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GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

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A/ES-7/PV.14
22 April 1982

ENGLISH

Seventh emergency special session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 22 April 1982, at 10.30 a.m.

President:

Mr. KITTANI

(Iraq)

- Question of Palestine /57/ (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 5 (continued)

QUESTION OF PALESTINE

The PRESIDENT: I should like to remind members of the decision taken by the General Assembly yesterday to close the list of speakers at 12 noon today.

Mr. PRADHAN (Bhutan): The seventh emergency special session of the General Assembly has been resumed at a very critical period in the crisis facing the Middle East. Since we last took up the "Question of Palestine" in July 1980 and at the subsequent sessions of the General Assembly, the developments in the Middle East have not contributed towards the attainment of the objectives we envisaged. Instead, the use of military force has caused more bloodshed and misery to the peoples of the region. Emotions have been fired and tensions have heightened between the countries and factions of the region. The already feeble foundations of international peace and security are in danger of being further weakened and a complete collapse of this fragile structure is no longer only a remote possibility.

The resumption of the seventh emergency special session, however, gives the international community, and especially the parties that are more directly involved, yet another opportunity to review their individual policies and positions. We must continue to try to find a solution which would lead to lasting peace and stability in the region. While attempting to find such a solution, we urge all concerned to exercise maximum restraint and work towards a truly realistic and practical solution so that the genuine interests of all are taken into account. If solutions suppress or ignore those genuine interests or attempts are made to impose one-sided solutions by force of might, or otherwise, lasting peace will not really be achieved.

A comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem, in order to be fair and equitable to all concerned, must include the following elements:

First, the recognition and participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, on an equal footing, in all efforts and negotiations to resolve the conflict in the Middle East.

(Mr. Pradhan, Bhutan)

Secondly, the withdrawal by Israel from all Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since June 1967.

Thirdly, the establishment of a sovereign independent State of Palestine.

Fourthly, the right of all States in the region to live in peace within internationally recognized and guaranteed boundaries.

I am aware that the elements which I just mentioned have been widely considered and deliberated upon. However, what is important is the particular mix of those elements in a comprehensive settlement that would be acceptable to all sides. My delegation is quite convinced that only if such a framework is permitted to evolve can a peaceful solution be found to the crisis that has plagued the Middle East for more than three decades.

Miss DEVER (Belgium) (interpretation from French): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 member States of the European Community.

Our ten Governments are profoundly disturbed and saddened by the very serious events which have recently occurred in the occupied territories of the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights, and by the toll of killed and wounded that the tragedy has taken. At a meeting of the European Council on 29 and 30 March last, our Heads of State and Government issued a pressing appeal that an end be put to that dangerous concatenation of violence and repression.

They denounced in particular the imposition on the Palestinian population of measures such as the dismissal by the Israeli authorities of democratically-elected mayors as well as the constraints on the freedoms and rights of the inhabitants of those territories, measures which followed those taken by Israel in connexion with the Golan Heights, and which can only jeopardize any prospects for peace.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

The pressing need to get out of the vicious circle of violence in the occupied territories and urgently to find a just solution to the Palestinian problem was very clearly brought out by the tragic intensification of the climate of confrontation resulting from the gun battle of 11 April this year in the Moslem Holy Places of Jerusalem.

Any solution to the Palestine question implies the reconciliation of two realities, the State of Israel and the Palestinian people, so that those two realities can live together in peace and security.

We believe that the events of recent months in the occupied territories and the steps taken by the Israeli authorities have only served to undermine the necessary bases for dialogue and trust, which are essential prerequisites for any constructive negotiation to reach a comprehensive peace settlement.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

On the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the Ten have set forth in the Venice Declaration and in ensuing statements the two basic principles which, they believe, should underlie the efforts to find such a settlement. These principles are the right to existence and to security for all the States in the region, including Israel, and justice for all the peoples, which necessarily implies the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. If the parties concerned can be induced to accept these two fundamental principles, the Ten are convinced that this would indeed be an important step towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace settlement, which we so sorely need.

The Ten believe that certain important consequences derive from these two principles. All the countries in the region have the right to live in peace within secure, recognized and guaranteed boundaries. A just solution must be found to the Palestinian problem, which is more than a mere refugee problem. The Palestinian people should be enabled, by an appropriate process to be defined as part of an over-all peace settlement, fully to exercise its right to self-determination. Israel should put an end to the territorial occupation it has maintained since the 1967 conflict. The negotiations to bring about a comprehensive peace settlement should be based on the recognition and implementation of a twofold right: that of Israel to existence and security and that of the Palestinian people to self-determination. Any progress along these lines would be extremely gratifying to the Ten.

The Ten have constantly made it clear that these principles apply to all parties involved, without exception. They have reaffirmed that the principles therefore apply to the Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which should be associated in such negotiations.

The Ten also wish to express their view that the Hague Convention of 18 October 1907 and the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 are applicable to all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

The ten States members of the European Community would like to reiterate the paramount importance which they attach to all matters affecting the rights of the populations of the occupied territories. They reject any unilateral initiative aimed at modifying the physical and demographic structures of these

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

territories. The Ten consider that Israel's policy to create settlements is a grave hindrance to peace prospects in the area. Such settlements are illegal under international law and contrary to the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war, a principle set forth in resolution 242 (1967).

Recognizing the particular importance of the question of Jerusalem for all parties involved, the Ten reject any initiative aimed at altering the status of that city. They would like to reiterate their commitment to respect for, and the inviolability of, the Holy Places. They wish to underline that any agreement on Jerusalem should guarantee the protection of and the free access by all to the Holy Places.

Those are the basic guidelines which determine our approach to the question of Palestine. We believe that it is up to all those concerned in the region to renew their efforts, before they are overtaken by events, in order to create those conditions making it possible for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace to be achieved. Recent developments of the situation in Lebanon only emphasize the need for every effort to be bent to establishing such a peace. In their declaration of 30 March, our ten Governments confirmed that they are willing and available to make such an effort.

Mr. LING Qing (China) (interpretation from Chinese): Sir, first of all, allow me to congratulate you warmly, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, on your assumption of the presidency of the resumed seventh emergency special session.

In the two years since the beginning of the seventh emergency special session, all justice-upholding and peace-loving countries and peoples have been calling for the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions and an early settlement of the question of Palestine. However, the Israeli authorities have persisted in a policy of aggression, expansion and oppression. As a result, there has been, not relaxation, but aggravation of tension in the Middle East. In early April the Security Council held several meetings on the situation in the occupied Arab territories and representatives of many countries categorically condemned Israel for its crimes of aggression and supported the Jordanian draft

(Mr. Ling Qing, China)

resolution designed to improve the situation. The draft resolution, however, was vetoed. In these circumstances, it was entirely reasonable and necessary for the Arab and non-aligned countries to call for the resumption of the seventh emergency special session of the General Assembly. Their just demand has been widely supported by the States Members of the United Nations.

The seventh emergency special session in 1980 adopted resolution ES-7/2, which explicitly

"Calls upon Israel to withdraw completely and unconditionally from all the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem, with all property and services intact, and urges that such withdrawal from all the occupied territories should start before 15 November 1980." (resolution ES-7/2. op. para. 7)

For more than a year now the Israeli authorities have shown nothing but contempt for the United Nations Charter and refused to implement the resolution of the emergency special session. They have intensified their efforts in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories to confiscate more land, expand the settlements, expel the local inhabitants and their political leaders and desecrate the cultural heritage of the Palestinian people, and they have illegally annexed the Golan Heights. In the wake of committing various acts of violence in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the attack on the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, Israel has, most recently, flagrantly sent large contingents of aircraft to bomb indiscriminately the Palestinian refugee camps and the innocent civilian population in southern Lebanon. This is another provocation on the part of Israel against the Lebanese, Palestinian and Arab peoples as a whole. The Chinese Government and people strongly condemn Israel for its crime of aggression and firmly support the Palestinian people in their just struggle against aggression, and firmly support the Governments of Lebanon and Syria in safeguarding independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

(Mr. Ling Qing, China)

The question of Palestine has been included as an important item on the agenda of successive sessions of the General Assembly for years. In the light of the development of the Middle East situation, an increasing number of countries have recognized the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The question of Palestine is at the core of the Middle East question, and in order to solve this question it is imperative to restore the national rights of the Palestinian people, including the rights to return to their homeland and to establish their own State. The fact that the seventh emergency special session is now resumed has highlighted once again the deep concern of the peoples of the world, their support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people and the urgent need for a speedy and just solution to the question of Palestine.

At the Security Council meetings in April, Jordan, Morocco and other States put forward two successive draft resolutions on the situation in the occupied Arab territories which condemned Israel for its crimes in the Golan Heights and the precincts of al Haram al-Shareef and demanded that Israel stop forthwith its acts in violation of the Geneva Convention in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan Heights. All of that reflected the common desire of the Arab, Islamic and non-aligned countries to oppose Israeli aggression and to preserve peace and stability in the Middle East region. However, both draft resolutions were vetoed by one of the permanent members of the Council. As a result, Israel was emboldened in its aggression, and the Security Council failed to discharge its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. No force, however, can stop the just struggle of the Palestinian people against aggression and for the recovery of their lost territories. We are convinced that with the support of the peoples of the world the Palestinian and Arab peoples, who have a glorious tradition of fighting against aggression, will surely defeat the aggressors and realize their lofty national aspirations.

The Chinese delegation wishes to take this opportunity to reaffirm that the Chinese Government holds that, in order to achieve the just solution to the Middle East question, it is imperative for Israel to withdraw from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and that the national rights of the Palestinian people must be restored, including the right to

(Mr. Ling Qing, China)

return to their homeland, the right to self-determination and the right to establish their own State. As the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the PLO should participate in all efforts concerning a comprehensive and just settlement of the Middle East question. It is also our view that the current session should strongly condemn Israel for its refusal to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions and for its continued illegal occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories. The Assembly should take all necessary and effective measures, including mandatory sanctions, against Israel. The question of Palestine is a major issue in the present-day world. We hope that the United Nations will shoulder its responsibilities and make its own contributions to the settlement of the Palestine issue.

Mr. LUSAKA (Zambia): The General Assembly is once again meeting to consider the question of Palestine. This resumed seventh emergency special session of the Assembly is a reflection of the deteriorating situation in the Middle East region. At the core of this problem is the question of Palestine.

In its attempts to deprive the Palestinian people of their inalienable natural rights to their homeland and to self-determination, Israel has increased its repression of the Palestinian and Arab peoples in the occupied territories. Israel has increased its efforts to destabilize Arab countries, such as Lebanon and Jordan, which support the Palestinian cause. Only yesterday Israel committed another act of aggression against Lebanon. In that aggression, a number of Lebanese citizens and Palestinians lost their lives and many others were injured. The recent annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights is yet another manifestation of Israel's intransigence, which, in the view of my delegation, is responsible for the heightened tension in the Middle East.

This situation, coupled with the increased repression and the reign of terror being unleashed by Israel against the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip, is a cause of great concern not only to my country but also, I believe, to the international community. Only last week the Security Council convened and deliberated on the action taken by an Israeli

(Mr. Lusaka, Zambia)

soldier who had sprayed bullets on innocent Moslem worshippers in the Al Aqsa Mosque on Easter Sunday, killing or injuring some of them. This is one of the tragic events that have befallen the Holy City of Jerusalem, which is under siege by Israel. My delegation regrets that at the conclusion of its meeting two days ago the Security Council was unable to take action as a result of the veto cast by one of its permanent members.

It is indeed ironic that the Jewish people, who were once victims of Nazi Germany's terrorism and who shout loudest against that terror, should themselves choose to torture, maim and kill thousands of innocent Palestinian men, women and children.

My delegation wishes to state in this regard that concrete action must be taken urgently to defuse the tension that exists in the Middle East region. We believe that the international community has an important contribution to make in bringing about a peaceful solution to the problem. To that extent, I wish to commend the latest efforts made by the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, at their meeting held in Kuwait from 5 to 8 April this year on the question of Palestine.

At that Conference many important recommendations were made towards solving the Middle East problem. Some of the recommendations were a reiteration of the resolutions and decisions adopted in the past by important organs of the United Nations, by the Movement itself, and indeed by other important conferences on the question of Palestine. Let me recall only a few, but important, aspects of the conclusions of the meeting of our Movement in Kuwait. The Conference emphasized that the Middle East problem can be settled only by a comprehensive and just settlement that, inter alia, ensures the following:

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"Complete, total and unconditional withdrawal by Israel from all the Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, in conformity with the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force;

"The free exercise of the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and to those who choose not to return the payment of equitable compensation;

"The attainment and free exercise of the inalienable rights in Palestine of the Palestinian people, including:

the right to self-determination without external interference and to national independence and sovereignty; and

the right to establish its own independent sovereign State."

Similar recommendations have been made in the past by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. It is my delegation's strong view that these recommendations provide a firm basis upon which the United Nations can solve the Palestinian problem. In this regard, the Security Council, which is charged with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, should seriously and urgently consider the recommendations of the Special Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and also those which were adopted recently by the Non-Aligned Movement in Kuwait. Such action by the Security Council would represent a concrete step towards a just and durable settlement of the problem of Palestine.

My delegation wishes to reaffirm Zambia's full support for the struggling people of Palestine and urges the international community to increase its support for the Palestinian people through the Palestine Liberation Organization. Any meaningful negotiations on the question of Palestine requires the full participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

There is an urgent need for Israel to comply with the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations if the continuing loss of life and destruction of property are to be stopped in the Middle East. The existence of a durable

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peace in the Middle East depends on Israel's respect for the decisions and resolutions of the United Nations. Israel should recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and respect the principles concerning the non-acquisition of territory by force, the non-use of force in the settlement of disputes and respect for the territorial integrity and independence of States.

Finally, my delegation urges the friends of Israel to exert maximum pressure on that country so that it will co-operate with the rest of the world community in finding a durable and lasting solution to the problem of Palestine. It is my delegation's hope that this session will contribute towards finding that solution.

Mr. FRANCIS (New Zealand): New Zealand has consistently held that a key element in the negotiation of a just, durable and comprehensive Middle East peace settlement must be the realization of the rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people. We consider the most fundamental of those rights to be that of self-determination. That means the right of the people of Palestine to establish their own State if that is their wish. There are other important rights which any eventual settlement must take into account, but most of the rights and freedoms which Member States of this Organization have come to enjoy are based upon the corner-stone of self-determination.

In the search for the full expression of Palestinian rights, and in the reflection of the hopes and wishes of the Palestinian people, it is clear that the Palestine Liberation Organization plays a distinctive role. That role is widely recognized. Until it is acknowledged by all principal parties concerned with the dispute between the Arab States and Israel, major obstacles to the achievement of a settlement will remain. It is even more important that Israel come to terms with the concept of the establishment of an independent Arab Palestinian State.

New Zealand's recognition of the right of the Palestinian Arab people to establish their own nation is balanced by our recognition and support of Israel's own sovereignty and independence. We support the affirmation in Security Council resolution 242 (1967) that every State has the right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or

(Mr. Francis, New Zealand)

acts of force. Clearly that is an affirmation that applies to Israel. It is the basis on which New Zealand welcomed and supports the progress towards peace marked by the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai on 25 April will mark an important step forward in the search for a comprehensive peace settlement. For that reason New Zealand agreed to participate in the multinational force of observers in the Sinai. The parties directly involved must now build on this beginning. If real peace is to be achieved the dialogue must now be broadened. Israel's other Arab neighbours, and most importantly the Palestinians, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, must be brought more directly into the search for a solution to the fundamental problem of providing for the proper exercise of the rights of the Palestinians.

Security Council resolution 242 (1967) clearly affirms the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. Yet we have seen a succession of acts in defiance of this principle by the Government of Israel, the Camp David accords notwithstanding. These include the annexation of East Jerusalem, the extension to the Syrian Golan Heights of Israeli law, jurisdiction and administration, and the seizure and settlement of large amounts of land and property in the occupied West Bank. We deplore these acts and recognize the validity of none of them.

The past 12 months have seen a number of actions on the part of the Israeli Government which have hindered, not helped, the search for a Middle East peace settlement. The events of yesterday have not helped either. The cumulative effect has been to increase tensions in the region and to heighten the dangers to international peace and security. Already twice this year the Security Council has been convened to consider measures imposed on the Palestinian population in the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem, and the resulting unrest and violence there. Democratically elected officials have been dismissed, liberties and rights have been restricted or suspended.

We sincerely hope the day will not be long in coming when Israel recognizes that the fires of self-determination of the Palestinian Arab population cannot simply be stamped out. We have said before that we see

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little chance of real progress towards a settlement until Israel is prepared to respect the rights and interests of the other States and peoples of the region and to live up to its responsibility to act as an acceptable neighbour.

(Mr. Francis, New Zealand)

At the same time, there is no prospect of worthwhile negotiations unless all parties are prepared formally to recognize Israel's right to exist. The Arab States and the Palestine Liberation Organization both have responsibilities in this: responsibilities to themselves, to the Palestinian people and to the world. The situation in the Middle East is of concern to every Member of the United Nations. Instability there threatens the well-being of us all. The level of tension in the territories that Israel continues to occupy reminds us ominously of the tension that existed in the first half of 1967. We appeal to all parties not to allow the events of that year to repeat themselves.

Mr. SRITHIRATH (Lao People's Democratic Republic)(interpretation from French): At this crucial time, when the danger of general conflagration is an extreme threat to the Middle East and to mankind as a whole, the question of Palestine is more pressing and vital than ever. That is why the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic warmly welcomes the resumption of this seventh emergency special session of the General Assembly to consider that question, the outcome of which can be just and lasting only if it follows the wishes of the international community, which has focused its efforts during the past three decades on how to assist the people of Palestine to recover their homeland and to exercise their inalienable rights to self-determination and national independence.

Those persistent and special efforts led to the adoption in 1974, by an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly, of resolution 3236 (XXIX), in which the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people were most explicitly set forth. Acknowledgement of those rights put an end to a Zionist and imperialist plot that had lasted almost a quarter of a century, aimed at swamping this highly political issue under purely humanitarian concerns.

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Democratic Republic)

Since that time, the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people has gained the increasingly large and energetic support of peoples and countries which love justice as well as of high international bodies, among them the Non-Aligned Movement, whose ministerial Co-ordinating Bureau meeting, held at the beginning of this month in Kuwait, adopted a programme of action along these lines.

However, despite active support for the attainment of their legitimate national rights, the Palestinian people none the less continue to suffer the lengthy and painful humiliation and repression carried out by the Israeli authorities and to live as refugees in their own homeland. This aberrant and tragic situation, which has no equal in contemporary history, must be remedied immediately. Thus, if we want this debate to be productive, we cannot be content, as some have been, merely to state the facts or to engage in diplomatic sleight-of-hand with specific facts; rather, we must together disclose and condemn the true causes hindering the exercise by the people of Palestine of their inalienable rights and, from there, get down to action.

In this respect, there is almost unanimous agreement that one of the main obstacles is to be found in the immobility of the Security Council. Indeed, the Council has continually failed to take a decision on the question of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, which it has considered repeatedly since 1977. That failure is the result of the misuse by the United States one of the permanent members of the Council, of its veto right, which means that the Council finds itself completely paralysed and unable to carry out the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

On that point, it would be useful to recall that, in this month of April alone, the United States - alone - already twice vetoed, unjustly and cruelly, draft resolutions condemning Israeli exactions in the occupied Arab territories, with total disregard for the overwhelming majority of the members of that Council.

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Democratic Republic)

In so doing, the United States of America has set itself against the consensus expressed by the international community that the effective exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights is a sine qua non to a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East crisis. It is also worth noting in this regard that even the closest allies of the United States, who in the past had been somewhat reluctant about recognizing those rights, no longer deem it reasonable to follow suit and are clearly moving away from the dangerous stand taken by the United States and associating themselves with the international consensus.

Despite this total isolation, the United States still persists in clinging to its unrealistic and outdated position: namely, a refusal to recognize the national rights of the Palestinian people, and it continues to treat the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole authentic representative of that people - recognized and endorsed by the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and by other international bodies - as a terrorist organization. But this unjustifiable position surprises no one. It faithfully translates the role of the United States as the unconditional protector of Israel and is in line with its plans aimed at using that country as a spring-board for the realization of its imperialist and expansionist policy in the region. That is why it is striving to derive maximum benefit from the "neither war nor peace" situation which it itself has created to widen and consolidate its hold in the Middle East through the vehicle of a so-called strategic co-operation agreement with Tel Aviv and through military installations in some countries in the region.

All this time, the Israeli authorities, encouraged by United States vetoes and sheltered by the Camp David accords, have intensified and accelerated their Zionist policy of extermination and rampant expansionism against the

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Arab and Palestinian peoples. All the barbarous acts that they have carried out one after another with impunity, with total disregard for universal condemnation and in flagrant violation of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council on the issue, must be seen in that context.

The hysterical attacks against Iraq and Lebanon and the annexation of the Holy City of Jerusalem as the eternal capital of Israel, and the annexation of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, to mention but a few, are just so many irrefutable proofs of Israel's policy of aggression and of its efforts to legalize for all time the Arab territories it has occupied by force.

It is thus more than obvious that those acts were not carried out in an impromptu manner but were part of a very detailed plan; consequently, we have every reason to fear that the other occupied Arab territories will fall one after another under the stroke of Israeli legislation.

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Moreover, the Israeli occupying authorities have had recourse, as we have seen in recent weeks, to the most brutal measures of bloody repression, destruction and systematic arrests and assassinations against the Arab and Palestinian peoples and their leaders so as to divide and weaken them and finally to crush the legitimate resistance while forcing them under their Zionist rod. Still more serious is the intolerable act of sacrilege carried out last week by the Israeli soldiery against the Al Aqsa Mosque, one of the most highly venerated Holy Places of Islam, and the cruel murder of the peaceful worshippers there.

In sum, do not all those barbarous acts of Israel, which progress in geometric fashion day by day, deserve severe punishment? Any crime left unpunished may spawn other, yet more foul, crimes. For its part, the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic has condemned and will always condemn such crimes, and reiterates its total support for the Arab and Palestinian peoples in their just struggle.

In the face of this grave danger, my delegation can only welcome the will of the peoples of the Middle East to wage an implacable struggle. Their high sense of solidarity and unity has enabled them to overcome many harsh tests and to multiply their efforts - in which the international community is associated - to put an end once and for all to Zionist reign and together to re-establish justice and stability in the region. It is only at that price that the legitimate rights of the Arab and Palestinian peoples will be fully restored and regional peace and security - indeed, international peace and security - maintained.

Thus, we should translate our unanimous sense of equity in this Assembly into effective and specific practical measures that go beyond merely stating the facts or censuring Israel, which has shown only disdain. Our Assembly should once again energetically appeal to the United States to refrain from holding up the Security Council's work and to allow that body to endorse the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with its mandate. We should appeal to

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the Security Council to resolve to impose against Israel strict sanctions provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter and thus compel that country to put an end to its series of crimes and misdeeds against the Arab and Palestinian peoples and to withdraw from the occupied territories that it took by force, thus enabling the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole authentic representative, to exercise its inalienable rights to self-determination and national independence.

Mr. FAFOWORA (Nigeria): The immediate event which has compelled the reconvening of this seventh emergency special session of the General Assembly is extremely serious: it is the outrageous armed attack by an Israeli soldier on Easter Sunday, 11 April 1982, on the Mosque of Caliph Omar, one of Islam's Holy Places and the oldest religious sanctuary in Jerusalem.

The criminal attack actually took place while worshippers were gathered there for prayers. Naturally, this sacrilegious act has aroused the conscience of the world as no other event has. The reprehensible act has been condemned everywhere. Even Israel and its allies have had difficulty in condoning this extreme act of religious intolerance. But the attack on the Mosque, serious as it is, is only a symptom of a much more serious malaise in the aggressive and expansionist policy of Israel, the direct consequence of which is the gross injustice of which the people of Palestine have been innocent victims for so long.

I refer here to the appalling and deplorable situation in which the people of Palestine have found themselves since the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. At that time the General Assembly -- unwittingly it would seem in retrospect -- adopted resolution 181 (II) endorsing the creation of the State of Israel, as well as taking care to establish and recognize the right of the people of Palestine to set up an independent State of their own within the area. Today the Palestinians still do not have a State of their own. As though that were not bad enough, Israel has deliberately pursued aggressive policies clearly designed to ensure the

(Mr. Fafowora, Nigeria)

dispersal of the people of Palestine from the area that it was envisaged would constitute a homeland and a State for that people.

By 1973, through repeated acts of aggression, the State of Israel had actually annexed and occupied the whole of the territory intended as a homeland for the people of Palestine. In addition, through the use of force, it has taken over other Arab territories, such as the West Bank, Gaza, the Syrian Golan Heights and Jerusalem itself. All this has happened despite repeated demands by this Assembly for Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands and the restoration to the people of Palestine of their homeland.

Since 1948, and after two major wars, the Palestinians have remained a deprived and homeless people. Israel has, through the use of force, brought under its direct rule some 1.5 million Arabs, the majority of whom are Palestinians.

Since 1973, when Israel purportedly annexed the West Bank, some 200,000 Palestinians have been thrown into detention. Meanwhile, in a blatant attempt to present the Arabs and the international community with a fait accompli, the State of Israel has proceeded to establish Jewish settlements in occupied Arab lands, vowing that those Jewish settlements have come to stay; in other words, that the annexation and occupation of Arab territory is irrevocable.

In all these occupied Arab territories, there is a total clamp down on any kind of political activity by the Arabs. Political dissent is absolutely forbidden. All kinds of literature and books remain banned. Arab schools have been deliberately closed. Through repeated acts of intimidation Arab commerce has been disrupted, if not totally destroyed. In short, life for the Palestinians has become absolutely meaningless.

Today the Palestinians are a people without much hope for the future. What we are witnessing today is the total and inexorable destruction by Israel not only of the Palestinian nation but also of the way of life of its people. The trauma which the people of Palestine have experienced is without parallel in the history of mankind.

(Mr. Fafcwra, Nigeria)

But the tragedy of all this is that this terrible ordeal has been inflicted on an innocent people by the State of Israel, which was itself created as a direct consequence of the holocaust to which the Jewish people were subjected by Nazi Germany. The establishment of the State of Israel engendered much hope throughout the world of a democratic and peaceful nation that would show the same compassion to others as it had received.

Those hopes have been betrayed by the extreme intolerance and aggression which are now the hallmarks of Israel's relations with its neighbours. Naturally, Israel has justified its expansionist policy on the grounds of ensuring its national security and survival. But this security consideration now manifests itself in the shape of inexorable expansion and repeated acts of aggression against the Arab and the Palestinian peoples. Only yesterday the Israeli army again launched a murderous attack on so-called PLO targets in Lebanon. It has intensified its campaign of terror and destruction against the Palestinians in the mistaken belief that these murderous and wanton attacks will ensure its security. It is indeed a tragedy that the Israelis have neither forgotten nor learned anything from their own recent history.

While considering the grave situation in the Middle East, it is necessary to refer to the encouragement and support which Israel has received from some Member States - principally the United States - which, under the provisions of the Charter of our Organization, were entrusted with specific responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In complete negation of their major international responsibility, these States have continued to give aid and comfort to Israel, the aggressor in the Middle East. Time and again they have blocked the efforts of this Assembly to secure a just and durable settlement of the Middle East issue; they have turned a blind eye to the untold sufferings of the Palestinian people and to the extreme deprivation to which it has been subjected, while at the same time sheltering the Israeli aggressors.

(Mr. Fafowora, Nigeria)

In a singular display of lack of moral courage, the United States has justified Israeli aggression on one pretext or the other. But, strange as this may seem, it is not only the Palestinians who are the victims of this gross injustice: it is the whole of the international community, including those now aiding and abetting Israeli aggression. For the foundation of international peace is moral justice, which is a basic element of our Charter. By undermining this principle Israel and its collobarators have seriously eroded the foundations of international peace and security. Nigeria's sympathy and support for the people of Palestine in their just and legitimate struggle for a homeland of their own is well known. Their traumautic experience evokes much sympathy throughout Nigeria. We remain unshaken in our belief that a just and durable settlement of the Middle East question consists basically of the exercise by the people of Palestine of their inalienable human rights, including the right to establish an independent State in their homeland. The right of the Palestinians to return to their land, from which they have been forcibly ejected, should be recognized and restored. A basic corollary of this condition is the necessity to accord the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) full recognition as the only genuine and authentic representative of the people of Palestine. It is absolutely essential for the attainment of a negotiated settlement of this issue that the PLO be admitted fully, and on a equal footing, to any negotiations over the Middle East issue. Without the full participation of the PLO in any future peace talks, peace will continue to elude that vitally important region of the world.

In addition, Israel must be prevailed upon to withdraw from all occupied Arab land. It cannot hope for peace while it continues to occupy Arab territory which was takn by force of arms.

Equally important is the issue of the purported Israeli annexation of the Holy City of Jerusalem, which has altered the character and status of the Holy City. The annexation must be rescinded, as it represents an affront to the international community.

(Mr. Fafowora, Nigeria)

Before concluding, I would say that we in Nigeria are convinced that, no matter how difficult and long the struggle may be, the ultimate victory of the Palestinians in their just and legitimate struggle for the attainment of what is essentially their birthright is assured. Like the oppressed people of South Africa, they will sooner or later be free. The only question is: when?

Mr. OTUNNU (Uganda): This is not the first emergency special session of the General Assembly devoted to the question of Palestine. Indeed, this is a resumption of the seventh emergency special session, on the same subject. It would have been very nice, as we meet this time, to be able to point to even some modest progress towards the realization of self-determination for the Palestinian people. Unfortunately, the truth on the ground is much less comforting. It would have been very uplifting if we were able to cite a few resolutions which have been implemented by Israel since July 1980, when the first part of the seventh emergency special session was held. But regrettably, all our resolutions have been like seeds thrown on the rocks.

What is so clear is that Israeli policy continues to be one of repression, aggression and expansionism. In recent times the world has witnessed extensive expropriations of Palestinian land and properties, the aggressive establishment of new settlements in the occupied territories, the continued practice of collective punishment, the constant closure of institutions of higher learning, the persecution of students, the shooting of demonstrators, and the arrest and detention of those who dare to criticize the excesses of the Israeli authorities.

More recently, the Israeli authorities have deposed the democratically elected mayors of the towns of El Bireh, Nablus and Ramallah. Israel has replaced military occupation authorities in the West Bank by civilian administrations. These are ominous signs. They betray Israeli designs to annex the West Bank and the Gaza District. These signs cannot be taken lightly, in view of the Israeli annexation of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories must be resisted by the international community as a whole. They are contrary to the general principles of international law and they run counter to the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 12 August 1949.

(Mr. Otunnu, Uganda)

Israeli designs extend beyond the occupied territories. Israel continues with impunity to commit acts of aggression against neighbouring Arab States. Last June a bewildered world witnessed an unprecedented attack on Iraq's nuclear research station. Barely a month later, the Israeli air force carried out massive bombardment of civilian targets in Beirut, causing extensive loss of life and property.

Indeed, even as we are deliberating here, Israel has been busy launching new attacks against Lebanon. Yesterday's aerial raids in areas south of Beirut and north-east of Sidon left in their wake heavy casualties and extensive damage to property. Uganda cannot but condemn in the strongest terms this latest act of aggression.

Tensions in the Middle East are too dangerous to be accepted as a normal way of life. The level of danger in the region is escalating with every passing day. If a major catastrophe is to be averted - and it must be - the United Nations must act now. The consequences of inaction are too ghastly to contemplate. The United Nations must once again become the forum for negotiations among the parties. The United Nations must provide the framework for a just and comprehensive peace. A framework for peace can be just if it restores the rights of the Palestinian people, and it can be comprehensive if it takes into account all the legitimate aspirations in the region and involves the participation of all the parties concerned.

Since the Palestinian question lies at the root of the Middle East problem, it is hardly necessary to say that among the indispensable elements for peace in the Middle East are the following: Israeli withdrawal from all Palestinian and other Arab territories, including the city of Jerusalem, occupied since 1967; the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine; and the direct and equal participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, in any peace process.

We have an urgent duty to work for peace in the Middle East. Nothing must deflect us from that goal, and no opportunity should be lost in that quest. To this important task Uganda is ready and willing to make its contribution.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.





