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President: Mr. Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA
(Algeria).

AGENDA ITEM 108

Question of Palestine (*continued*)

1. Mr. Kewal SINGH (India): The roots of India's attitude to the question of Palestine are to be found in the positions taken in the early years of the century by the leaders of the nationalist movement of India, particularly of the Indian National Congress, the organization which formed the spearhead of all nationalist forces in India against the alien rule. Besides the considerable emotional sympathy for Arab nationalism, the Indian leaders also foresaw the seeds of future conflict in the policies pursued by outside Powers in West Asia, an area in whose peace, stability and progress free India was bound to have a great stake, linked as India was with Palestine by ties of history, geography, faith and culture, ties which were further strengthened by the similarity of contemporary experience.

2. Our own struggle for national independence reaffirmed the principle that sovereignty belongs to the people of the country. It can be neither encroached upon nor limited by external forces. West Asia lies astride three continents and at the crossroads of the global communication system. A conflict in that area can endanger world peace, as indeed it has done for almost three decades now. The Assembly has pondered over the question of Palestine almost continuously over the last 25 years, whether directly or through its related consequences. But the time has come when neither refinements of diplomacy nor a patchwork of so-called solutions can camouflage the key issue in West Asia—that is, the inalienable rights, the hopes and aspirations of the Palestinian people.

3. India was a member of the Special Committee on Palestine [*consisting of eleven members*], set up by the General Assembly at its first special session in 1947, "to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine" [*resolution 106 (S-1), para. 2*]. India took the position, even at that stage, that the question of the outrageous treatment of the Jews in Europe should not be linked to that of the independence of Palestine, which belonged to the people—whatever their religious persuasion of preference—

who lived and worked there and who must shape the destiny of the country of their birth. We have seen the consequences of the decisions of 1947 since then—four wars, sustained tension and conflicts, massive movement of population out of their hearths and homes, loss of life and property, and constant danger to world peace and security.

4. Today the question of Palestine has been inscribed on the agenda of the General Assembly, because what were wrongly assumed yester-year to be the constants of the situation have become the explosive variables of today. The agonizing appeals of those whose legitimate rights have been ignored or denied over a quarter of a century have begun to be heard, not necessarily because the fairness of their demands has dawned on the world community but because the logical thrust of history has added great potency to them. A large part of the world has become free from colonial domination and the subject people of yesterday have begun to assert their independence and their rights in a way that had not happened before. By a strange coincidence, some of the most needed raw materials of the world come from the region of West Asia and therefore it is no longer possible to ignore its political and economic weight.

5. The fundamental cause of the situation in the Middle East, which this Assembly has debated since practically its very inception, is undoubtedly the question of Palestine. But that is precisely what has not been tackled, even though a series of resolutions has been passed, some as late as last year, recognizing that the people of Palestine are entitled to self-determination in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. My delegation is gratified that at long last the sovereign representatives assembled here are now pondering over the question of Palestine. We are glad that the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO]; Mr. Yasser Arafat, was invited to address this Assembly and what we heard was a voice of reason, a passionate appeal for justice. In Mr. Arafat's speech we found echoes of the same values to which we in India are dedicated—that is, democracy, secularism, human dignity and common nationhood for multiracial, multireligious groups. Over a million people had to leave their hearths and homes for no reason other than that they professed a certain faith. They have been living in camps in conditions that should be a burden on the conscience of the international community. Israel has, since 1967, extended its occupation to areas far beyond the territory that was given it by the United Nations. And this occupation has continued. Why should we be surprised if a people that has been deprived of its homes and normal existence was reduced to such frustration that it did not look to the international community to restore to it its legitimate rights of return and resettlement? Today once again we have an opportunity of redressing

an injustice which has been perpetrated for a generation, and the United Nations, in conformity with its own Charter and resolutions, ought to promote the restoration of those rights.

6. India has expressed its solidarity with the Arab cause and with the people of Palestine. Our Prime Minister, in a message to Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the PLO, expressed India's profound sympathy for the cause which his organization represents. Mr. Arafat, in his reply of 22 October 1974, reciprocated as follows:

"The historic and cultural ties which have always linked the friendly Indian Republic with the Arab peoples, especially with the Palestinians, have always been an example of its strength and spontaneity. This enabled us to confront all difficulties faced by our two peoples all through the years of struggle against imperialism and colonialism in all their forms.

"The teachings of the great leader Mahatma Gandhi and those of your great father, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, had an impact, which cannot be erased, on the struggle for freedom and dignity of nations and solidarity of the Asian and African people against the forces of occupation and tyranny."

7. What the people of Palestine are demanding is no more and no less than what every people is entitled to for the natural and normal unfolding of its genius: an independent existence in dignity and honour. As Mr. Yasser Arafat said before this Assembly, only then can the people of Palestine pour all their "resources into the mainstream of human civilization" [2282nd meeting, para. 80] and concentrate Palestinian creativity in the service of humanity. India adheres to the resolutions adopted by the Fourth Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries,¹ and accepts the decision of the Arab Summit Conference of October 1974,² held at Rabat, that the PLO is the representative of the Palestinian people. Since 1967, India has consistently condemned the continued Israeli occupation of the Arab territories. The consequences of this aggression must be fully and finally liquidated. An enduring solution in the Middle East based on justice and peace cannot be found without the participation of the Palestinian people. Together with all non-aligned countries and other peace-loving forces, India has been demanding the restoration of justice and legitimate rights to the displaced people of Palestine. Then alone can a structure of durable peace in West Asia be built and then alone will the United Nations itself have lived up to the hopes and aspirations of the international community so nobly enshrined in its Charter.

8. Mr. ANWAR (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): This is the first time in the history of the United Nations that the General Assembly is debating in its plenary meetings the cause of a people struggling to secure their rights, in the presence of their representatives and with the effective and positive participation of those representatives in the deliberations affecting the destiny of their people and their homeland. This is indeed a praiseworthy precedent in the field of development of international relations, and the Egyptian delegation sees in this positive development a sound step in our persistent efforts to implement

the provisions of the Charter and to realize its principles and goals. With this step, peoples struggling against colonialism for the sake of their right to self-determination can participate in political work whose aim is to build an edifice of justice and equality, as called for in the Charter.

9. General Assembly resolution 3210 (XXIX) of 14 October 1974, inviting the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly on the Palestinian question was a sound and just one. What makes it more effective is that the General Assembly will discuss the national cause of the Palestinian people and not merely the human tragedy of the Palestinian people.

10. Developments in the world have facilitated the adoption of the resolution. Foremost among these developments is the fact that the General Assembly, which is today considering the Palestinian question, is an assembly that gives expression to the international community more truthfully and reflects to a great degree its free and genuine will. The General Assembly now includes representatives of various peoples from Asia, from Africa and from other parts of the world, whose struggling nations have achieved their fundamental rights, particularly the right to self-determination, after long strife. Therefore, the Assembly is more capable of understanding the sufferings of the Palestinians people, sufferings that have resulted from the denial of their rights and of their legitimate demands.

11. With its present composition, the General Assembly shoulders an historic responsibility. It is in a position to contribute genuinely, as it has done in recent years, to the achievement of justice for peoples struggling for self-determination, freedom and independence.

12. For more than 20 years, the General Assembly has not dealt with the essence of the Palestinian problem or with the position and fate of the Palestinian people. As a result, some have imagined that the question had been frozen or even shelved. They have also imagined that with the lapse of time, this question would be nothing more than a chapter in history telling us that once upon a time, there were people in the land of Palestine, who were later scattered and then disappeared, and what remains of them are groups of refugees, the solution of whose problem can be confined to contributions for their subsistence and relief.

13. Events have clearly demonstrated that ignoring the essence of the problem, that failing to deal with the question, and that blocking attempts to reach a just settlement have made the Palestinian people more determined to achieve their rights and to carry on their struggle until the whole world feels that without solving the Palestinian question, there can be no just and lasting peace.

14. There are even those who have been under the illusion that Palestinians are dead wood and the Israeli leaders have absurdly gone to the extent of alleging that "there is no such thing as the Palestinian people". Events have proved that those under such an illusion are merely burying their heads in the sand.

15. Zionism has exerted efforts to make the world community forget, or feign to forget, the question of Palestine, at a time when peoples have risen to demand the achievement of equality, justice and independence.

Zionism has thus tried to obstruct the current of history. It has always sought to impose a fait accompli by force on the Palestinian people, but this Zionism will never be able to do.

16. The Palestinian people came here to present their case in this hall and from this rostrum, declaring that justice was their goal, peace their beacon and the Charter their guiding document. They have not come here to make threats or issue warnings. They have come to the Assembly holding an olive branch as a sign of the peace to which they aspire and the tolerance in which they believe. They have come here not only to call for the achievement of their aspirations to freedom and independence but also to declare that freedom and independence are an end as well as a means. Freedom and independence are an end that will ensure for them the achievement of the aspirations and rights that others have attained. They are also a means by which the Palestinian people can contribute to collective work by nations and peoples to enrich the wealth of mankind, with all that means for the benefit of all, without any discrimination based on race, colour, religion or language.

17. We are confident that the message conveyed to the Assembly by Mr. Yasser Arafat in the name of the Palestinian people, from this rostrum on 13 November [2282nd meeting], has not gone and will not go unheeded. The meaning of the message will not escape the attention of people who have a sense of equity and justice. Here, from this rostrum, in this Hall, the leader of the PLO raised the banner of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, both of which express the determination that every individual and every nation has the right to freedom and equality, and that the world has the right to justice and peace.

18. Allow me to deal now with a number of points, since I feel that they are of particular importance and that it is necessary to emphasize them because they constitute the foundation from which we should proceed in order to achieve justice for the Palestinian people. The first of these points is this: what are the Palestinian people and what is their positive contribution to the development of mankind?

19. The Palestinian people are not hordes of refugees, as Zionism has been trying to portray them; they are not people without ties to keep them together. They are people who have their roots, their entity and their continuity. They have territory on which they have lived throughout history. Their country was the cradle of religions and the meeting-place of culture and knowledge. They have their history, which is based on tolerance, coexistence and hospitality, which they have always extended to any newcomer seeking to live with them within the framework of equality, co-operation and brotherhood. It is not unnatural, therefore, that these people should remain faithful to coexistence, tolerance and peace despite the injustice that has been inflicted on them and despite the terrorism to which they have been exposed. It is indeed part and parcel of the nature of these people to hold an olive branch and to cry loudly, as our brother Yasser Arafat has done, "Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand" [*ibid.*, para. 82].

20. In stating this before this Assembly, I do not overlook the fact that the Palestinian people, or any

other people who have been or are being exposed to the kind of oppression, terrorism and injustice that has been inflicted on the Palestinian people, must find themselves compelled to hold a weapon in the other hand in order to defend their right to existence, freedom, justice and independence.

21. It is pertinent to recall here that in the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is stated that:

"... it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law."

Therefore let us apply the principles of the Charter, which is the law of nations, so that man shall not be compelled to struggle in order to obtain his established and inalienable rights and to protect his fundamental freedom.

22. It may also be appropriate to recall the words of the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, who stated that:

"In particular, the United Nations has to act against the forces of racialism and colonialism, for these represent the kind of tyranny and oppression which deny all hope to men, and which therefore force them to express their humanity through violence."³

23. The right of the Palestinian people to resort to all possible means to obtain and defend their rights is parallel to the duty of every country to refrain from all acts of force designed to prevent peoples from exercising their right to self-determination, freedom and independence. In resorting to any means to exercise their right to self-determination, peoples are entitled to demand and receive assistance in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. This is what members of the General Assembly have in fact determined in various resolutions, the wording and aims of which are based on the principles of the Charter.

24. There is not the slightest doubt that continuance of the use of force to prevent the Palestinian people from exercising its rights has to be met with the resistance of that people, which has been steadfast in protecting its fundamental rights. The Palestinian people will stand united against any attempt to usurp or violate those rights. The Assembly will perhaps agree with us that the demonstrations taking place in occupied Palestinian territory at present provide most convincing proof of what we are saying. The flagrant suppression of the Palestinian people in the occupied land of Palestine and the unprecedented atrocities and murder to which their innocent martyrs are being subjected indeed merit condemnation by the General Assembly and the international community.

25. The Palestinian people has contributed to the civilization of the world, but it has been compelled by forces that adopt terrorism, racism and oppression as a policy to resist and struggle against Zionist forces, which have falsified its history and distorted its achievements in every field of human endeavour, in the fields of knowledge, culture and art. Zionist forces have destroyed hundreds of Palestinian towns and villages. They have killed and massacred thousands of innocent

Palestinians. Zionism's record of massacres and mass expulsion cannot be forgotten. There is Deir Yassin, there is Kfar Kassim, there is Ikrit, there is Kfar Birim. And there are many more, including Safad and Khan Yunes. All those names cannot be erased from the history of Zionist terrorism in the Middle East. The terrorist acts of the Zionist gangs are too well known to be enumerated or recalled here. There is also the official terrorism of the State of Israel, which by doing the work of terrorists hopes in vain to weaken the will of the Palestinians. But these acts of terrorism only serve as an impetus to resistance and struggle.

26. Israel has also desecrated the Holy City of Jerusalem, and there is bound to be incessant action until the sacred places are restored to their faithful owners, protectors and guardians.

27. Permit me now to say something about the work and activities of the PLO. The work of that organization is not confined to bearing the brunt of the struggle against those who have violated the rights of the Palestinian people. It has other activities, and the preservation of the nature and character of the Palestinian people is uppermost in the minds of its leadership. The organization aims at preventing the Palestinian people from disintegrating and falling victim to despair after the many years during which they have been deprived of the possibility of exercising their rights. It works to ensure the advancement of the Palestinian people and to enable them to keep pace with the developing world. I find no words to describe the efforts of the organization better than those of the leader of the PLO when he said:

"The PLO can be proud of having a large number of cultural and educational activities, even while engaged in armed struggle, and at a time when it faced increasingly vicious blows of Zionist terrorism. We established institutes for scientific research, agricultural development and social welfare, as well as centres for the revival of our cultural heritage and the preservation of our folklore. Many Palestinian poets, artists and writers have enriched Arab culture in particular, and world culture generally." [2282nd meeting, para. 62.]

28. The PLO has been helped in its activities by the total support it gets from the Palestinian people, which staunchly adheres to its leadership. The organization is based on a democratic system; it has its National Council, which represents all sections of the Palestinian people, and its Executive Council, which represents activities in various fields. The organization has been set up by the Palestinian people to lead its struggle at this stage, and the General Assembly, which represents the world community, on 14 October adopted resolution 3210 (XXIX), inviting it to speak in the name of the Palestinian people and to express its free will. I seize this opportunity to greet all Member States that voted in favour of the resolution.

29. The question of Palestine is that of a people whose fundamental rights have been usurped, whose economic wealth has been looted and whose contribution to civilization has been denied. It is a people rendered homeless as a result of a conspiracy unprecedented in history. Some have suffered from the denial of their fundamental rights, while the political rights of others have been usurped, many have been exposed,

and still are, to the looting of their economic resources. But the Palestinian people has suffered more than any other because it has been subjected to all these forms of oppression in addition to being rendered homeless. The whole of its homeland has been confiscated, and there are even those who deny the very existence of a Palestinian people. This is a very sad chapter in the history of the world, and perhaps the Palestinian people will find some kind of consolation in the fact that the world community is now acknowledging their existence and their right to their homeland. In fact, the international body, particularly after the liberation of the peoples of Asia and Africa, has never opposed the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination as an established and inalienable right.

30. Consequently, the question before the Assembly today is not one dealing with the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, since these rights are inalienable and firmly established, and the Charter of the United Nations has further consolidated them. The Assembly's deliberations here should deal with the means that would enable the Palestinian people to exercise these rights, of which they have been deprived for so long. We have to remember that this is closely linked with the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and it is our earnest wish that the Assembly resolution in this respect will herald a fundamental change and a turning-point in history. We earnestly wish that this resolution will terminate the several decades of conflicts and wars resulting from Israeli expansionist policies, which have rendered the Palestinian people totally homeless and resulted in the complete occupation of its land.

31. The United Nations in several resolutions has asserted and reasserted the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. In so doing, these resolutions have been based on the aims, principles and provisions of the Charter. What the Palestinian people is demanding now is to exercise this right, and this is the only way to ensure that the area will enjoy peace instead of being plagued with tension—tension that exists and will continue to exist as long as this right is denied. Let us remember that, in Article 1, the Charter stipulates that the purposes of the United Nations are, *inter alia*, to maintain international peace and security. These purposes cannot be achieved unless the right to self-determination is respected and unless the policies of terrorism, coercion and violation are brought to an end.

32. It follows, therefore, that the Palestine question should be considered not only within the framework of its given factors but also within the framework of constant and necessary efforts to preserve international peace and security, which must undoubtedly be given priority provided they are based on justice. The Charter and its principles should serve as a guide for the preservation of international peace and security.

33. The right to self-determination is today foremost among the principles on the basis of which the United Nations functions. It is the first aim of the United Nations. It is a principle that has been consolidated by the struggle of peoples—the peoples of Asia, Africa and others—against colonialism, against usurpation, against oppression. The national liberation movement, of which the Palestinian liberation movement con-

stitutes an indivisible part, reached its zenith during the past decade, thus adding to the process of applying and developing the legal and political principles in the United Nations. Here we should mention that the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples [*resolution 1514 (XV)*] and other fundamental declarations, which form part of the structure of the United Nations, aim at consolidating the right to self-determination and other inalienable rights. These declarations serve to consolidate the basic principles of the Charter, and the people of Palestine have come here to submit their case within the framework and on the basis of the Charter.

34. It becomes obvious, therefore, that the demands of the Palestinian people today should embody affirmation of its fundamental rights, particularly the right to return to its homeland and to exercise the right to self-determination without any outside interference, and that they should also embody the national independence and sovereignty of the Palestinians, as well as the right to resort to all means to secure these rights in accordance with the Charter and in accordance with its principles and aims.

35. It is incontestable that the Palestinian people is a principal party to the Middle East problem and that the Palestinian question and its solution in conformity with the principles of the Charter and of justice have to be part and parcel of a process of establishing a lasting peace in the Middle East. As long as this question remains unsolved, and as long as the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are not restored and exercised—just as they have been exercised by other peoples—we shall never see the lasting peace to which we all aspire, and any peace in the area cannot last.

36. The aim of the international community, as defined by the United Nations, is to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. This policy finds clear expression in the principles of the Charter and in the resolutions of the United Nations, which have condemned the acquisition of territories by force. That entails respect for the integrity of territories and the political independence of all States. This policy also finds clear expression in the principles of the equality, justice and self-determination of peoples.

37. It is clear from all this that we are operating within the framework of the Charter and that we are upholding the principles of the Charter in order to restore peace in the area, which has long suffered from oppression, from expansionist policies, from occupation and from the usurpation of rights. We earnestly hope that our efforts will lead to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

38. Israel has been trying to impose a policy of *fait accompli* on the Arab countries. It has failed in this and it will also fail in imposing a *fait accompli* on the Palestinian people. In his statement before the Assembly on 13 November [*2283rd meeting*], the Israeli representative's utterances were nothing but a declared intention of clinging to an expansionist policy and persisting in ignoring the rights of the Palestinian people as expressed in the resolutions of the Conference of Arab Heads of State, held at Rabat, as well as the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

39. This Israeli attitude indicates that Israel has not absorbed the lesson of the glorious October war. It seems to us that Israel has forgotten the valour of the Egyptian soldier, the Syrian soldier and the Arab soldier in that war. It also seems that Israel is not aware of the international isolation in which it finds itself and that it is indifferent to the unanimous will of the countries and peoples of this world. Israel persists in that policy, knowing that the doors of massive financial and military assistance are wide open to it.

40. We reiterate from this rostrum what President Anwar El Sadat has repeatedly said—that in its quest for a lasting peace, Egypt will not hesitate to shoulder its duties, together with its sister Arab countries. Egypt will shoulder its full responsibility vis-à-vis the continued Israeli challenge and Israel's obstruction of efforts that are being exerted to achieve peace. Israel is trying today to create the circumstances that would enable it to launch a new aggression. We warn Israel against the consequences and we hold it responsible for the deterioration of the situation in the area and for foiling all efforts that have been exerted to reach a peaceful and just settlement.

41. We are confident that the various countries and peoples—the non-aligned countries, the African countries, the Asian countries, the Latin American countries, the Islamic countries, the Socialist countries, and the European countries—will consider the question of the Palestinian people in the light of the principles and aims of the United Nations Charter. We are confident that they will take steps to ensure the application of those principles to achieve those aims and that they will uphold the rule of law, thus reaffirming the historical development towards a world where justice and equality prevail and where a just and lasting peace reigns.

42. Mr. LARAKI (Morocco) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Only two months ago I had the honour of taking the floor in order to deliver from this rostrum the statement of my country on the occasion of the opening of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly and the general debate on the main current international problems [*2249th meeting*]. I am happy to take this opportunity today of setting forth the views of my Government and people on the question of Palestine. Like all Arab countries we are particularly concerned with this question and attach the utmost importance to it, for it is the source and basis of the current problem in the Middle East.

43. For the first time for more than a quarter of a century we have a real feeling of hope today and we see that our Organization is opening the file on the Palestinian question with a new spirit and trying to treat it as an independent item by the only method likely to lead to a lasting and just solution, namely, facing up to the Palestinian reality in a direct and bold manner after having for so long treated it as a secondary issue in the United Nations and turned it over to sub-committees.

44. An historic and virtually unanimous resolution [*resolution 3210 (XXIX)*] was adopted by the General Assembly at its meeting on 14 October 1974 [*2268th meeting*]: having inscribed the question of Palestine on its agenda to be discussed as an issue independent of the Middle East crisis, the Assembly

invited the PLO to participate in its deliberations on the question of Palestine, considering the Palestinian people as the principal party to this question and the PLO as the representative of that people. That resolution is an historic victory for the Palestinian cause. It is also a decisive expression of the conviction of the international community of the need to allow the Palestinian people to participate in the debate on an issue on which its destiny depends. That historic resolution gives legal recognition of the Palestinian entity and character.

45. We consider that this resolution crowns the victorious Palestinian struggle on the battlefield and in the field of international political action because it truly reflects the elements of the existing political situation prevailing in the Middle East region. We find that it represents a first step in the right direction towards rectifying the unjust conditions from which the Palestinian people have suffered since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947.

46. A new era is now beginning for the Palestinian people, which has struggled and is still struggling to preserve its national entity as an independent people having its own character and an independent and specific existence. It has also struggled to repel the aggression launched against it with the intention of uprooting it. The fact that this entity has now been given an international legal legitimacy does not mean at all that it has only existed since the decision that gave it a basis of legality; it is an historic and ancient entity, which has existed for thousands of years and has maintained its own identity in spite of the attempts of the Zionists to efface and obliterate it.

47. The comprehensive statement made here by Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, portrayed to us the different dimensions of the Palestinian tragedy. It informed us of the facts that led to the revolution of the Palestinian people. After having in vain entrusted their just cause to international political action for a long time, this people at the end was obliged to carry arms, both military and political, in order to awaken the international community and to face their torturers and the usurpers of their lands and rights.

48. Mr. Yasser Arafat expressed the aspirations of his people and called on the United Nations, in its reconsideration of the Palestinian question, to deal with it drastically and to reject the policy of compromise, which has always proved ineffective and futile. In his impressive and remarkable statement, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO described the sufferings of his people and extended a hand of friendship and understanding even to those who impose injustice upon that people. His statement gave us hope for the future.

49. By attempting to prevent the Palestinian people from speaking here to express its views and opinions; by instigating noisy demonstrations outside the United Nations Headquarters, led by Israeli leaders, Israel has defied the unanimity of Member States. The arrogant tone of the Israeli representative and Israel's threats of further murder and genocide against the Palestinian people and its representatives; the blind hatred characterizing the Israeli representative's statements—all this clearly shows the mentality of the

Zionist military administration that rules Israel. It has done the Palestinian people a great injustice, dispersing and uprooting it—a process unprecedented in history.

50. Israel's persistence in ignoring the people that was the first direct victim of its establishment is by no means surprising. Such ingratitude is traditional in Israeli conduct and stems from the Zionist philosophy that established the Israeli State on the corpses of Palestinian victims through the work of murderous gangs such as the Haganah, the Stern Gang and the Irgun, which did not hesitate even to assassinate representatives and mediators of the United Nations, one such victim being Count Bernadotte.

51. Not content with expelling the Palestinian people from its homeland, Israel followed up that physical liquidation with a political and legal liquidation. To achieve that aim, the Palestinian people had to be prevented from creating an entity of its own. Moreover, it must have no political rights whatsoever. Israel is now refusing to allow the people of Palestine to speak at international conferences and gatherings and to make its voice heard.

52. Israel's insistence on opening a dialogue with some Arab countries and its rejection of the principle of holding a dialogue with the representatives of the Palestinian people—the main party concerned in the issue under discussion—are another embodiment of the legal and political assassination Israel is trying to achieve. It ignores the fact that Arab States have no authority to speak in the name of the Palestinian people or on its behalf and cannot take decisions on which its destiny depends.

53. One of the paradoxes of contemporary history is that we find that, at a time when we in this Assembly are congratulating countries that have recently gained their independence and shaken off the yoke of colonialism, the Arab people of Palestine, which had also been awaiting the moment of its liberation from the British Mandate, was itself victim of a Zionist and colonialist conspiracy, which, not content with once more subjugating it to the yoke of foreign occupation, has sought to decimate it, scatter it, seize its property, confiscate its land, and establish foreign sovereignty over its homeland for the benefit of groups of foreign settlers, colonialists and immigrants. Thus, the Palestinians lost political control over their own country and residence in their own homeland. In itself, that tragedy alone is likely to shake the conscience of the world.

54. After all that, we have had to listen to a Zionist immigrant, an alien in the land of Palestine who became Prime Minister of Israel, insolently asking, "Who are the Palestinians?"

55. It is our right and the right of every justice-loving people to ask, "Who are the Israelis, and where did they come from?" On whose land have they established their State—those whose number did not exceed 2.5 per cent of the local population in 1917, when they owned land amounting to less than 2.5 per cent of the total area of the land of Palestine, according to the documents of the Mandatory Power, the British Government? It is also our right to ask why the machinery of world Zionism has until now, more than a quarter of a century after the establishment of Israel, continued its pressure on and blackmail of even the

great Powers in order to obtain and take to Israel a large number of Jewish immigrants. Where does Israel intend to settle and house them?

56. The Palestinian people has stood firm against all intentions to destroy and annihilate it. It refused the logic of force of the Israelis and continued to adhere to its fundamental rights until—under the leadership of the PLO, and thanks to the support of countries which love peace, justice and freedom—it was able to achieve its present great political and international gains.

57. The General Assembly's virtually unanimous decision to invite the PLO to attend its meetings as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, is an event of great significance. The General Assembly must give its historic decision practical and realistic meaning.

58. We must devote our efforts anew to working open-mindedly to establish justice in the Middle East. To that end, this question should be discussed as a national political problem related to the destiny of a people one half of which has been expelled through aggression and the other half of which still lives under the yoke of direct Israeli occupation. In the face of that sad reality, it is necessary for us to strengthen the laws, customs and international principles upholding the right of peoples to exist and condemning occupation and usurpation. The first step along that path requires that we reaffirm the legal right of the Palestinian people to return to its homeland, to exercise self-determination and to establish national independent authority under the leadership of the PLO in its capacity as the sole legitimate representative of that people. It also remains for the United Nations to recognize, in accordance with its Charter, the right of the Palestinian people to national liberation, which is an extension of the right of peoples to defend themselves confirmed by the Charter and deemed to be a natural right under Article 51.

59. The continued subjugation of territory acquired by aggression against the Palestinian people means continuation of the aggression itself. That is why the right to liberation from the consequences of such aggression is actually an extension of the natural right to resist aggression.

60. Allow me in this connexion to go back to history in order to get inspiration from its lessons and teachings, to understand the events of yesterday that have brought about the events of today, and to confront the Zionist attempts to falsify history.

61. The recommendation of the General Assembly on 29 November 1947 concerning the partition of Palestine was adopted in spite of the clear opposition by the overwhelming majority of the original population owning the greater part of the land. We must say that the Charter of the United Nations does not authorize the General Assembly in any of its provisions to partition any country, and does not give it the right to create any State.

62. In addition to all this, that recommendation involved a flagrant injustice because it gave the Jews, who owned less than 6 per cent of the total area of the land of Palestine on the day the partition resolution was adopted, an area amounting to 56 per cent of the total area of Palestine. The proposed Jewish State

was to include a number of Arab inhabitants actually outnumbering the Jewish inhabitants as can be seen from the report of Sub-Committee 2 of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Palestinian Question.⁴

63. History has recorded that the Palestinian people were in the vanguard of modern peoples who launched a war of national liberation against colonialism: between 1920 and 1939 the Palestinian people expressed its resistance by seven uprisings, the most important of which was that of 1936, which lasted for 172 days and can be regarded as the greatest rebellion known in modern history.

64. The historical right on which world Zionism has based itself in its usurpation of the Palestinian land has no historical, political or even emotional foundation.

65. I wonder, how could peace be maintained in the world if each community demanded, on the Zionist model, a return to lands on which its forefathers had lived for a specific period of time more than 20 centuries ago, although those lands constituted a permanent and normal homeland for another people who had lived on it for thousands of years? This historical argument is rejected by reason and by the nature of international life itself. The Hebrew tribes that came to Palestine many ages ago were only one of the many successive waves of immigrants that came to Palestine. Those Hebrew tribes were able to settle in Palestine only for a brief period. They were not able to put up any resistance against the Arab Canaanite tribes, which since time immemorial had had their permanent home in Palestine. After the Babylonian exile, every legal or political link between the Jews and Palestine was ended for more than 2,000 years, and Palestine remained a purely Arab country until 1947.

66. If Zionism is invoking this argument to justify the return of the Jews to Palestine after more than 20 centuries, then why does it reject the right of the Palestinian people to go back to their homeland and to their properties and lands, which they left only a few years ago?

67. As to the emotions of the Jews towards Palestine, it is an historical fact that the Zionist movement proposed to settle the Jews in some country that was not necessarily Palestine.

68. The Zionists claim that Palestine is Jewish because the Temple of Solomon was established in Palestine. But the Sermon on the Mount and the Ascension of Christ also took place in Palestine. The *Israa*, or night journey, of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, also took place in Palestine. So by what right do the Jews seek to use religious arguments to rule over the Holy Places to the exclusion of Christianity and Islam? What right have they to Judaize them?

69. The United Nations and all peace-loving countries working against colonialism can understand the nature of the Zionist entity in the Middle East by studying the real course of action of the State of Israel and its declared intentions. The latter reaffirm beyond any doubt that from its birth that State represented a colonialist and racialist force that has expansionist designs and has been closely related since its beginning to the movement of European colonialism and expansionism. It has used colonialist methods in the settlement, expansion and exploitation of Arab lands.

70. But the Zionist State was not content with all this, and up to the present day it is still harrying the Palestinian people by raids, attacks, assaults, and individual and collective murder, as well as imprisonment, torture and expulsion, whenever it has the chance.

71. The expulsion of Palestinian leaders from the West Bank, the shelling of refugee camps, schools, hospitals and mosques are all evidences of the Nazi and colonialist methods pursued by Israel to end the very existence of the Palestinians once and for all. Starting from this basis, we must deal with the situation in the same way as we have been treating issues of the liquidation of colonialism.

72. That neo-colonialist danger in the Middle East, which is gathering momentum at a time when colonialism is dying in other parts of the world, is considered a threat to all peoples resisting colonialism in Africa, Asia and the countries of the third world. Because the issue of liberation is one that is of interest to all peoples, it is one issue which cannot be divided.

73. This colonialist reality is clearly shown in the policy of occupation, annexation and expansion that has come to characterize the State of Israel.

74. Last year the Prime Minister of Israel stated that Israel is a country with no boundaries, and that its borders change according to what the sons of Israel can accomplish. Can there be better evidence of the reality of the expansionist designs of Israel? Have we not repeatedly heard statements by Israeli officials about the State of Greater Israel? If those statements made by responsible authorities in Israel are not sufficient proof of their expansionist aims, let us recall that Israel, as that State is known to our Assembly, occupies to the present day, by force of arms, many parts of the territories of three Member States of our Organization.

75. It might also be pointed out that no sooner had the Knesset decided upon the final annexation of the Arab city of Jerusalem than the Israeli Government undertook measures designed to Judaize that city and to efface its Arab, Islamic and Christian character, in spite of the numerous resolutions adopted by our Organization condemning those measures and calling for their immediate cessation.

76. Israel has broken all records in its defiance of United Nations resolutions, particularly those pertaining to the cause of the Palestinian people, and has violated all international practices, laws and conventions relative to that cause. Israel's insolent defiance has been accompanied by arrogant statements made by Israeli leaders, who have sullied both the United Nations and its resolutions. It was only natural that those open challenges should have been accompanied by the breaking of another record by Israel. Indeed, the records of our Organization show that, of all the States Members of the world community, Israel has been the object of the greatest number of condemnations and criticisms as a result of its repeated aggressions and flagrant violations of Charter principles.

77. The Seventh Conference of Arab Heads of State, from 20 Arab countries, Members of our Organization, was recently held at Rabat, the capital of my country. Since the main point on its agenda was the Palestinian

problem, I consider it my duty to inform you of the thrust of that Conference.

78. The Arab Summit Conference proved the unanimity with which the Arab nations, prompted by principles of law and justice, by resolutions, by the United Nations Charter and by principles of international law, reject Israeli aggression in all its forms and deem it imperative to regain the land occupied by Israeli forces since 1967. The Conference declared that the Arab nation should not give up any parcel of Arab land or its absolute sovereignty over that land, including the Arab city of Jerusalem. The Arab nation rejects any situation or status liable to damage Arab sovereignty over the Holy City, and undertakes to ensure the restoration of the Palestinian people's national rights, pursuant to decisions of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

79. The resolutions of the Rabat Conference have proved the vanguard role played by the PLO in representing the Palestinian people, leaving no doubt that it recognizes the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The Conference also determined the right of the Palestinian people to support its organization in the exercise of its natural and lawful rights to self-determination, to recover its freedom and to liberate its homeland.

80. The Palestinian people has long suffered from a situation in which the victim has been treated as the aggressor, while the actual aggressor and oppressor has been treated as the victim deserving of aid and sympathy.

81. A glance at recent history clearly demonstrates that the Palestinian people has been the true victim of Nazi-like, Fascist crimes. Indeed, Zionism has exploited the compassion and sympathy aroused by the Nazi crimes against the Jews in order to realize its long-cherished dream of creating a Zionist State on Palestinian soil, and in so doing has used the very methods formerly employed by the Nazis. Israel continues to resort to acts of genocide, mass expulsions, collective punishment and the uprooting of the Palestinians—all this in violation of every international principle and practice. Thus yesterday's victim has become today's torturer.

82. Discussion of the Palestinian case at this turning-point in history gives us hope that we are embarking on a new era of serious action designed to solve this problem, particularly since new factors are in play, notably the renewed confidence of the Arab world in its military strength and in its international importance following the Ramadan war, which destroyed the myth of Israel's absolute superiority. Moreover, the Seventh Arab Summit Conference² has clearly defined Arab functions and responsibilities emerging from the great military, political and international victories achieved by the Palestinian revolution recently, the latest example of which we are witnessing in this very Hall.

83. It is incumbent upon the United Nations, which has recognized the legal existence of the Palestinian people and finally stopped treating the Palestine question as merely a refugee problem, to consolidate that recognition by providing a sound and appropriate solution based on justice, through an examination of the

roots and basic elements of the problem, as well as through consultation with the parties concerned.

84. In this connexion, it is essential to have direct contacts with the Palestinians in view of their natural rights over their homeland and the fact that they alone have the right to manage their own destiny and to accept or reject the proposals made to them. It is the entity of the Palestinian people that must be given first place in examining this problem, just as the PLO, the spokesman world wide for that people, whose authentic national struggle has been hailed by all who cherish freedom, is and remains the sole legitimate representative of that people, expressing its will and acting on its behalf.

85. It is common knowledge that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. Yet in dealing with the Palestinian problem, there has been a deviation from the straight line by ignoring the Palestinian entity and avoiding any direct contact with Palestinian leaders, thereby taking a more circuitous route to a solution. Indeed, the efforts in that direction have become lost in the maze of international politics.

86. Now that circumstances favour it, the achievement of that solution is the most pressing task before us because, as is known, the Middle East is threatened with frightening dangers, liable to unleash a fifth Arab-Israeli war, the grave consequences and political and financial impact of which would be felt around the world. We cannot ignore the false equation on which the *status quo* is based.

87. In the past quarter of a century—for a whole generation—the Middle East region has been the scene of four successive wars, all emanating from attempts to obliterate the Palestinian entity and to dilute it in what is called the Middle East crisis.

88. The United Nations recognition of the legal existence of the people of Palestine has enabled the world to find the true key to the solution of the problem. It now only remains for us to give that recognition real substance so that it may be applied and translated into reality. We should not be misled by the illusion that the United Nations is incapable of acting. This Organization is merely a reflection and an extension of the international community, and it cannot be said that the international community is unable in this case to repel aggression and to establish the right, peace and justice that are the very essence, quintessence and *raison d'être* of our Charter.

89. The appeal of Mr. Yasser Arafat to this Assembly not to let the olive branch fall from his hand is worthy of very careful study because it is a sincere appeal for peace, understanding and tolerance such as can rarely have been heard from a revolutionary leader. This Islamic Arab trait, born of a spirit of tolerance, fraternity and conciliation, has its roots in Arab and Muslim history, because Muslims have always maintained friendly relations with peoples of other religions. One of the basic pillars of our Islamic religion is faith and belief in revealed religions, in the forefront of which are Judaism and Christianity.

90. From this clear, humanistic source came the appeal of Yasser Arafat, like the appeal now launched by the whole Arab nation as it extends the hand of conciliation to those who have trespassed against its sanctity, in a true wish to avoid the shedding of inno-

cent blood. All that it asks is the application of the simplest principles of justice and equity.

91. This appeal does not stem from weakness or fear but rather from a position of strength combined with patience, for it is a long time since the Arab nation has enjoyed such a brilliant period militarily and economically. Although ours is a position of strength, we are joining with the PLO to raise with its leader, Yasser Arafat, the olive branch, symbol of tolerance and conciliation combined with justice.

92. As one of the Arab leaders said at the conclusion of the recent seventh Arab Summit Conference, held at Rabat, we are a nation that prefaces every action with the word *salaam*, peace, in accordance with the teachings of our religion and our age-old customs. It is with this word, peace, and in order to serve the cause of peace, that we are opening a new file on the question of Palestine and launching a sincere appeal for peace. I believe that nobody will reproach me here for rejecting injustice and aggression. The Arab nation today is determined to put an end to this injustice and to wipe out the insult to it, and will stand side by side with the PLO until ultimate victory is achieved and the rights of the Palestinian people are restored so that they may establish national sovereignty, go back to their homes and liberate the Arab city of Jerusalem, the cradle of religions and civilizations and the holy place most dear to the heart of the whole Arab nation.

93. The attention of the world is focused on us today, with anxious hope. The dignity and status of our Organization today is at stake more than ever before. The destiny of millions of human beings living in the Middle East is closely linked to the outcome of our efforts. They may live to see a joyous future in which peace will reign or, on the contrary, they may once more suffer the scourge of war. So let us rise to the hopes placed in us so as to establish order and apply the principles of justice and equity. Let us bring peace to reign once more over the land of peace, Palestine.

94. Mr. AKÉ (Ivory Coast) (*interpretation from French*): I should like first of all to associate my delegation with the tributes paid yesterday and on Friday morning to the memory of Mr. Erskine Childers, President of Ireland, and Mr. Omar Sakkaf, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia. I should like to request the delegations of Ireland and Saudi Arabia to find in my words an expression of profound and heartfelt sympathy on the occasion of the deaths of those two distinguished statesman.

95. If there is a problem today that concerns each of our nations, be they large or small, rich or poor, because it constitutes the most serious threat to international peace and security and because it affects each one of us, surely that problem is the situation in the Middle East. The Ivory Coast is profoundly dedicated to peace and has always advocated negotiation for the peaceful settlement of all disputes, particularly those of the Middle East, by addressing itself to the very heart of the conflict—the Palestinian problem. The feelings of frustration experienced by the Palestinian refugees, feelings which are exacerbated by their obstinate rejection by some and by the propaganda of hate and exploitation, for domestic and foreign political ends, of others, have led us to fear, since 1961, that the inhuman living conditions of those ref-

ugees could only make them a permanent threat to international peace and security. The events of recent years have fully justified our fears and there is now agreement in recognizing that there will be no true peace in the Middle East so long as a political solution to the Palestinian problem is not found and so long as the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, so often reaffirmed, are not made a practical reality.

96. The situation of those people required then, and demands today, a political solution, which could and must be found, had we wanted and if we still want to recognize and take into account the real and evident state of affairs in the region. We are pleased at the efforts now being made to defuse the explosive situation in the area. We are happy at the results that have been obtained and we earnestly encourage all those who are engaged in the process to pursue their efforts.

97. However, if we believe, like the vast majority of this Assembly, that the solution to the Palestinian problem is a *sine qua non* for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, we must recognize that those efforts will remain futile if the people of Palestine, the main party concerned, is not associated with them. It is important, therefore, to involve its representatives in the process of negotiation and the patient search for peace in the region. It was on the basis of those profound convictions that the Ivory Coast sponsored the request for the inscription of the question of Palestine on the agenda of this session, and sponsored the draft resolution adopted by the Assembly as resolution 3210 (XXIX), inviting the PLO, which represents the people of Palestine, to participate in our deliberations on this crucial question that is now influencing the peace of the world. The participation of that organization in the debate was essential because it made it possible for us to learn the specific views of the Palestinian people and assess the assistance the international community could provide to it to achieve its legitimate aspirations, in full respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

98. In the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Ivory Coast before the General Assembly on 27 September 1974 [see 2246th meeting, paras. 70 and 81], he said that the slogans in General Assembly resolutions, which frequently concealed our shortcomings, must give way to a pragmatic approach to the problems, and added that, over and above all our disagreements, there was still room for reciprocal concessions on the part of each one of us. We showed how, in the Middle East, from 1948 to 1973, the impassioned violence of men gave rise to the Palestinian conflict and how, in its turn, that conflict also led to violence.

99. We arrived at the conclusion that successive wars have settled nothing, any more than the development of a new war would solve anything. Therefore, why not cease entangling ourselves in this spider's web of intrigue, hatred and suffering?

100. The problem is no longer to know if our sympathies are with the Israeli or the Palestinian side, the Christian or the Islamic side. No! Our sympathy, our attitude, has always been inspired by our tenacious search for peace for all. Peace is indivisible; peace in the Middle East is a condition for peace in Africa and

peace in the world. This twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly can, better than previous sessions, serve the cause of peace and thus has a chance to accomplish great things.

101. Everyone is content to acknowledge that the situation in that region is becoming disastrous and that the problem is becoming more and more complicated. But we repeat: it is by desiring to know what must be known that we can assist in the solution to the problem. Now, what is it that we should know?

102. All the inhabitants of Palestine are brothers; they are in fact, the same Semitic people who have had the privilege of receiving three divine revelations on their territory. It is contemporary colonization that has divided them. Certainly, conflicts of a religious nature ruptured the unity of that people, but it needed contemporary colonization to sow in our midst the seeds of discord and division, making of the Semites enemy brothers. None the less, if they have a fundamental message to give to the world, is it not that of peace, peace to men of good will?

103. The State of Israel was created by General Assembly resolution 181 (II) on 29 November 1947. As stated by Mr. Gromyko in Budapest on 18 November 1968, it acquired for itself the right to an independent national existence. All the major Powers are unanimous in protecting that existence, as their statements of 22 November 1967⁵ and 20 September 1969 attest.

104. In like manner, the objective of the revolt of other Palestinian peoples, Christians and Muslims, must be grasped and understood by all. They have given proof of their aspiration to independence. Nothing can now weaken the growing impact of the specifically Palestinian element in that problem, and it would be only just to recognize the legitimacy of their right to restore an autonomous Palestinian State and to lead their own national existence there.

105. It should be understood that new forces have been liberated: Muslim and Christian Palestinians. We shall have the greatest difficulties in dealing with them if we do not offer them justice. If, as we were saying earlier, Palestine was formerly divided, a part of it having become Israel—and all the Major Powers are now ensuring the existence of that part—quite obviously, the other part must be returned to the other Palestinians. We shall be told, perhaps, that this is the thorn in the wound, but we must become convinced that, regardless of the pain, to heal that wound it is necessary to remove the thorn.

106. But it is also equally evident that certain positions or definitions explained or made plain by the two parties diametrically opposed to each other do have their merits, whether it be the establishment of a unified Palestinian State in which Jews, Muslims and Christians could live democratically, or the integration of the Palestinians in a Jordano-Palestinian nation. However attractive they may appear, they can only belong in a future that is very difficult to foresee.

107. First of all, the return of the Christian and Muslim Palestinians is desired by the world community. Moreover, it is now a constant factor in the policy of the Middle East. At Rabat, the Arab countries agreed to return to the Palestinians the lands

they had occupied for the needs of the Arab national cause. Israel should consider favourably the attainment of this aspiration and should return the occupied territories, or should evacuate them. In that case, common sense bids us say, the problem will become a Palestinian-Arab problem, not an Israeli-Arab problem. Moreover, history has taught us that, since Weizmann, each time that this affair has taken an Israeli-Hashemite orientation, the Palestinians have seen in it an Anglo-Saxon imperialist design. To insist on this solution is to create an insurmountable obstacle.

108. Furthermore, President Houphouët-Boigny has taught us that we must always find a way to fuse the visionary ideal with the practical reality. When unity is imposed by force, then conquest is an empty victory. There can only be unity when all those years of war have been forgotten and when we have effaced the hatred and distrust they have engendered.

109. The question should be removed from the rut of petty politics and raised to a higher level. We must have the courage to speak the truth as we understand it, to all the parties: Israelis, Palestinians and Arabs. Perhaps the Israelis have the impression that we wish to conclude with them a false peace in order to destroy them or to subjugate them. Perhaps also the Palestinians and the Arabs are convinced of Israel's intention to expand, and thus are also excluding, as far as they are concerned, all possibility of peaceful solutions.

110. Current difficulties are a result of the distrust of both parties. None the less, they have no other choice but to concentrate all their energies on defeating distrust, the mother of fear and hatred. Each party should have a policy to appease the other.

111. Israel should attempt a new policy, one of demonstrating sympathy and goodwill towards its Palestinian brothers. Its future lies with them. The Palestinians, on their part, should reassure the Israelis by renouncing their intention of destroying that State.

112. We are certain that, with mutual good will, the Semites, who for centuries lived together in that Palestine which is the cradle of religions, will find the right way.

113. Since large groups are now the trend, it is not impossible that the peaceful coexistence of two States, one an Israeli-Palestinian, the other a Muslim and Christian Palestine, would re-establish the credibility of both of them or that the mutual trust arising out of their coexistence would facilitate a form of union or unity. In the meantime, let us adopt the wise concept of President Houphouët-Boigny who, with his rustic good sense, has taught us that if men cannot live harmoniously in one hut, then it is better to live harmoniously in separate huts.

114. It is not realistic either to flout the right to self-determination and to integrate the Palestinians in any State in that region. This would mean our being caught up in a chain of events prejudicial to world peace.

115. Since the "Yom Kippur war", the just determination of the great Powers to avoid the extension of the armed conflict rules out any prospect of victory for either side. Only a solution by dialogue offers assurances.

116. Dialogue is an effective weapon. It might seem difficult in certain circumstances, but it is never impos-

sible. It is true that dialogue is difficult when affinities are few, but between Israeli, Christian and Muslim Palestinians, those affinities exist in abundance: they are only stifled. Therefore let us all make an effort in order to overcome our difficulties. It is enough to balance the forces of cohesion and the forces of aggression to achieve a fruitful dialogue.

117. In fact, an agreement cannot be established except between the parties concerned. One of those parties is Israel and the other the Christian and Muslim Palestinians. Why cannot Israel achieve a direct understanding with the other Palestinians, with the PLO, in order to resolve the differences between them?

118. We continue to state that the great Powers are responsible for that unfortunate situation. But since we have been provided, for the first time since 1947, with an opportunity to have our say, we must enter—even if we have to break in—the traditional inner circles of the policy of that region, which is so dear to us, and assist in building a policy of peace for the Middle East.

119. Of course, we must remain above the fray and not allow ourselves to be perturbed or dismayed by the contradictory positions of the supporters of one party or the other. The recommendations of the Assembly should express the considered opinion of the international community in the light of 27 years of tension and war in that region, and should set forth the conditions for a settlement acceptable to all.

120. In that respect, the Ivory Coast would have serious doubts about the future of any solution that did not endorse the following essential principles: reaffirmation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people; recognition of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people; withdrawal by Israel from the territories occupied since 1967; restoration to the Palestinians of Palestinian territory under the control of any other States; establishment of a Palestinian State separate both from Israel and from Jordan; recommendations to Member States to give all material and financial assistance to the young Palestinian State; reaffirmation of the right of all the States of the region, including Israel, to their existence and independence; agreement on the non-belligerency and peaceful coexistence of all the States of the region.

121. The Ivory Coast is following with many misgivings the situation developing in the Holy Land, and there would seem to be nothing in that situation to allay our fears. There has never been, even in the most ancient times, a conflict concerning so small a region, a region with such a limited economic potential, that has had such repercussions and increasingly disastrous consequences for mankind. This situation calls for reflection. From peace in that region, the cradle of religions, universal peace will emerge, whereas conflict there will certainly have incalculable consequences, out of all proportion to the size and nature of the countries involved in the conflict.

122. May this first debate on the substance of the question of Palestine constitute, through the realism and pragmatism of our resolutions, the first milestone on the long road that must lead us to peace, that peace we all so fervently desire in the Middle East.

123. Mr. MACKI (Oman) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Mr. President, there is no doubt that the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under your able guidance, is witnessing a very important historical trend in the evolution of the Palestine question.

124. The question of Palestine has been deliberately ignored by some and some have been unaware of the real issues involved, while some quarters are engaged in deliberately obliterating and distorting the whole question. Those quarters are the very ones to which the principles of justice and peace and the fact of a nation rendered homeless do not seem to mean anything at all.

125. Today, after a bitter struggle lasting more than a quarter of a century, the Palestinian people have proved their legitimate right to self-determination and their right to return to their homes. The Palestinian people have rejected the *fait accompli* being imposed by the Zionist occupation of Palestine and the looting of their property and the misappropriation of their lands.

Mr. Aké (Ivory Coast), Vice-President, took the Chair.

126. Today the question of Palestine, now before the General Assembly, is not a question of refugees in need of charity and funds; it is, for the first time, a question of a nation and a lost home and the right to self-determination.

127. This is really an eventful occasion. The presence and participation of the representatives of the Palestinian people in the deliberations concerning their just cause add to the importance and vitality of these deliberations. Their presence here imparts to the deliberations a realistic dimension which has often been missing in the past.

128. Allow me here to greet all those representatives who voted in favour of extending an invitation to the delegation of Palestine and who thus enabled the General Assembly and all the States represented in it to listen to the facts, straight from the Palestinians themselves.

129. No one can seriously deny or ignore the fact that Palestine is at the core of the crises in the Middle East and the wars that have flared up there, with their dangerous and harmful economic and political repercussions on the whole world.

130. The real issue here revolves around a people forcibly expelled from its homes in order to accommodate another people gathered from the four corners of the earth. That was the outcome of a Zionist plot aided and abetted by some States and ignored at that time by the rest of the world. That is the tragic reality of the whole situation. The world, which has come to its senses, is witnessing with horror the genocide being carried out by the Zionist gangs—with the callous collaboration of the colonialist Powers—when they themselves had suffered under foreign domination.

131. If the world could tolerate such a thing at a period in history when foreign occupation and domination were rampant in many parts of the world, the free people of today's universe can no longer ignore such a situation or allow it to continue unabated. This new awareness is evidenced by the fact that 105 Mem-

ber States participated in extending the invitation to the delegation of the PLO to these meetings.

132. The PLO came into being as a realization of the desire of the majority of the Palestinians, those displaced people, to continue their struggle to regain their usurped rights and homes. The noble objectives of that organization were clearly stated by its leader, Yasser Arafat, a few days ago before this august Assembly. The PLO, by its continuous struggle, has proved its consistency with and faith in those noble targets. We fully support the objectives of the PLO. We support also its right to struggle by all the means at its disposal to achieve those objectives in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

133. No one doubts, even those who do not wish to admit it, that the key to the settlement of the Middle East crisis and the only way for peace and security to reign supreme in that area lies in the just solution of the Palestinian question. This solution entails the return of the people of Palestine to their homes and the securing of their independence through their legitimate right of self-determination.

134. The United Nations has recognized the right of the Palestinian people in many resolutions, which regrettably could not be implemented owing to the utter rigidity of the Zionists and the collaboration of certain Powers.

135. In spite of these facts we appreciate and support the efforts of the United Nations and its organs in this respect. We clearly support the resolution condemning Israel, while supporting the rights of the Palestinians.

136. We believe, however, that the time has come for the United Nations to consider and study this question more closely. The steps to be adopted here should not only concern the humanitarian aspects of the question, but the General Assembly should also address itself to the political and legal realities of the question, since the real issues involved concern the legitimate rights of a people to return to its home.

137. Absolutely no one has the right to prevent the Palestinian people from exercising their legitimate right of self-defence, a right recognized by the Charter of the United Nations as well as by the principles of international law and all just legislation in history.

138. Israel and the mass media collaborating with it have been engaged for 25 years in a process of distorting the facts about the Palestinians and all kinds of accusations are being levelled against the PLO.

139. I do not intend to list the series of atrocious crimes committed by the Zionist terrorists of the Haganah, the Irgun and the Stern Gang, and those being committed nowadays by Israel against the Palestinian people and the rest of the Arabs. Allow me here to draw attention to document A/9801, which has been distributed as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 108, and contains a detailed list of those atrocious crimes.

140. May I be permitted here to go back to recent history. On 29 November 1947, when the General Assembly adopted the resolution on the Plan of Partition, the number of Jews in Palestine, including the European Zionists, stood at less than one third of the

total population. The percentage of the lands owned by them was not more than 3 per cent of the whole of Palestine. Yet the resolution ignored this fact completely and gave the Zionists 56 per cent of the lands and gave the Arabs, who constituted more than two thirds of the population then, only 44 per cent of the lands. This happened at a time when the Arabs owned 97 per cent of the lands. All the tragedies and human sufferings inflicted upon the people of Palestine are directly related to this unfortunate resolution. I reiterate here the almost prophetic words of Sir Mohammed Zafrullah Khan in his message to the General Assembly at that fateful session:

[The speaker continued in English]

"A fateful decision has been taken. The die has been cast . . . We did succeed in persuading a sufficient number of our fellow representatives to see the right as we saw it, but they were not permitted to stand by the right as they saw it. Our hearts are sad but our conscience is easy. We would not have it the other way round . . .

"We very much fear that the beneficence, if any, to which partition may lead will be small in comparison to the mischief which it might inaugurate . . . We entertain no sense of grievance against those of our friends and fellow representatives who have been compelled, under heavy pressures, to change sides and to cast their votes in support of a proposal the justice and fairness of which do not commend themselves to them. Our feeling for them is one of sympathy that they should have been placed in a position of such embarrassment between their judgement and conscience, on the one side, and the pressure to which they and their Governments were being subjected on the other."⁶

[The speaker resumed in Arabic]

141. The prophecy of Sir Mohammed Zafrullah Khan came true. After that decision the area witnessed four wars in which Israel occupied the 44 per cent allotted to the Arabs and even more of the lands of neighbouring States in complete faith to its aggressive expansionist policies and thus displacing thousands upon thousands of the Arab inhabitants.

142. Is it too much to ask the United Nations after 25 years to rectify this situation, which was originally created by it? Is it too much to ask the United Nations to take the right and just path of recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination?

143. The right of every people to return to the home from which they were forcibly expelled is a sacred right. No human being who is endowed with a conscience can deny this. It was exactly this truth which led Senator William Fulbright to ask:

"Is the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes from which they were expelled any less fundamental than the right of Soviet Jews to make new homes in new lands?"

144. Mr. NAÇO (Albania) (*interpretation from French*): The Palestinian problem, which the present session of the General Assembly is in the course of examining, constitutes beyond any doubt a question of great importance because it concerns the protection and the respect for the highest sovereign rights of people, their struggle to free themselves from foreign

domination and from the imperialist, colonialist and racist yoke, because it concerns a vital question for the heroic and long-suffering Palestinian people, as well as for peace and security in the Middle East.

145. The Albanian people and the Government of Albania, guided by the policy of principle of unqualified support for the struggle of peoples to conquer and defend their national rights, have always taken an unshakeable stand in favour of the just cause of the Arab people of Palestine to return to its cherished homeland, and recognition of its inalienable right to self-determination. This attitude of principle and of determination adopted by the Albanian people and its Government remains unchanged and immutable.

146. As everyone knows, the Palestine problem emerged as a consequence of the aggressive and annexationist policy of international Zionism, encouraged and supported by the United States. The fact is that more than a quarter of a century ago an entire people, the Arab people of Palestine, was expelled from its beloved motherland by force of arms and compelled to become a refugee people as a result of the blatant aggression of Israel, powerfully supported by international Zionism and the imperialist Powers, and in the first place by the United States. From that time until the present day more than a million and a half Palestinians, a whole nation, have continued to lead a life of privation and suffering far from their homes, enduring all the harsh consequences of the life of refugees forced to live in camps. To this number must be added the Palestinian refugees from the eastern sector of Jerusalem, Gaza and the other regions occupied by the Israeli Zionists as a result of their aggression of June 1967.

147. While forcibly expelling the Palestinians from their homes, Israel at the same time has continued to conduct an active campaign of terror and massacre against the civilian population of Palestine. The Israeli Zionists bomb Palestinian refugee camps, raining fire and iron on them by the use of cannons, tanks and aircraft supplied to them by the United States. These monstrous acts, which have profoundly shocked the conscience of all progressive human beings, are nothing but the expression of the policy of genocide and denationalization that Israel pursues arrogantly and stubbornly towards the Palestinian people in order to make them disappear from the face of the earth.

148. Palestine, which occupies a key position in the Middle East region, has always aroused the covetousness of the imperialist Powers, which seek to take over that important strategic region and its great reserves of oil, estimated to constitute two thirds of the resources of the world.

149. The United States has always used Israel, its agent in the Middle East, precisely in the interest of its imperialist policy in that region. It has used and continues to use Israel like a pistol that it aims at the Arab countries in order to achieve its colonialist designs in the Middle East. American imperialism has converted Israel into a weapons depot and a base for aggression. It gives Israel unceasing and ever-increasing multilateral, moral, political, economic and military assistance and support.

150. We have already highlighted the fact that the source of the Palestinian tragedy lies precisely in that

policy of the imperialist Powers, and particularly the United States, in their profoundly hostile and anti-Arab attitude, in the role they have assigned to Israel. It is obvious that, without the multilateral support of the American imperialists, the Israeli Zionists would have been unable to engage in such criminal activities against the Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples, to undertake aggression on a large scale as they have done in that region and to openly defy progressive international public opinion and the United Nations. All the activities of Israel against the Palestinian people, all its aggressive wars, from the earliest to the most recent, against the Arab peoples have been wars of the United States against those peoples.

151. Even here, in the United Nations, the United States has done its utmost to divert the attention of peace-loving Member States from the essence of the Palestinian problem by forcing the United Nations to conduct the discussion on this question from the wrong angle, converting a problem concerning the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people—which it is in fact—into a simple question of refugees by imparting to it a so-called humanitarian character in order to alleviate the sufferings of those refugees by the hypocritical offer of some charity. Such an attitude was designed to ignore and totally liquidate the national cause of the Palestinian people. But that people has never bowed to force of arms or crimes, terror, fierce reprisals and the plots hatched against it. It has always kept up its patriotic spirit. Palestinian mothers have raised and continue to raise a whole generation of fighters for liberty and the restoration of their national soil. The Palestinian people, by constant effort and at the cost of extraordinary sacrifices, by the struggle it has carried on for many years, has conserved its traditions and its rich national culture, its entity as a nation.

152. Addressing the Association of Albano-Palestinian Friends, the leader of the Albanian people, Enver Hoxha, said:

“Your glorious struggle, the armed struggle, is the only just course for the liberation of the Palestinian people and all the Arab lands occupied by the Zionist invaders. It cannot ever be impeded regardless of the intrigues hatched or the methods used by your enemies. There is no force which can weaken and vanquish the invincible will of your people to gain their freedom. Your struggle frightens your avowed and your hidden enemies. That is why they fight you openly and carry out secret intrigues in order to liquidate you. But, just as it is impossible to liquidate the brother Arab peoples, including the Palestinian people with its glorious history, so it is impossible to liquidate your national liberation movement which is an integral part of the struggle of the peoples of the Middle East.”

153. The enemies of the Palestinian people—the imperialists, the Zionists and others—have tried to apply the law of silence to this heroic struggle. But all freedom-loving peoples, countries to which the cause of freedom and national independence is dear, have followed carefully the just struggle of the Palestinian people. We Albanians have always stood at the side of our Palestinian brethren; we understand fully their aspirations and their legitimate demands, and we have given them our complete and firm support.

154. Since the admission of Albania to membership of the United Nations, our delegation has played an active part in all the discussions that have taken place here in connexion with the Palestinian problem and has always emphasized that this problem is above all an important political question concerning the destiny of an entire people deprived of its fundamental rights, concerning the grave situation created in the Middle East, and that it is a question inseparable from the lofty aspirations of peoples for freedom, independence and social progress. At the same time, we have criticized here the way in which our Organization has dealt with this question because that method has done nothing to defend the national interests of the Palestinian people but, on the contrary, has made it possible for the Israeli Zionists to continue their crimes against the Palestinian people and to perpetuate their occupation of the national soil of that people.

155. Encouraged and supported by the United States, Israel has succeeded in putting into practice the old design of international Zionism to create a “greater Israel” at the expense of neighbouring countries and peoples. It has unleashed, and this is only during the past two decades, three aggressive wars in that region, thereby occupying and placing under its control large territories belonging to the Arab States, which it continues to occupy by force of the arms supplied to it by the United States. By their successive aggressive actions in the Middle East the Zionists expect at the same time to reduce to nothing the question of Palestine.

156. What is being concealed behind these aggressive acts of Israel is the expansionist designs the United States is trying to implement in the Middle East by the extension of aggression against the Arab countries and by converting the Middle East into an arena of continual wars and conflicts.

157. Such a situation in the Middle East, including reducing the Palestinian people to the status of a refugee people and the pursuit of the aggressive and annexationist policy of Israel, is in conformity also with the well-known expansionist aims of the Soviet Union in that region.

158. Whereas the United States is openly supporting Israel and using it as a tool in its hands, the Soviet Union, for its part, is taking advantage of the situation that has been created in order to bring about its hegemonic designs, calculating that the Arab peoples and the Palestinian people threatened by Israel will need it and thus be obliged to bow before it and obey it.

159. In its attitude with respect to this question, the Soviet Union has as a starting-point its narrow imperialist interests and its design to establish its influence in this area. The Soviet social-imperialists are dangerous because, on the one hand, they attempt to represent themselves as friends and defenders of the Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples and, on the other—and this is what really corresponds to reality—they stab them in the back and abandon them in their most difficult moments. It is common knowledge that, whereas the United States is unceasingly supplying Israel with all types of weapons and all the necessary means of warfare, the Soviet Union, for its part, is abiding by its clearly defined line, which is intended to prevent the strengthening at the necessary

level of the defence capacity of the Arab countries vis-à-vis the Zionist enemy that is armed to the teeth.

160. The whole attitude of the Soviet Union on the question of the Middle East has one way or another helped the Israeli Zionists in their aggressive activities. Numerous facts in this respect unmask its ambivalent attitude towards the Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples. In fact, by publicly permitting its citizens to flock to Israel, it is giving effective assistance to the latter so that it might repress the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people, the just struggle of the Arab peoples. The Soviet Government has gone so far as to use the vital national interests of the Palestinian people and those of the Arab peoples as barter in its dealings with the United States. At the very time when here, in the United Nations, the overwhelming majority of Member States voted in favour of allowing the PLO to participate in its debate on the question of Palestine and when the representative of the Soviet Union spoke of that country's alleged friendship with the Palestinian people, talks were being held in Moscow in the course of which it was agreed that the Soviet Union would increase to 60,000 the number of Soviet citizens who would be authorized to emigrate each year to Israel, and this in exchange for a few economic benefits it will receive from the United States.

161. In this regard, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Albania, Mr. Mehmet Shehu, on 29 October of this year stated in the People's Assembly that:

"Soviet social-imperialism has become the greatest supplier to aggressor Israel of human resources in the fields of labour, science and war. This is how far the perfidy and the betrayal of the social-imperialist super-Power goes with respect to the peoples. We denounce with contempt and condemn with a strong aversion this abominable bargain between the two super-Powers against the brother Arab peoples, which will undoubtedly draw the necessary conclusions."

162. This policy of the Soviet Union clearly reveals its intentions to establish itself as firmly as possible in the Middle East region for strategic reasons and with a view to the economic exploitation of the area. Just like the United States, the Soviet Union is also in favour of the establishment and the maintenance in the Middle East of an atmosphere in which a perpetual threat by Israel against the Arab countries exists. The Soviet Union is rivalling and collaborating with the United States to ensure its own presence in this area and to have it as a base for further expansion towards the Mediterranean, Africa, Asia and other regions.

163. The two super-Powers have tried by all means to divide the Arab peoples and, above all, to repress the legitimate struggle of the gallant Palestinians, to liquidate the Palestinian cause. These are the purposes served by their plans manufactured in Washington and Moscow, as well as here, at the United Nations, by means of certain resolutions of the Security Council that, *inter alia*, were designed to obliterate the Palestinian cause.

164. The United States and the Soviet Union are not only opposed to a just solution of the Palestinian problem and that of the Middle East as a whole but

they are also attempting to make the existing situation last for as long as possible because they can thus more easily penetrate into the Middle East and continue their attempts to play the role of arbiter in this problem. In this respect, the two super-Powers continue to collaborate and to allocate roles between themselves.

165. It is certain that these two imperialist Powers have incompatible interests also; the rivalry between them in the Middle East is more than obvious. Each seeks to make sure of better positions for itself to the detriment of the other Power and to undermine the other's positions. At times, the differing aims of these two super-Powers are clearly observable, as was the case particularly after the October war in the Middle East last year.

166. However, in spite of their rivalry and in spite of the efforts that they make to outdistance each other, the two super-Powers, as it has become quite clear, have embarked upon efforts to maintain the present situation of "neither war nor peace" in the Middle East in order to make of partial solutions a permanent *status quo*. It is already known that during the recent Brezhnev-Kissinger meeting the Middle East problem was again discussed. We must not imagine that in these talks there is any question of the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Arab territories or of the return of the Palestinians to their homeland. Quite the contrary, in the Soviet-American talks, new plans are being hatched against the Arabs and, in the first place, against the Palestinian people.

167. These irrefutable facts once again demonstrate that the roots of the tension and of the explosive situation now existing in the Middle East, the roots of the continuation of the deplorable situation in which the Palestinian people lives, are to be found first of all in the efforts of the two super-Powers to take advantage of the Israeli-Arab conflict for their own hegemonic plans in this region.

168. The Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples are beginning to realize more and more who their true friends and who their false friends are. They have suffered and are still suffering the consequences of the plots that the two super-Powers have hatched in order to make the effects of the Zionist imperialist aggressions last as long as possible. But they will never agree to sacrifice their lofty national rights. The Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples have rejected all the machinations against them and they have firmly stated that they will fight until the total liberation of the lands that have been wrested from them.

169. During this period of suffering and constant struggle, the Palestinian people has written glorious pages in its history in the blood shed by its finest sons and daughters on the battlefield, thus proving its vitality and its unshakable resolution not to retreat before any difficulty.

170. The Palestinian people is a gallant people with a brilliant tradition of struggle for freedom, independence and national dignity. The heroic armed struggle of the Palestinian people is part of the great struggle of all the peoples of the world against imperialism, social-imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and all other forms of reaction. We are convinced that

together with the other Arab peoples, it will conduct its armed struggle until final victory.

171. The Arab peoples are invincible. Their fighting spirit and their courage were manifested once again in the October war of last year in which the brave Palestinian fighters, side by side with their Arab brothers, gave further proof of heroism. The October war has shown that the Arab peoples have the real capability of overcoming Israeli aggression and reconquering the rights that have been taken away from them. The myth of the invincibility of Israel has been shattered; and it could not be otherwise, since that State was pillaging and oppressing the neighbouring peoples and drowning them in blood. Whatever aid the United States and international Zionism might supply to Israel—and quite apart from the treacherous attitude of the Soviet leadership with respect to the cause of the Arab peoples—1948 and 1967 can no longer be repeated.

172. The sources of the strength of the Arab peoples are immense. The petroleum embargo has become a formidable weapon in the hands of the Arabs. Solidarity with and international support for their just struggle are constantly growing; that was most clearly shown by the vote here in the General Assembly on the invitation to the PLO to take part in the present debate, which was supported by the overwhelming majority of Member States.

173. The Palestinian people, by its determined struggle, has won the admiration of all of the freedom-loving peoples of the world. It has become an excellent example to other peoples still languishing under the cruel yoke of occupation, oppression and exploitation.

174. The question of the national rights of the Palestinian people is the key to and the heart of the whole Middle East problem. Without a just solution of the Palestinian question, in conformity with the sovereign rights of the Arab people of Palestine, and without correcting the great injustices done to that people, no solution can ensure the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

175. The cause for which the Palestinian people is fighting is a just cause. It is directly linked with the

ideals of freedom, independence and progress and the question of peace and security. Whoever defends and cherishes those ideals must give his support and aid to the recognition and the total restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people and to the triumph of its just struggle.

176. The Albanian people, which is bound by an old traditional friendship to the brother Arab peoples and to the Palestinian people, powerfully supports their just struggle and their just cause. It will always be at their side, in good times or in bad, and will always and unreservedly support their liberation struggle. From the bottom of our hearts we salute the delegation of our Palestinian brothers who are taking part in the work of this Assembly.

177. The Albanian delegation, by expressing once again to the Palestinian people and to the other Arab peoples, profound feelings of brotherly friendship, solidarity and the firm support of the Albanian people for their just cause, emphasizes once again its confidence that the day is not far off when the Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples, by persevering in their resolute struggle, by maintaining their vigilance and by constantly reinforcing the unity between them, will reconquer and defend their inalienable sovereign rights and will realize their national aspirations.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

NOTES

A/9330 and Corr.1.

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

² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1867th meeting, para. 42.

³ A/AC.14/32, para. 64.

⁴ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-second Year*, 1382nd meeting.

⁵ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 128th meeting, p. 1426.