Security Council after the 1967 war. All these resolutions have the common feature of twisting the question of restoration of the

Palestinian people's national rights into a so-called "problem of refugees" with the obvious aim of totally obliterating the sacred national rights of the Palestinian people. It is only natural that this has been categorically rejected by the broad masses of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples. The Chinese people fully support their just position.

128. The Chinese Government and people have always stood on the side of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples who have been subjected to oppression and aggression and firmly support their just struggle. We have never been opposed to the Jewish people. However, we are resolutely opposed to the Zionist policies of expansion and aggression. Ever since the founding of the People's Republic of China we have refused to have any contact with the Israeli Zionists who persist in aggression. We are resolutely against the two super-Powers' contention in the Middle East and against their support and abetting of the Israeli Zionists. We maintain that the United Nations must rectify its past unjust attitude on the Palestine question and adopt a just resolution on this question to recognize the Palestinian people's national rights and support their restoration. In our view, the struggle for the restoration of the Palestinian national rights and the struggle for the recovery of lost Arab territories form an integral whole. In the interest of a real settlement of the Palestine question, the Israeli Zionist aggressors must withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories, the Palestinian people must regain all their national rights; moreover, it is necessary to maintain strict vigilance and firmly oppose all super-Power schemes of aggression, subversion, control and interference against Palestine and the Arab countries and peoples.

129. History is created by the masses of the people. The Arab nation is a great nation. The Palestinian and other Arab peoples are heroic peoples. In the final analysis, the Palestinian people can regain their national rights and the Arab countries can recover their lost territories only by relying on their own close unity and unremitting struggle, with the support of the people of the whole world. We are confident that the Palestinian and other Arab peoples who have been tempered through prolonged struggles, fully utilizing and taking advantage of the current favourable situation, firmly getting rid of super-Power interference and control and strengthening their unity to persevere in all forms of struggle including armed struggle, will certainly win complete victory in their cause of national liberation. All ideas overestimating the enemy's strength and underestimating the people's strength are groundless. The road will be tortuous, yet the future is surely bright.

130. Mr. SIDDIQ (Afghanistan): Allow me at the outset to state that my delegation heard with deep sorrow of the sudden demise of Mr. Omar Sakka, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia. I wish to use this opportunity to offer the sincere condolences and sympathy of my delegation on the passing away of that statesman and diplomat, whom we had the honour of seeing among us once again so recently. May I request the representative of Saudi Arabia to convey our profound sorrow and sympathy to His Majesty King Faisal, the Government and people of Saudi Arabia and the family of the late Minister.

131. On behalf of my delegation, I also wish to convey to the representative of Ireland our heartfelt condolences and sympathy on the occasion of the sudden death of Mr. Erskine Childers, the President of Ireland. I request the representative of Ireland to extend our condolences to the Government and people of Ireland, as well as the family of the late President.

132. My delegation is proud to have been among the first countries to support the inclusion of the item entitled "Question of Palestine" in the agenda of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly in order to deal with this problem in its totality, covering all aspects, historical, political and juridical.

133. Afghanistan was also among the signatory countries of the request that the representatives of the PLO participate in the deliberations on this item as the sole representatives of the people of Palestine, thus recognizing the right of the people of Palestine to present their cause to the United Nations through their duly recognized representatives.

134. The General Assembly has been seized of the problem of Palestine almost since its inception. As a result of the early decisions taken by this body, a great many Palestinians have been displaced from their homeland and forced to live as refugees. As a nation, the Palestinians have been denied the opportunity to exercise their inalienable rights, foremost among which is the cardinal right to self-determination embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

135. The Arab-Israeli conflict is a product of the underlying problems involving Palestine and the struggle waged by the indigenous Palestinian people against colonists who converged from abroad upon an Arab-inhabited country with the intention of transforming it into a Jewish State. The origin of this problem and the root cause of the present conflict, as well as the key to its resolution, rest in this issue.

136. At the crux of the Palestine issue is the fate of a nation and people and their homeland, the dispossession and displacement by force of a great part of the indigenous population of Palestine and the subjugation of the remainder. The problem also involves continuing massive importation of aliens and further colonization of Palestine, together with the seizure of both the national rights and the resources of the people of Palestine and the private property of its individual inhabitants, even to the present time. In other words, the fabric of the native Palestinian nation has been continually eroded and replaced by that of an alien Jewish society transported into the area. The refusal of the Arab world to acquiesce in that attempt to destroy the Palestinian people explains both the bitterness and the persistence of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

137. The Israeli attempt to destroy a people—the Palestinians—constitutes the fundamental difference between this political and military conflict and many other international disputes. As the problem rests on this issue, the Arab-Israeli conflict cannot be resolved unless the national and inalienable rights of the people of Palestine are restored.

138. I do not intend to speak extensively about the genesis and evolution of this conflict. However, a brief résumé of the major events which concern the United Nations role in the origin of this problem can

illuminate the action the United Nations should now take.

139. On 29 November 1947, the General Assembly recommended the partition of Palestine and the creation in that small country of a Jewish State and an Arab State [see resolution 181 (II)]. It also accorded an international *corpus separatum* in Jerusalem and its surrounding villages and towns. The Palestinian people have opposed that decision of the United Nations throughout.

140. In order to be clearly understood, the Palestinian opposition to the recommended partition must be viewed against the background of the following facts.

141. Contrary to the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination, that decision was adopted despite the well-known opposition of the indigenous population. As such, the decision lacks legal and moral validity. That recommendation obviously constituted a clear violation of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. In disregard of fundamental legal and moral fairness and equity, Jews, who owned less than 6 per cent of the total land area of the country, were awarded a State covering more than 50 per cent of it. Furthermore, the proposed Jewish State was to have more Arabs than Jews under its jurisdiction. Finally, less than six months after its adoption, the partition recommendation was suspended by the General Assembly itself. Before that date, when the Israelis invoked the recommendation in unilaterally proclaiming a Jewish State, they realized that the recommendation was not binding. They and pro-partition forces inserted in the draft resolution a paragraph requesting the Security Council to take the measures necessary for the implementation of the recommendation. However, the Council rejected that request.

142. During that legal impasse and the increasing bloodshed in Palestine, the Security Council was entrusted with a temporary trusteeship. That was rebuffed by the Israelis. As a result, a special session of the General Assembly was convened in order to reconsider the partition recommendation and the future Government of Palestine.

143. During this brief period, while the General Assembly was still in the process of debating the future of Palestine, Israelis took matters into their own hands. Defying the second special session of the General Assembly, they occupied not only the area that the partition recommendation had earmarked for the Jewish State but also parts of the area reserved for the Arab State. Their aim was obviously to conquer all of Palestine and drive its indigenous Arab population into mass exile.

144. In the meantime, the British Mandate officially expired. The General Assembly concluded its reconsideration of the entire question by adopting a new resolution, which, in addition to suspending the partition recommendation, also appointed a mediator who would strive to promote a peaceful adjustment of the problem of Palestine. This United Nations Mediator, as all of us here are aware, was slain by Israel.

145. As I stated earlier, the Israeli community unilaterally proclaimed itself a State with sovereignty not only over the area originally allotted to it, but also over the Arab State of Palestine.

146. The Arab countries had no choice but to intervene in an attempt to prevent further Israeli conquest of Palestine. It was at this precise point that the Arab-Israeli conflict was born. Consequently, the former confrontation in Palestine between indigenous Palestinian Arabs and alien immigrants gave way to confrontation between Arab States and Israel.

147. Ever since that juncture, the Arab-Israeli conflict has taken a variety of turns going from war, to peace, to cease-fire, and the truce of 1948. The Armistice Agreements of 1949,⁷ which were breached by Israeli military action, the occupation by Israel of the demilitarized zones, the invasion of Egypt in 1956, and the premeditated war of 1967 launched by Israel against Arab States, mark the history of this conflict. Israel annexed occupied Jerusalem and its hinterland, an action for which it has been censured by the United Nations in both the General Assembly and the Security Council on many occasions.

148. As a result of these series of aggressive acts the Palestinian people have been relegated to the status of refugees, dispossessed and barred from returning to their homes, or they have become civilians living under alien, hostile and repressive military occupation.

149. Although various aspects of the problem of Palestine have been considered by the United Nations during the nearly three decades of the existence of both the problem of Palestine and this world body, none the less the question has not been studied in its true perspective.

150. We believe that the United Nations bears a primary historic, political and juridical responsibility for this problem. The inscription of this item concerning Palestine on the agenda of the General Assembly during this session provides clear testimony to the realization by this world body of its obligations to remedy the injustices perpetrated upon the people of Palestine.

151. My delegation is of the view that no item is more worthy of consideration at this session of the General Assembly than the question of Palestine and the fate of its indigenous people. An integral part of the consideration must include steps to bring about the restoration of the national rights of the Palestinians, and the safeguarding of the right of a nation to retain its national dignity and identity.

152. A clear distinction should be drawn between the two main facets of the Middle East situation. The first part of the problem involves Palestine and the destiny of the Palestinian people as a nation. The second part concerns the aggressions committed by Israel against Arab States, the latest manifestation of which is the continued occupation of Arab lands by Israel.

153. We are pleased to see the legitimate representatives of Palestine taking part in the discussion of this item. It should be recalled that for many years, the representatives of Palestine were deprived of participation in deliberations and decisions vital to their national interests. The present problem results from the fact that decisions which caused them much suffering, both as a people and a nation, were imposed upon them.

154. Palestine was a Mandated Territory until 1948. While in many other Non-Self-Governing Territories

steps were implemented to terminate the mandates and grant independence, during the existence of the United Nations Palestine has in effect remained a Mandated Territory in which the principle of self-determination has thus far been totally ignored. The result has been tragic wars and endless suffering.

155. Israel has disregarded all the United Nations decisions. It has seized more territory than was assigned to it. It has prevented the establishment of the Arab State envisaged by the United Nations by occupying all of that territory. It has occupied Jerusalem. It has expelled Arabs from their homes, and confiscated and destroyed their property. Therefore, the Israel of today is not the Jewish State created by this Organization in May 1948, nor that which was envisaged in the United Nations resolution.

156. It is obvious to all the representatives gathered here that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be based on the perpetuation of injustice. It is high time that the injustices done to the people of Palestine and the Arab world were corrected. Only in this way will the conditions for a lasting peace in the area be created.

157. My delegation fully supports the decisions adopted by the Seventh Arab Summit Conference at Rabat⁵ in regard to Palestine. We believe, as do a large number of States in this Organization, that the struggle waged by the heroic people of Palestine to regain their national rights and homeland forms an integral part of the struggle of all peoples against alien domination, colonialism, and racial discrimination, and for self-determination. Such struggles have always had the full support of the Government and the people of Afghanistan.

158. The history of Palestine is well known. Its development is perhaps a unique example in modern history of conspiracy and betrayal of a State and its people involving the United Nations. It is therefore only just and proper that this Organization, having taken part in this situation from the beginning, should now be given the prime responsibility of redressing the injustice by acting according to the principles enshrined in the Charter.

159. My delegation earnestly hopes that discussion of the question of Palestine in the General Assembly will lead to a just solution of the problem. We shall support any just and honourable decision based on the restitution of the national and inalienable rights of the people of Palestine.

*Tribute to the memory of Mr. Erskine
Hamilton Childers, President of Ireland (concluded)*

160. Mr. SEPETU (United Republic of Tanzania): It is with profound sorrow that we have learned of the death of the President of Ireland, Mr. Childers. The passing away of this great statesman is not only a loss to the Irish people and their Government but also a

blow to the international community, which has benefited from the wisdom and statesmanship of the late distinguished President. The African group in the United Nations, on whose behalf I have taken the floor, wishes to express its most sincere condolences to the Government and people of Ireland, as indeed to the bereaved family. I request the friendly delegation of Ireland to be kind enough to transmit these condolences. We assure them that the African States, which cherish the best of ties and co-operation with Ireland, join them as they mourn this great loss.

161. Mr. KENNEDY (Ireland): I should like to express from this podium, on behalf of the Government and delegation of Ireland, our sincerest thanks and appreciation for the kind words of sympathy and condolence expressed by you, Mr. President, by the representatives of the regional groups, and by the speakers in this morning's debate on the untimely death of our beloved President, Erskine Childers. We deeply appreciate what has been said and done here this morning.

162. We are mourning today in Ireland the passing of a great President. He devoted his entire life to the cause of Ireland and the welfare of our people, and if I could try to sum up in one phrase all he lived and worked for, it was the reconciliation of all our people in peace and harmony so that they could live and work together for the good of the nation as a whole, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

163. I shall, of course, convey the words of sympathy and condolence which were so kindly spoken today in this General Assembly to my country, where I know they will be deeply appreciated by the family of the deceased, by the Irish Government and by all the people of Ireland in this time of national sorrow.

The meeting rose at 1.55 p.m.

NOTES

¹ See "The American Section of the International Commission on Mandates in Turkey (the King-Crane Commission)", *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, vol. XII (Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1947), p. 792.

² *Palestine: Statement of Policy*, Cmd. 6019 (London, HM Stationery Office, 1939).

³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 14 (A/7614)*.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 1A (A/6701/Add. 1), para. 49.

⁵ Seventh Conference of Arab Heads of State, held at Rabat from 26 to 29 October 1974.

⁶ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-ninth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1974*, Document S/11428.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Fourth Year, Special Supplements No. 1, 2, 3 and 4.