



President: Mr. Jorge E. ILLUECA (Panama).

AGENDA ITEM 34

The situation in the Middle East: reports of the Secretary-General (*continued*)

1. Mr. KULAWIEC (Czechoslovakia): For many years now, the developments in the Middle East have been among the darkest aspects of international relations. This situation did not arise spontaneously. As in other parts of the world, this tension is carefully planned and created by the most reactionary imperialist forces. The final objective of these imperialist forces is the establishment of control in the Middle East over both the internal and external policies of the individual States. The developments in the Middle East reveal with growing clarity the anti-Arab nature of the United States-Israeli alliance directed against the achievement of equitable peace in that part of the world.

2. At the present time, Israel is doing its utmost to expand the occupied territories by a *de facto* division of Lebanon. In the occupied territories, it is destroying the economic structure, driving the Arab population away from the land and destroying its cultural heritage in an effort to deprive it of its national identity. In this way, Israel is striving to make radical demographic changes in the region that should ensure for it territorial gains from its aggression.

3. The unresolved question of Palestine is the primary source of the ever-more-explosive situation in the Middle East, which poses a direct threat to world peace and has a negative impact on the overall development of international relations.

4. By its unprecedented brutality and violation of all existing international norms, current Israeli aggression in Lebanon clearly shows the entire world that Israel will stop at nothing. The military actions of Israel in Lebanon have brought new suffering to millions of Arabs. A settlement of the Middle East problem, however, cannot be achieved either by military force or by the gradual annexation of the occupied territories.

5. Israel can behave in this way only thanks to the all-round support extended to it by the United States in the political and economic as well as military fields. This support alone has enabled Tel Aviv for decades to trample upon and to usurp the rights of the Arab States, to cause immense damage to these States and to ignore the recommendations and decisions of the United Nations.

6. The all-round support of the United States for Israel has reached a new stage. By direct military actions against the Lebanese patriotic forces and the inter-Arab peace forces, the United States has placed itself on the same level as the Israeli aggressor. This is the consequence of the failure of the Camp David accords to solve the crisis in the Middle East and of Reagan's plan for an imposed agreement between Lebanon and Israel, as well as of all

the back-stage methods, such as the unleashing of a civil war and the launching of far-reaching aggression by Israel against the Lebanese people and the Palestinian resistance movement. It must be added that the United States did not learn a lesson from its similar action in 1958, the results of which demonstrated how futile are the attempts of neo-colonialism to turn back the clock of history. The historical experience of the Middle East proves that problems cannot be resolved by the shedding of blood. Violence only further increases the tension.

7. The adventurism of the United States is furthermore reflected in its deliberate overlooking of the fact that in the era of nuclear weapons a local hotbed of tension can easily escalate into a broader conflict. The taking of such a risk leads to the inevitable conclusion that the most reactionary forces of imperialism see in this method a hope for the liquidation of socialism and national liberation movements throughout the world and for world hegemony.

8. On 7 December 1983, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic issued the following statement on the situation in the Middle East:

"The recent actions of the United States armed forces in the territory of Lebanon offer new convincing evidence that, in a reckless drive for its imperialist objectives in the Middle East, the United States has placed its stakes on the policy of gross strength designed to force into retreat all those who resist the implementation of the joint United States-Israeli plans in that region.

"Through its actions, the current United States Administration proves once again that its Middle East policy is a part of its global crusade against the forces of social progress and national liberation. The most reactionary militarist and Zionist circles in the United States are deliberately increasing the tension in the Middle East in an effort thus to create conditions for a further escalation of their direct interference in the affairs of the peoples of that region.

"These ends are pursued also by the just-concluded agreement on the further strengthening of the so-called strategic co-operation between the United States and Israel, the first tragic fruits of which are the aggressive attacks against Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. The conclusion of this agreement has completely unmasked the so-called peace-making and impartial role of the United States in Lebanon and the mission of its troops in that country.

"The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic resolutely condemns the aggressive actions of the United States, which are sharply at variance with the Security Council resolutions adopted in the interest of securing the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. It expresses its lasting solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and other Arab countries against expansionist and imperialist plans and calls on all progressive and honest people throughout the world and on the entire international community to resist actively the implementation of further stages of the aggressive designs of the United States and Israel in the Middle East."

9. Czechoslovakia has repeatedly stressed the necessity of an immediate withdrawal of the Israeli troops from Lebanon and from other Arab territories, and the recall of the interventionist troops of the United States and other countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] from Lebanon; this is an unconditional prerequisite for restoring lasting peace in that region. We support a just and comprehensive settlement of the crisis in the Middle East that would respect the inalienable legitimate rights of the Arab Palestinian people, including the right to the establishment of their own independent State, as well as the right of all States in that region to an independent existence and to security and development. We are in favour of the convening of an international conference on the question of the Middle East with the participation of all interested parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO], as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In an exchange of views on these questions, the importance of the unity and joint action of the Arab countries in order to thwart the aggressive acts and designs of the United States and Israel has been stressed.

10. Mr. WABUGE (Kenya): The situation in the Middle East continues to be as volatile as ever. In the last three decades, we have witnessed unceasing turmoil in the region. The situation continues to worsen, with great loss of life and property. To us, this is a deplorable situation and it should receive the closest attention of the Assembly. The international community must exert every effort towards finding a peaceful solution of the problems of the region so that its peoples may once again enjoy the fruits of peace and stability.

11. We have before us the report of the Secretary-General, in which he observes: "The developments in the Middle East during the past year have given little cause for hope that the problems of that region are nearer to solution." [See A/38/458, para. 38.] This is lamentable. The international community should search its conscience more thoroughly and develop appropriate measures that would serve the cause of bringing peace to the region.

12. During past years, commendable efforts in the search for a peaceful settlement of the problems of the region have been made, but these efforts, however meaningful and faithful to the cause enunciated in the Charter of the United Nations, have yet to bring about a peaceful settlement of the problems of the Middle East. My delegation finds no fault with the efforts so far exerted by the United Nations. Instead, we find fault with the participants in the conflict that engulfs the region. We know events have increased bitterness and suspicion but, whatever the odds, bitterness must give way to reconciliation and suspicion must give way to trust. It is only in this way that room will be found for a meaningful settlement of the problems of the area in conditions that would change defiance into peaceful co-operation and accommodation.

13. In the view of my delegation, a climate of trust and co-operation in the Middle East, devoid of bitterness, defiance, intransigence and suspicion on the part of all the parties in the conflicts of the region, would make possible the attainment of lasting peace in the area.

14. We view a lasting peace in the region as one that would bring about the recognition and realization of the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people. To this end, we have on many occasions called for the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab land occupied since 1967, for we are strongly opposed to the acquisition of land and territories by the use of force. We regret that Israel continues to defy the will of the international community and the resolutions of the Organization with regard to the Arab territories it continues to occupy.

15. Further, the rights of the Palestinians as a people, including their right to self-determination and independence in a State of their own, must be not only recognized but also realized. We hold that the Palestinian people must participate on an equal footing with other parties in all attempts to solve the problems of the Middle East, for without them the core of the problems in the area will not be sufficiently resolved and, more than that, conflicts in the region will not be resolved. Equally, in all these endeavours in the search for lasting peace, the right to exist of all the States in the region, including Israel, within secure and internationally recognized borders must also be recognized and respected for all time by all States in the region. It is a pity that Israel has not yet come to understand that it cannot justify its existence by brutally denying the existence of a Palestinian State. Similarly, the other parties to the conflicts of the Middle East must fully accept the existence of Israel as a nation within the region.

16. My delegation feels that most of the other problems that affect the region are off-shoots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is our hope therefore that once the core of the problem is adequately solved most of the other problems will in like manner fall into place. The continuing conflict in Lebanon, without the Palestinian factor, would surely be much easier to solve; the large number of Palestinian refugees would finally find a peaceful home to return to; the blood of Israelis and Palestinians would no longer be shed; and the threat to international peace and security that the problem constitutes would be no more.

17. In conclusion, I would like to observe that the Middle East region constitutes an area of great importance, at least to my country, and to many others in the continent of Africa. We therefore earnestly wish for peace to return to the region, and the sooner the better for us all. In this connection, I appeal to those who have any positive influence in the States of the region to utilize that influence in an effort to bring about a peaceful settlement of the conflicts.

18. Mr. AMEGA (Togo) (*interpretation from French*): Since the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly, another year has gone by without our coming closer to restoring peace in the Middle East. On the contrary, recent events in the region, especially in northern Lebanon, have made the situation even more complex and the search for a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the problems of the Middle East more difficult.

19. At the root of these problems—and this cannot be over-emphasized—lies the Palestinian problem. For over three decades now, the martyred people of Palestine has been waiting for justice from the international community. Responding to that expectation, a large majority of the international community has for several years now recognized the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of that people to a country and to establish a sovereign, independent State, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 181 (II), adopted in November 1947, which provided for the establishment in Palestine of a Jewish State and a Palestinian State. Furthermore, the PLO has been recognized as the authentic, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. However, the lack of agreement between all the parties directly concerned enables one of them to continue to prevent the Palestinian people from effectively exercising its rights.

20. Closely related to the Palestinian problem is the problem of the Arab territories occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem. Despite the many resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council reaffirming

the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and calling on Israel to withdraw from the territories it occupies by force, it continues not only to occupy the territories but to reinforce its presence there through expropriation, the establishment of settlements and annexation pure and simple, notably the annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights.

21. The third element of the Middle East crisis, which in recent times has totally eclipsed the other components of the crisis, is the problem of Lebanon. Rent by civil war, which for long years has pitted rival factions one against the other, Lebanon has frequently served as a battleground for the Israelis and the Palestinians. For some time, unfortunately, it has served also as a battlefield for the Palestinians themselves, divided into rival factions which are fighting each other for reasons which we believe to be related to ideology or a struggle for political power. My delegation deeply deplores that division, which is resulting in considerable losses of human life and can only delay the solution of the Palestinian problem. That solution will be possible and the advent of freedom certain only if the Palestinian people and fighters unite under a single leader and with a single purpose; one cannot saw off the branch of the tree one is sitting on. Looking at the present situation in Lebanon, it is clear that that country is in serious danger of becoming a theatre for generalized confrontation between the multinational, Israeli, Syrian and Palestinian forces.

22. These are the three main components of the Middle East crisis. My delegation believes that to resolve that crisis, it is urgently necessary to find a just solution to each of those components.

23. With regard to Lebanon, the Government of Togo supports the efforts of the Lebanese Government aimed at regaining its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Government of Togo supports the desire of the Lebanese Government to see all unauthorized foreign forces withdraw from Lebanon. My delegation calls on all the parties concerned to implement without delay the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, and in particular resolutions 508 (1982), 509 (1982) and 520 (1982). Pending the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, my delegation appeals urgently to all the parties concerned to adopt an attitude of restraint and to refrain from any act which might further exacerbate the situation in Lebanon. My delegation also calls upon the General Assembly to support the Lebanese Government in its quest for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

24. Concerning the two other main components of the Middle East crisis—namely, the Palestinian problem and the problem of the Arab occupied territories, including Jerusalem—the Government of Togo supports the conclusions of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, and in particular the recommendation concerning the organization of an international peace conference on the Middle East.¹ The purpose of that conference would be to initiate serious negotiations among all the parties and with the guarantee of the major Powers regarding: first, mutual recognition by Israel and the PLO; secondly, the withdrawal of Israel from Palestinian territories and other Arab territories occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem; thirdly, the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of that people to a country and to establish a sovereign, independent State; and, finally, the right of all States of the region, including Israel, to live in peace within secure, recognized and guaranteed boundaries.

25. My delegation fervently hopes that the Organization will make all the necessary institutional arrangements

to prepare for that international peace conference on the Middle East.

26. Meanwhile, my delegation calls on all the parties directly concerned, in particular Israel, the Arab States and the PLO, to refrain from any act which might compromise or delay the holding of the conference. Israel should end its illegal policy of establishing settlements in the occupied territories and refrain from any act aimed at changing the demographic and cultural character of these territories. The Arab States and the PLO should renounce military confrontation and seek a peaceful, negotiated solution to the crisis in the Middle East. In that context, a united, strong and credible PLO could play an essential role.

27. Despite all the difficulties which are yet to be overcome, my delegation hopes that the day will come when peace will reign in the Middle East, a day when the Israelis, the Arabs and the Palestinians, who are destined to live together, will make their long-awaited contribution to peace and to the progress of mankind.

28. Mr. MARINESCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): Consideration of the situation in the Middle East, a question which has been on the agenda of the General Assembly and the Security Council for a long time, is taking place in circumstances which are especially serious and disturbing to all Member States and all peoples of the world.

29. The alarming developments of recent times, the escalation of military action and the use of the most sophisticated military means in Lebanon, and the unprecedented concentration of forces and war technology, have exacerbated the situation in the region and have created the danger of the conflict's degenerating into a conflagration of which the consequences for the peoples of the area and for international peace and security cannot be foreseen.

30. In recent days, the public of my country, like the rest of the world, has learnt with concern and deep disquiet of the negative development of the situation and the escalation of tension in Lebanon following the recent Israeli and American air raids against Syrian and Palestinian positions, which have resulted in the loss of human life and material damage.

31. As recently stated by the Romanian press agency, the Government of my country finds these raids reprehensible and demands that the United States and Israel end them definitively and refrain from any acts that might increase tension in Lebanon and in the region. In our view, everything must be done to prevent resort to acts of force and to ensure respect for and consolidation of the cease-fire and continued dialogue among the political and social forces of Lebanon in order to bring about broad national reconciliation, the rapid, unconditional withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon, and to secure the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Lebanon.

32. It is obvious that the maintenance and intensification of the state of confrontation in the Middle East, which is largely responsible for the deterioration of the international political climate, are due to the lack of progress in the solution of the Palestinian problem and to the fact that it has not been possible to set in motion a broad and viable process of negotiations leading to a comprehensive solution of the conflict and to a just and lasting peace in the region.

33. As is emphasized in the report of the Secretary-General [4/38/458], the central problem of the situation in the Middle East, that of the inalienable rights and the future of the Palestinian people, has been further

complicated by the continuance of Israeli policies in the occupied territories and by the increase in the number of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, actions which, of course, have been condemned by the international community.

34. The degree of tension reached in the Middle East and the entire course of events in the Israeli-Arab conflict once again confirm, if confirmation is necessary, the historical truth that peace and security cannot be built and ensured by the use of force or the threat of the use of force or by denying other peoples' right to a free and independent existence. It also confirms that the use of force and war not only cannot resolve controversial problems but makes them more complex, creating the conditions for new and increasingly destructive armed confrontations. It is axiomatic that peace and security can be achieved only on the basis of respect for the legitimate rights of other peoples and for the principles and rules of behaviour of international relations.

35. We believe that the serious situation existing in the Middle East and the international situation in general, because of their complexity and their unprecedented dimensions, call for the greatest political and moral responsibility on the part of all States and all the skill and sense of responsibility of the United Nations in fulfilling its primary function, that of acting to maintain international peace and security.

36. Romania, as President Nicolae Ceausescu has frequently stated, is firmly in favour of the renunciation of military methods, force and the threat of force in the solution of problems or disputes among States and of their settlement by means of negotiation only, in the interest of the peoples.

37. Romania, since the beginning of the Middle East conflict, has always supported and believes to be particularly important, especially in present international conditions, the redoubling of efforts to establish, by means of a political solution, a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied after the 1967 war, recognition of the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to establish an independent State, and the guarantee of the security of all the States of the region.

38. As has been repeatedly stressed in our debates, in order to be just and lasting, the future peace settlement in the Middle East must be based on the withdrawal of Israel from the Arab territories occupied in 1967, including the Arab part of Jerusalem. Such a demand, clearly formulated in United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolution 242 (1967), has been consistently and firmly reaffirmed by my country on the basis of a position of principle according to which the occupation of foreign territory by force is inadmissible, being categorically rejected by the principles of justice and law.

39. Romania, as is well known, reacted strongly against the actions leading to the annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights. We also believe that it is necessary to do everything possible to ensure the unconditional withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon and to guarantee respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of that State, so that the Lebanese people can settle its problem in its own way.

40. The lack of progress towards a comprehensive settlement of the conflict and the state of confrontation which continues in Lebanon bring home to us more clearly than ever the truth that the Palestinian problem is the key element and that until it is solved it will not be possible to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting

peace in the Middle East. Such a solution demands recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to establish an independent Palestinian State in which that people can devote its efforts to development, progress and well-being, as well as recognition of the right of the PLO to participate as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in all negotiations for peace in the Middle East. Romania is convinced that there is room in the Middle East for the State of Israel and for the independent Palestinian State and that relations of peaceful coexistence and good-neighbourliness must in the end be established between them, as well as with the other Arab countries. That would be fully in keeping with the interests of the two peoples, of all the peoples of the region and of world peace and security.

41. At the same time, we continue to believe that a basic premise of any settlement which fully responds to the legitimate interests and aspirations of the States and peoples of the Middle East is that the right of every State in the region to a free and sovereign existence, independence and territorial integrity be guaranteed. Real security, as we see it, can be achieved only through the establishment and development of relations of co-operation, trust and mutual respect among all the peoples of the region.

42. There has been growing concern in recent years regarding the question of the Middle East, and proposals and initiatives aimed at finding a peaceful settlement of the many aspects of the Israeli-Arab conflict have been put forward. Such political and diplomatic efforts should continue and be stepped up so as to bring about a real process of negotiation within an appropriate framework. As was recently stressed in the authorized statement of the Romanian press agency, in the view of the Romanian Government it is now more important than ever to step up the political and diplomatic efforts to find solutions to all the complex problems of the region and to achieve a comprehensive settlement leading to a just and lasting peace. Attacks by the Israeli Air Force and Navy on Lebanese territory and on Palestinians can in no way facilitate such efforts.

43. In order to achieve that basic objective of peace in the region, as was reaffirmed by President Nicolae Ceausescu in his message addressed to the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the political and diplomatic efforts must be intensified, including those within the framework of the United Nations, in order to bring about the convening of an international conference under the auspices of the Organization and with its active participation, in which all interested parties would take part, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as well as the Soviet Union, the United States and other States which could make a positive contribution to the resolution of the Middle East conflict.

44. The Romanian delegation wishes to express its satisfaction at the fact that the International Conference on the Question of Palestine considered it essential that an international peace conference on the Middle East—which was proposed a long time ago, and has continued to be proposed by Romania—be convened with a view to settling the complex problems of that region, primarily the Palestinian problem. This idea has also been expressed in draft resolutions before the General Assembly.

45. Romania hopes that all interested countries, all States and political forces which have expressed their support for a political solution in the Middle East, will

help to ensure the successful organization of such a conference, thus making an invaluable contribution to the settlement of the serious situation which prevails in the Middle East, a situation which, in the absence of a solution, will become increasingly dangerous for peace and security in the region and the world.

46. As has been the case thus far, Romania will continue to play its part in efforts towards a political solution of the problems of the region by means of negotiation, with the participation of all interested parties, leading to the establishment of a comprehensive peace, the achievement of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, and in the interests of peace, co-operation and security in that region and throughout the world.

47. Mr. KORNEENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): Since the Second World War, the alarming events in the Middle East have constantly been the focus of attention of the international community. The past year was no exception to this. It was a year which will go down in the history of the Middle East conflict as one which marked further escalation of tension, which assumed a new and more dangerous character fraught with the most serious consequences for peace, and not only in that area.

48. After invading Lebanon and unleashing the fifth Arab-Israeli war, the Israeli militarists, in actual fact, have been pursuing a policy of entrenching their domination of the Arab territories they had seized earlier, their occupation of southern Lebanon, and ultimately the annexation of part of Lebanese territory.

49. The Syrian Golan Heights, occupied in 1967, and also the ancestral Palestinian lands, are still under the heel of the aggressor. By means of brutal terror and bloody repression the occupiers have methodically and systematically pursued a course of evicting the Arab Palestinian people and appropriating the living space thus cleared, creating in the occupied lands settlements which they populate with their own settlers. It is well known that one of the major purposes of this new act of aggression was an attempt to crush the Palestinian resistance movement and in this way to close the book on the Palestinian problem which, as everyone knows, is at the very heart of a comprehensive Middle East settlement.

50. Turning to the aggressive expansionist policy of the Israeli leadership, we cannot forget their accomplices who, in actual fact, are those primarily responsible for the Middle East tragedy. As has been made clear in the discussion, behind the new dangerous exacerbation of the situation in the Middle East, there stands the adventurist policy of Washington, aimed at establishing domination in this area. Not content with the comprehensive support which the United States has always lavished on Israel in its aggressive wars against Arab States and peoples, Washington has now embarked upon open armed intervention in the affairs of these States. The United States, having adopted a course of overt support for the aggressor, and ignoring resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982)—adopted by the Security Council with its participation—calling for cessation of aggression against Lebanon and that Israel withdraw all its military forces “forthwith and unconditionally”—we would like to stress the word “unconditionally”—from that country, has, together with Israel, imposed upon Lebanon a one-sided anti-Arab agreement. Lebanon, in actual fact, has been dismembered and now the accomplices in the aggression are not only attempting together to crush the national patriotic forces of Lebanon, which are fighting against the occupation of their country by Israeli and United States forces, but have actually embarked upon military action against other Arab States. In order to intimidate the Lebanese

and other Arab peoples, the United States, under the flag of the “multinational force”, has been building up with increasing speed its imperialist military presence in the Middle East and accelerating the creation there of a springboard for subversive action against countries in the region and adjacent areas which do not find favour with it and is working towards converting Lebanon, and ultimately the whole of the Middle East, into a United States-Israeli protectorate.

51. Having entrenched themselves in Lebanon in August 1982, the United States has now assembled off the coast of that country a naval armada consisting of more than 30 warships with hundreds of aircraft on board. According even to United States sources, by September of this year the military strength of the United States in this area stood at 14,000 men. It was precisely this period which saw a qualitatively new stage of United States aggression in Lebanon, when there was unleashed the firepower of the military machine of the United States concentrated there. From that time forward, there has been almost uninterrupted gunfire from United States ships stationed offshore on the pretext of alleged “stabilization” of the situation in the country and “protecting” their interventionist corps, with which the United States, in co-ordination with Israel, has been carrying out air raids against the positions of Lebanese national patriotic forces and Syrian forces of the inter-Arab peace-keeping forces in Lebanon. The so-called peace-making role of the United States has now, in actual practice, become a tragedy for the Lebanese people. One of the most recent examples of the true goals of United States armed intervention in the Middle East was the barbarous air raid on 4 December of this year by 28 United States fighter bombers against targets in Lebanese mountain areas.

52. As has already quite rightly been pointed out in this discussion, this act of brigandage on the part of the United States was committed with the aim of deliberately exacerbating the situation in and around Lebanon and creating a pretext for a further expansion of aggressive action on the part of the United States against the Syrian Arab Republic.

53. What is alarming is the fact that the President of the United States personally gave the order to carry out that action, and has threatened that a repetition is not to be ruled out. Accordingly, the current United States Administration has once and for all torn off its mask as an “impartial mediator” in Middle East affairs and has once again revealed its true imperialist, military strategic goals in the area and its intention to exploit its military presence to use military force to put pressure on all those who are so staunchly fighting against the expansionism of Israel and the hegemonism of the United States.

54. We cannot fail to note the direct link between the escalation of armed intervention by the United States in the Middle East and the strengthening of the anti-Arab “strategic co-operation”, as it has come to be called, between Washington and Tel Aviv, which went a stage further in the course of the recent negotiations between the United States President and Israeli leaders. As a result of those negotiations and as a follow-up to the memorandum on “strategic co-operation”, an American-Israeli military political committee has been set up to co-ordinate military action. The United States has embarked on a further expansion of its military assistance to Tel Aviv, and in particular, has renewed its deliveries of fragmentation bombs and shells and other forms of offensive weapons which the Zionists need to continue their aggressive expansionist policy.

55. Over the past 10 years, American assistance to Israel, including military assistance, has grown by about 50 per

cent, and it has been estimated that over the past 20 years the cost of that assistance has been some \$25 billion. About half that sum is not subject to repayment. Naturally, the generosity of the patron is not to be explained only by a shared ideology and solidarity between imperialism and zionism. In maintaining constant tension in the Middle East, having launched one armed conflict after another in this area, the United States and Israel are aiming at dictating from a position of strength to the Arab peoples, to break their will to resist Israeli aggression and to bring the whole region under their military and political control.

56. The delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic endorses the just condemnation by the international community of the aggressive policy of Washington and Tel Aviv against Lebanon, and associates itself with the demand for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal from that country of Israeli and NATO armed forces.

57. Recent events in Lebanon have underlined the need for an immediate, comprehensive and just settlement in the Middle East. This is of particular urgency now, in circumstances of a dangerous military escalation which threatens peace not only in the Middle East but throughout the world. The bases for such a settlement should include the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem, and the guaranteeing of the exercise by the Arab people of Palestine of their inalienable national rights, including their right to found their own independent State on Palestinian soil, and also of the right of all States in the region to a secure and independent existence and development. A just, comprehensive settlement can be brought about by the concerted efforts of all interested parties, including, of course, the PLO, which is the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

58. There can be no constructive course towards a settlement without the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, as was proposed by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held this year. In our view, the attitude to convening this conference will once again reveal what course—military or political—will be chosen by Israel and the United States.

59. In once again expressing its solidarity with the peoples of Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic and the other Arab countries, and with the Arab people of Palestine who are defending their freedom and independence and opposing American and Israeli attempts to force them to acquiesce in the results of Israeli aggression and the continuation of Tel Aviv's policy of expansionism and annexation of Arab lands, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic hopes that the decisions of the current session of the General Assembly will genuinely promote the interests of the peoples of the region and ultimately the interests of international peace and security.

60. Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (*interpretation from French*): The Middle East conflict, which has already lasted some 40 years and which periodically erupts into bloody wars, has turned the region into one of the most dangerous hotbeds of tension in the world, which constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security.

61. The persistent attempts of imperialism to restore its military and political supremacy in the region, whose geographical position and raw materials potential have long made it the object of imperialism's attention, are the basic cause of this state of affairs. The primary instrument for the fulfilment of these ambitions is the militarist State of Israel, which is seeking to impose its hegemony on the region by brutal armed force.

62. The particularly dangerous deterioration in the situation in this part of the world which we see today is due to the political line adopted by the imperialist forces—primarily the United States—aimed at crushing the national liberation movement and the progressive Arab States. The diplomatic efforts of Washington and Tel Aviv have constantly been devoted to the same end, through tactics of dividing Arab resistance through separatist deals such as that of Camp David.

63. It is precisely that policy, based on the classic precept "divide and rule", that prepared the ground for the monstrous massacres committed over the past two years, massacres which so deeply stirred the conscience of the world.

64. Israel's large-scale invasion of Lebanon, aimed at eliminating the military and political organization of the Palestinian movement and at conquering new territory, taken together with the measures to perpetuate Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, constitutes a new stage in the execution of that strategy.

65. After the unutterable tragedy suffered by the population of Beirut and after the massacres of Sabra and Shatila, the aggressors did everything possible to impose on the Lebanese people a humiliating and one-sided agreement. That agreement is openly designed to transform the country into an American-Israeli protectorate and a springboard for aggression against the neighbouring Arab States.

66. It is from that stronghold that the imperialist interventionists intend to put powerful pressure on the Syrian Arab Republic, whose firm position of principle is playing an important role in the fight of the progressive Arab forces against the Israeli aggressors and their American protectors. Only a few days ago, naked acts of aggression were committed against the Syrian Arab Republic. Dozens of United States bombers attacked the positions of Lebanese national patriotic forces and Syrian troops forming part of the inter-Arab forces, sowing death and destruction in a country thousands of kilometres from the United States. In the pursuit of their political, military and strategic plans, Washington and Tel Aviv have made intensive preparations for military action against the Syrian Arab Republic, including the invasion of its territory.

67. The Bulgarian news agency has published the following statement on recent events in the region:

"On orders from its Government, American militarism has committed a new criminal act. United States warplanes have barbarously bombed several mountain areas in Lebanon, including positions of Lebanese patriotic forces and Syrian troops which form part of the inter-Arab peace-keeping force. The purpose of that attack was to force the Lebanese people to acquiesce in the so-called Israeli-Lebanese agreement which is contrary to its profound interests and also to create favourable conditions for the perpetration of direct military aggression against the Syrian Arab Republic, which is so staunchly resisting the plans of imperialism and zionism in the Middle East.

"By its blatant acts of aggression, the United States and Israel have both violated the agreement on the cease-fire in Lebanon hitherto respected, and that has confirmed once again that the presence of United States armed forces in the Middle East is a threat to the independence and sovereignty of all Arab States.

"The People's Republic of Bulgaria firmly condemns this new bloody crime committed by American militarist circles and the attempts of the United States and Israeli Governments to impose their will on Arab States by diktat and blackmail."

68. All those adventurist acts have been carried out in the context of the well-known "strategic co-operation" between the United States and Israel. The annexation of the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem, the bombing of Iraqi nuclear installations, acts of provocation carried out by the United States naval forces against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the "iron fist" policy carried out against the civilian population of the occupied Arab territories and the massacre of Palestinians and Lebanese which turned into what can only be described as genocide are merely some of the grim results of this plot.

69. If we were to make a detailed analysis of that aggressive and macabre entente, it would not be difficult to unmask its true motives and anti-Arab policy.

70. Without comprehensive assistance from its ally across the Atlantic, Israel would not be in a position to pursue its expansionist policy on such a large scale. According to reports in *The Christian Science Monitor* of 30 November last, for 1984 alone Israel will receive military aid estimated at \$1.3 billion in the form of free grants, including further quantities of aircraft, tanks, missiles, fragmentation, vacuum and phosphorous bombs, and radio-electronic equipment, all to be used in waging war.

71. American support given to the aggressor in various forums, such as the Security Council and the General Assembly, merely encourage Tel Aviv to disregard the will of the international community and to flout, haughtily and arrogantly, the decisions of the Organization.

72. Furthermore, while strengthening Israel militarily and rendering it assistance and support in its aggressive acts, the United States is benefiting from its military conquests to establish a lasting American military and political presence in the area. It is not moral principles but global United States imperialist ambitions which determine American support to Israel, considered to be one of the most reliable and viable pillars of the United States and a guardian of its "vital interests" in that part of the world. Within the framework of the distribution of roles between those two countries, a devastating invasion by Tel Aviv is normally followed by an American peace-keeping mission, a mission which is nothing but a political shuttle designed to set a diplomatic seal on the results of aggression and to impose American arbitration in the region.

73. Recently, the true character of that alliance was clearly revealed. It is looking more and more like a true military coalition waging an imperialist war aimed at crushing, dividing and subjugating independent Arab States. This new characteristic face of the American-Israeli aggressive bloc has assumed some very clear-cut contours, with the most recent arrangements emerging from the Reagan-Shamir talks in Washington in November this year.

74. An expression of the determination of the current United States Administration to use its own armed forces in the Middle East, the Mediterranean and South-West Asia, in accordance with its imperialist policy, has been the creation of new military formations like the so-called "central command", the strengthening of the so-called "Rapid Deployment Force", which is already in existence, participation in the "multinational force" in Beirut and the carrying out of threatening demonstrations, such as the "Bright Star" manoeuvres, and so on. There has been an intensive regrouping of the United States Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. A United States task force, including the nuclear aircraft-carrier *Eisenhower* and the battleship *New Jersey*, has been concentrated off the Lebanese coast.

75. In this context, American and Israeli machinations to bring about a so-called settlement of the Middle East crisis can be described only as a means of undermining even further the freedom, independence and resistance capacity of the Arab peoples. These designs, including what is known as the Reagan plan,² have nothing whatsoever to do with the solution of the pressing problem of establishing a just peace in the area; they all amount to an instrument aimed at division and diktat.

76. We are profoundly convinced that the escalation of military activity in Lebanon in recent days amply demonstrates the spurious nature of the various mediating operations of the imperialist States. Those diplomatic manoeuvres have proved that they have always been a prelude to a further aggravation of the situation. They are all part of the same imperialist plot directed against the vital interests of the peoples of that part of the world. They are thus doomed to failure from the very outset.

77. It is particularly dangerous and illusory to imagine that today, in the last quarter of the twentieth century, punitive expeditions can determine the fate of peoples and regions. The failure of the most recent campaigns of this kind in the 1950s and 1960s and should be recalled to all those who have forgotten them or do not want to learn the necessary lessons from them. Dien-Bien-Phu, the Bay of Pigs, Port Said, the Gulf of Tonkin, are all names which mark the road of defeat and dishonour of the aggressors and at the same time constitute a symbol of the heroic struggle of peoples for freedom and independence. Furthermore, in the nuclear age in which we live today, a single spark would suffice for the international climate, already fraught with tension, to explode with fatal consequences for mankind.

78. As long as gunfire from American ships is heard in Lebanon and as long as Israeli and American bombs are exploding, it is impossible to speak of peace in the Middle East. The NATO troops should unconditionally withdraw from Lebanese territory. It is only on that condition that the process of reconciliation already begun can yield positive results.

79. In the view of my delegation, what has been agreed on at Geneva among the various factions in Lebanon, when they met last month to discuss national reconciliation, constitutes a step towards the restoration of peace and order in that sorely tried country.

80. Our position of principle on the question of the Middle East remains unchanged. We believe that, in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, Israel must withdraw its troops from the Arab territories it has occupied since 1967. It is also necessary, in accordance with the Geneva Declaration on Palestine,¹ adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, for the Arab people of Palestine, as soon as possible, to be able to exercise its right to self-determination and the founding of its own independent State. The right of all of the peoples and States of the region to a secure and independent existence must be guaranteed. The principles which should underlie a peaceful settlement of the problems in the area have been laid down in the Soviet proposals of 15 September 1982,³ which the Soviet Government has declared remain relevant and valid in the existing conditions. These proposals are entirely in keeping with the Arab peace plan,⁴ adopted on 9 September 1982 by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez.

81. In our view, the Middle East crisis—at the heart of which is the Palestinian problem—can and must be solved by concerted efforts and with the participation of all interested parties, including the sole legitimate representative

of the Palestinian people, the PLO. A broadly-based and representative conference on the Middle East could be the appropriate forum for this purpose. This is an idea which my delegation has always supported.

82. The vital interests of the peoples of the Middle East and also the interests of peace and security throughout the world require the States Members of the Organization to make every effort to eliminate this source of tension on our planet.

83. The People's Republic of Bulgaria once again wishes to express its profound sympathy and solidarity with the Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian peoples and also with the peoples of other Arab countries who are so firmly and valiantly defending their legitimate right to freedom, independence and sovereignty. My country will continue, in so far as its means allow, to make its utmost contribution to a lasting, peaceful and just settlement of the Middle East conflict.

84. Mr. ROA KOURÍ (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The invasion of Lebanon by the armed forces of Israel and its continued occupation of part of the territory of that country, together with the intervention by the United States under the banner of the so-called "multinational force", which thus constitutes an interference in the internal affairs of the State, and the attacks by their respective air forces against the Lebanese patriotic forces on 3 December and against Syrian positions in the Bekaa Valley and the Druse militia on 4 December, do not leave any room for doubt regarding the true objectives of the strategic agreements signed in Washington by the Governments of Reagan and Prime Minister Shamir.

85. Indeed, imperialist policy in the Middle East, which has always been characterized by its unconditional support for the expansionist designs of Israel and by its use of the Zionist State as the spearhead for its hegemonism in the area, is now revealed quite nakedly as a sustained effort to impose a *Pax Americana* on the peoples of the region through the elimination of the Palestinian revolution, the fomenting of division among the Arab States and the installation of Israel as a policeman in the Middle East and as the executor of the plans of imperialism.

Mr. Koroma (Sierra Leone), Vice-President, took the Chair.

86. If any one were naive enough still to harbour illusions as to the exclusively pro-Israeli bent of American policy in that area, despite the siren songs sung for some Arab ears, those illusions should by now have been dispelled by Mr. Shultz's recent trip to North Africa. In Tunisia, Mr. Shultz stated what is nothing but a truism for the rest of us: that the "friendship" of American imperialism towards the Arab countries is strictly subordinate to its intimate alliance with Israel and to its defence of Zionist interests.

87. American-Israeli actions in Lebanon once again reveal the collusion between imperialists and Zionists, and their intention to redraw the map of the Middle East, sacrificing the Arab peoples, and, in particular, the Palestinian people. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba stated on 7 December 1983:

"At present, a new war against the Arab peoples is being prepared, but in contrast to the past, United States assistance will not be covert. The United States Army and Navy are getting ready to participate in this new action side by side with the Tel Aviv troops."

88. In this dangerous game, the Government of the United States is trying to draw in and commit its NATO allies. The Minister for Foreign Affairs continued:

"We note with great concern the development of events in the Middle East. We believe that were a

local aggression against the Syrian Arab Republic, the Palestinians or the Lebanese patriotic forces to be unleashed, in line with the proposals of American strategists, this would set the region alight and could have catastrophic consequences."

89. The madness of the bellicose adventurist policy of the present American Administration has brought the world closer than ever before to the threshold of a thermonuclear conflict. The inventor of the insane theory of "brinkmanship", John Foster Dulles, has been outclassed by the hawks of today. This has induced even Barry Goldwater, one of the most reactionary men on the American political scene, to say, with great concern, that "The time has come to withdraw our forces"—from Lebanon. "There is a growing danger of our being involved in a major war in that area of the world as a result of our participation"—in the multinational force.

90. The voice of reason must prevail to stop the aggressive plans of imperialism and its pawns, in the Middle East, in southern Africa, and even in Central America. Cuba strongly condemns all action against the Syrian Arab Republic, against the heroic Palestinian fighters and against the Lebanese patriots, and appeals to the progressive forces and peace-loving States to denounce the criminal designs of the American Government.

91. Despite the many efforts made by the United Nations during the almost four decades that have elapsed since the beginning of the conflict in the Middle East, no comprehensive, just and lasting solution has been found to the overriding and crucial problem—the tragedy of Palestine. We are as far today as we were in 1947 from achieving a just and lasting peace for the peoples of that region.

92. The crisis in the Middle East has, on the contrary, actually become more profound and acute. Israel has intensified its policy of aggression and genocide against the Palestinians and against the Arab peoples in general. It has occupied additional territories, including southern Lebanon, and continues to pursue a policy of settlements in the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip with the aim of drastically altering the demography, the system of land tenure and the physical, social, political and cultural characteristics of the occupied territories, as well as of bringing before the international community as a *fait accompli* the messianic and unrealistic goals of the leaders of the Herut Party.

93. It must be stated once again that there can be no peace in the Middle East as long as the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and to establish their own State in Palestine is not recognized as part of the comprehensive, just and lasting solution set forth by the United Nations and reiterated by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, recently held at Geneva.

94. To achieve that goal there clearly must be a total and unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab and Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, and an end to all acts of hostility against the Arab States and the Palestinian people. The barbarous massacre in the camps of Sabra and Shatila cannot be allowed to recur.

95. We are in favour of the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation of all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Soviet Union, the United States and all other interested States. Obviously, the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, must participate on an equal footing and with equal rights in that as well as in any other conference on the Middle East.

56. The international community must remain vigilant in the face of the danger that could ensue from the warmongering American policies in the Middle East, including aggression against the Syrian Arab Republic and against the Palestinian and Lebanese patriots. These herald new threats to international peace and security in that corner of the world which must be prevented.

97. Never before has there been a more urgent need to support the heroic Palestinian fighters, their representative, the PLO, and the Arab front-line States. Never more than today has it been so necessary to have unity among all Arab forces in confronting their common enemies, imperialism and zionism.

98. We welcome the decision of the PLO to continue its just struggle and, in keeping with the agreements reached by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and with the tenets of our own foreign policy, we will continue to lend it all our co-operation in support of the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights.

99. The Cuban Revolution, which has always stood side by side with the Arab and Palestinian people in their historic struggle against imperialism and zionism, will spare no efforts to contribute to the attainment of the desired peace in the Middle East and to the comprehensive, just and lasting solution which we have supported with our vote on the resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

100. We therefore trust that the draft resolutions that will soon be submitted to the Member States of the United Nations for their consideration will meet with overwhelming support. Only firmness can lead to victory; only the resolve to resist will deter imperialist aggression.

101. Mr. NGUYEN THUONG (Viet Nam) (*interpretation from French*): Last week, my delegation had an opportunity to contribute to the debate on the question of Palestine and the right of its people to self-determination. Today, my statement will deal with the Middle East from a broader perspective than that of regional peace and security.

102. The question of the Middle East has been on our agenda for several decades. This year, however, the General Assembly is discussing it at a time when the situation in that area is particularly tense and even explosive, owing to the policy of Israel and that of the current United States Administration.

103. During the past year, aided and abetted in every way by its powerful strategic ally and after having brought its war of aggression into Lebanon with all the crimes that have since come to light, Israel, with the co-operation of that ally, imposed the so-called Lebanese-Israeli agreement of May 1983, which even Lebanese political figures have termed an "agreement of capitulation". It continues its military occupation of the southern part of Lebanon, persists in its annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights and stubbornly continues to speed up its annexation of occupied Arab territories, in particular the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip.

104. Under the title of "multinational peace-keeping forces", the United States has sent its Marines to Lebanon and has stationed off the Lebanese coast the largest concentration of air and naval forces ever seen in the eastern Mediterranean. Recently, Washington reaffirmed and strengthened even further the "strategic alliance" with Israel, increased military assistance, strengthened the weaponry of the Zionist forces and, we are told, has begun preparations for joint manoeuvres by the two allies. Moreover, Washington makes only verbal protests against Israel's acts of annexation and aggression against the Arab States and feigns friendship with some of those States in order to divide the Arab nation in its time of

severe ordeal. Most recently, on the pretext of carrying out reprisals, United States planes bombed Syrian positions and received the reply they deserved.

105. The aims of successive United States Administrations have always been to secure for themselves alone a grip on the Middle East, the region that is the richest in currently available energy resources as well as a strategic area of great importance controlling the sea traffic in and between the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean and a support base in its search for hegemony in eastern Africa, the Gulf and West Asia, as well as for possible attacks against the southern flank of the Soviet Union and the socialist States of Europe. Since the new Administration came into office, these American aims have been encouraged by a warmongering policy of the most adventurist kind and of unprecedented intensity.

106. The plan of the current United States Administration is to make Israel into the most powerful offensive force in the region, the faithful instrument of the ambitions of the United States in the Middle East. It was none other than President Reagan who, in an interview with *The Washington Post* in August 1979, which was reproduced in *The Christian Science Monitor* of 29 November 1983, argued in favour of the choice of Israel as the sure, if not exclusive, ally of the United States. He said: "The fall of the Shah of Iran had increased Israel's value as perhaps the only remaining strategic asset in the region on which the United States can truly rely." The President went on to say:

"Other pro-Western States in the region, especially Saudi Arabia and the smaller Gulf kingdoms, are weak and vulnerable. Israel's strength derives from the reality that her affinity with the West is not dependent on the survival of an autocratic or capricious ruler."

107. Quite clearly, by their current feverish, military and diplomatic activities, the rulers in Washington are striving to keep Israeli forces and their own Marines in Lebanese territory and to install there a springboard to be used subsequently for acts of ever more extensive aggression against Arab States and peoples. That clearly is an integral part of the overall strategy of the United States aimed at a much bigger zone, and involves, *inter alia*, the strengthening of their military presence, as is shown by the deployment of nuclear weapons in the Gulf area, the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean, with their network of bases, their Rapid Deployment Force, and their central command, called CENTCOM.

108. Of course, in the present international situation, the international community must, as a matter of the highest priority, strive to prevent a world nuclear war, but at the same time it should also oppose local wars, in particular the one that American imperialism is in the course of launching, through and in collusion with Israel, in one of the most sensitive regions of the world, a war which is in increasing danger of assuming unforeseeable dimensions. It is very alarming to note that the United States is acting out in the Middle East scenarios similar to those which, at the beginning of the 1960s in Viet Nam, led them, through successive escalations, into a large-scale war of direct aggression from 1965 to 1973. This similarity extends to the very pretext alleged to explain to the American people and to the world at large the ever-increasing involvement of the United States.

109. In the face of these acts of intimidation and this gunboat policy, aimed primarily at the Syrian Arab Republic, the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983:

"denounced the attack launched by Israel and the United States of America against the right of Syria to

secure the means to defend itself [and] noted with great concern that that attack could be considered as the prelude to a premeditated assault against Syria and other Arab States". [See A/38/132 and Corr.1 and 2, annex.]

This warning, issued in March 1983, is more than ever relevant today.

110. American imperialism might be tempted to repeat in the Middle East its intervention against Grenada, an abominable act which has been condemned by the world public and which will be condemned by history. Such a military adventure, starting in Lebanon and expanding to take in other Arab States, would inevitably prove to be a second Viet Nam for the United States.

111. For the aggressors, the end in the Middle East will be just as ignominious as the end in Viet Nam, because all peoples who rise up in defence of their independence and freedom have the same valour and intelligence; because the situation in the world in the 1980s is very different from that at the beginning of the 1960s; and because the Arab States, in the face of cynical aggression, will identify more clearly the enemy and the friend, will close their ranks in unity within the Arab nation and strengthen their solidarity with all the forces that cherish peace and justice, and will without any doubt win international support commensurate with the justice of their cause and the need to defend world peace and the region.

112. The appeal of the Security Council to the parties to show restraint is addressed primarily and essentially to the United States and Israel, the two "strategic allies", which are beginning to carry out their new plan prepared in the course of the Reagan-Shamir talks. The international community, including those in influential circles and the peace-loving forces in the United States and Israel, must take action in time to prevent a local war with unforeseeable risks of escalation, which would be extremely prejudicial to the interests of the peoples of the region, to world peace and, ultimately, to the interests of the United States itself. For, in this day and age, peace can be defended successfully, and the historic process of the liberation of peoples will irresistibly gain ground.

113. Many Governments have demonstrated their concern and put forward ideas for a peaceful solution to the Middle East situation. In particular, there have been the judicious statements by the summit and ministerial conferences of the non-aligned countries and the recent International Conference on the Question of Palestine, as well as the numerous resolutions of the United Nations. The proper way to restore peace and stability in the region is through a comprehensive political settlement, which must include the recognition of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and, as my delegation stressed last week [81st meeting], the restoration of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, essentially by the unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops and other non-Arab foreign forces; respect for the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, which means that Israel must restore all the occupied Arab territories, including the Syrian Golan Heights and Jerusalem; and arrangements to guarantee the right of all States in the region, primarily the new Arab State of Palestine, to live within secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

114. Pending such a comprehensive solution, and in circumstances in which the diktat and gunboat policy of the United States and Israel continue, the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries:

"expressed appreciation of the effective solidarity offered by all States and Powers that support the

struggle of the Palestinian people and the Arab nation, especially the countries of the Organization of African Unity, the socialist countries, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The Conference also praised the advanced European stand on the problem of the Middle East and Palestine. The Conference called upon those countries and Powers to intensify their political, diplomatic and material support for the Palestinian people and the Arab countries in their efforts to re-establish all their national rights and recover all the occupied Arab territories." [Ibid.]

115. Having had occasion to oppose the aggression of American imperialism and being particularly vigilant with regard to any re-emergence of these ambitions and manoeuvres against other peoples, Viet Nam has consistently and resolutely stood side-by-side with the Arab peoples of Palestine, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and others in their just struggle, which will inevitably be successful, despite temporary difficulties, against the policy of aggression, annexation and intervention of the United States and Israel, in order to regain their fundamental rights and defend their independence and sovereignty. In particular, in a statement of 8 December last, the Foreign Minister of Viet Nam said:

"The peoples and Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam firmly condemn the military alliance agreement between the United States and Israel as well as the criminal acts of aggression carried out by the United States, their air raids on the positions of the Lebanese patriots and the positions of Syrian units of the Arab peace-keeping force in Lebanon."

The statement continues with the demand that

"the United States immediately cease all intervention and escalation of aggression against the peoples of Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and other Arab countries and calls for the immediate withdrawal from Lebanon of all United States, Israel and other non-Arab foreign forces."

116. With regard to the political solution of the problem, my delegation wishes to express Viet Nam's support for the just ideas and guidelines I have mentioned. Furthermore, we support the proposal put forward by the PLO in development of a Soviet proposal and adopted unanimously at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, namely, the convening as soon as possible of an international conference on the Middle East, with the participation on an equal footing of the PLO and the Soviet Union, the United States and all the other parties concerned. In this spirit, my delegation welcomes the preparatory work for the discussion of this item of the agenda and will vote in favour of the judicious draft resolutions already prepared.

117. Mr. ICAZA GALLARD (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Only a few days ago, the world witnessed a new and dangerous turn in the relations between the United States and Israel which obviously represents a new threat to international peace and security, especially in the Middle East. I refer to the conclusion of agreements guaranteeing United States support for Israel in all military, economic and political fields. Of particular danger is the possible 15 per cent increase in military assistance to Israel, the conversion to grants of that assistance, the authorization of \$550 million for development of the Israeli Lavi war plane and supplies of extremely dangerous bombs.

118. In Lebanon, the fruit of these new agreements is already apparent in the openly aggressive conduct brazenly adopted by the United States Marines in that country, where they are stationed in the guise of a peace-keeping force.

119. Recent bombardments and attacks by the United States in Lebanon make it even more clear that the recently concluded agreements between Israel and that major Power include mutually agreed and co-ordinated military action by those countries against the Arab people. These actions are yet a further manifestation of the violent, warmongering policies which the current Reagan Administration has adopted against peoples struggling to defend their national interests, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The United States Marines carry misery, suffering and death to mankind all over the world. The use of force is the only method considered by officials of the Reagan Administration to solve world problems and maintain their hegemonistic control.

120. Together with Israel in the Middle East, South Africa in southern Africa and its puppet Governments in South America, the United States is demonstrating its unbridled militaristic attitude in all the regions of the world. In the case of Central America, the strengthening of economic and military relations between Israel and those countries of the area through which the United States carries out its dirty, undeclared war against Nicaragua is particularly significant.

121. In the Secretary-General's report to this session of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East there is an appeal for the Security Council to fulfil its responsibilities with regard to the Middle East conflict, in view of the means available to that organ in the search for a peaceful solution to the problem. The Secretary-General says: "I continue to believe that the Council could become a key instrument for resolving the Middle East conflict and eliminating an increasingly dangerous element of instability in world affairs." [See A/38/458, para. 47.]

122. The Secretary-General's concern is widely shared by the international community and the other day, in this very Hall, during the debate on the question of Palestine [82nd meeting], the observer of the League of Arab States referred to that same point and specifically to the constructive role that the Security Council could play with regard to the Arab peace plan⁴ adopted by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights¹ adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. The observer of the League of Arab States reminded us of the leading, unfortunate role which a permanent member of the Security Council has played and continues to play with regard to the Middle East conflict.

123. In this context, throughout the past few months we have seen how that supposedly peace-loving country has been, in the supreme organ of the Organization, the main obstacle to that organ's fulfilling its functions and adopting appropriate measures against Israel in the face of the latter's violation of the principles and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and its non-compliance with Security Council resolutions.

124. Since June 1982, two draft resolutions on the situation in Lebanon and one on the occupied territories have been vetoed by the United States in the Security Council. The purpose of one of those draft resolutions was to prevent the establishment of new settlements in the occupied territories. By vetoing it, the United States actually gave Israel the green light to continue its illegal settlements policy. In regard to other draft resolutions that have had a better fate, the United States has either abstained or not participated in the vote or, if it has voted in favour, the resolutions have remained unimplemented because of the passive conduct of that super-Power.

125. The ineffectiveness of the Security Council was clearly demonstrated in 1982 when Israel invaded Lebanon, disregarding the existence of an important instrument

of persuasion and peace-keeping that had been created by that body: the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. Invading forces continue to be present in Lebanon, despite Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982), which call for their immediate and unconditional withdrawal from that country.

126. In Lebanon, the possibility of a military confrontation with disastrous consequences for mankind seems more imminent each day. The urgency and gravity of the Middle East crisis have been obvious for a long time now. This means that we can no longer delay the search for and the implementation of a solution. Even before the recent events had taken place, the Secretary-General in his report to the current session of the General Assembly on the item under consideration made the following very-much-to-the-point and wise comments:

"I believe that the time has come to take a searching look at the actual state of affairs in the Middle East. I do this in the full knowledge that such an effort may be unpopular in many quarters. But it is of little value to pretend that things are as they were in 1948, or 1967, or indeed even two years ago. The facts and the principles involved must be faced, if any genuinely effective action is to be taken, and if this intractable and increasingly dangerous problem is to be resolved in a relatively peaceful manner." [See A/38/458, para. 41.]

127. But how can this long-standing and dangerous conflict be solved? How can the international community adopt effective measures leading to a just and lasting solution in the Middle East? How can we assist the heroic peoples of Africa, the Middle East and Central America in the efforts they have been making to bring about peace and to stop the imperialist onslaught against them?

128. This challenge that we face calls for changes in the political will of the United States Government. Without that political will, future generations will continue to witness war and its consequences of death and destruction, while peace will continue to be a vague, unattainable ideal. The international community must call on the United States to begin to respect the principles of the Charter and to refrain from using misinterpretations of those principles to carry out its aggressive policies.

129. The Security Council should review the various resolutions adopted on the Middle East with a view to implementing them, and if Israel continues to disregard the Council's resolutions we should then invoke the relevant provisions of the Charter.

130. Since the question of Palestine is the core of the problem of the Middle East and the main reason for the Arab-Israeli conflict, the United Nations must redouble its efforts to ensure that the rights of the Palestinians do not continue to be disregarded.

131. In the search for a solution to the Middle East problem, we must bear in mind the Geneva Declaration on Palestine¹ and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights,¹ adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in September 1983. The fact that the Conference supported the proposal that the United Nations should hold an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation, on an equal footing, of the PLO, the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as other interested States, and that one of the essential elements of a solution should be the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine, must guide our work both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council.

132. My country will exert its best efforts to ensure the attainment of those objectives.

133. Mr. SINCLAIR (Guyana): At a moment when the situation in the Middle East is as tense as it now is, with

such an alarmingly high potential for explosiveness, it is unhelpful to seek to direct the attention of the Assembly away from the basic issues that lie at the heart of that question and into irrelevancies, such as the Assembly heard earlier in this debate.

134. This debate is not about perceptions of the nature of Arab Governments, nor is it about the strategies these Governments have chosen, in a sovereign manner, for their own internal development. Those considerations are of the nature of red herrings, designed to shift the focus of attention from where it properly belongs. My delegation will certainly not be distracted by such tactics.

135. The "Situation in the Middle East" is, we are all aware, a complex of issues—among them, the dispossession of the Palestinians; their statelessness, despite the fact that the partition resolution made provision for the establishment of a Palestinian State; Israel's refusal to come to terms with Palestinian nationalism; Israel's treatment of the Palestinian people as if they did not have rights.

136. Another issue forming part of the complex of issues referred to in the "Situation in the Middle East" is Israeli expansionism over the years. Why does Israel continue to occupy territory belonging to its neighbours and then to seek to impose its laws and to Judaize those pieces of territory? How do the Israelis expect to find security when they are occupying and annexing their neighbours' territory? These are some of the major issues that challenge the Assembly in any consideration of the "Situation in the Middle East".

137. Unfortunately, in 1983 we are conspicuously further away from a solution to this question than when we considered it last year. In the intervening period, the plight of the Palestinians under Israeli occupation has worsened. This is evident from independent reports of the torture, imprisonment, mistreatment and banishment of Palestinians by the Israeli occupying authorities, of their closure of Palestinian schools, and of other actions routinely brought to the attention of the Assembly and of the Security Council. And these are not random, isolated actions by the Israelis. When taken in conjunction with official statements by the Israeli leadership, they are seen as representing a hardening of the Israeli position against the Palestinians and a renewed insistence on denying them their fundamental rights.

138. At the same time, Israel is intensifying its settlement policies. The continuation of these policies is inconsistent with the promotion of peaceful and stable relations, for they represent the exacerbation of a wound in the side of Israel's neighbours and are bound adversely to affect relations between them and, ultimately, the chance for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. Israel must cease this policy of establishing new settlements.

Mr. Illueca (Panama) resumed the Chair.

139. The situation in Lebanon has worsened considerably since the Assembly last took up the question of the Middle East and new dimensions of complexity have thereby been introduced into the search for peace in that region. In the pursuit of what are perceived as legitimate security interests and in the context of what is seen as a confrontation of ideologies, that unfortunate country has been turned into a battlefield, with little more than lip service being paid to its sovereignty and territorial integrity or to the interests and rights of the Lebanese people. With each passing day, the danger of another upward twist in the spiral of violence increases.

140. These developments reinforce the position which has been articulated for several years now by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and which enjoys almost

universal endorsement. This is that a peaceful solution in the Middle East must be based on Israeli withdrawal from all territory occupied since June 1967, respect for the rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to their own independent State, and respect for the right of all States in the area to live within secure and mutually recognized international borders.

141. My delegation believes that there is still time to avert the tide of violence which threatens to engulf the Middle East. After more than three decades characterized by a seemingly endless cycle of wars and skirmishes, it should be clear to all that there can be no military response to the political aspirations of the Palestinian people or to the security needs of the States of the region. Policies of intimidation, agreements or arrangements designed to promote the use of force or which bolster or reward intransigence do a monumental disservice to the cause of peace in the Middle East. Security in the region has to be common; security for one cannot be found at the price of the insecurity of others.

142. We therefore call on all States, particularly those with special responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, to do their utmost to help to harness the energies of the peoples and States of this region into a force for peaceful change. This is a political, no less than a moral, imperative if we wish to avoid what the Secretary-General vividly predicts in his very penetrating report as "a far more fundamental and destructive crisis in this unique region of the world" [*ibid.*, para. 40]. The time is surely now for a sober hard look at where the interests of peace in the Middle East and ultimately in the world at large truly lie. Any such examination brings us inevitably to the centrality of the Palestinian question. The importance of this question in the Middle East context is almost universally recognized. It was understood at the recently concluded International Conference on the Question of Palestine, out of which came the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, both of which demonstrate the world-wide nature of the support for fulfilment of Palestinian national rights, including the right of the Palestinian people to their own independent national State.

143. In addition, Israel must withdraw from all territory occupied since June 1967 and there must be respect for the right of all States in the area, including Israel, to live within secure and mutually recognized boundaries.

144. My delegation is under no illusion regarding the enormous difficulties that attend the efforts to secure a just and lasting peace based on the prescription I have just described. In 1983, the political environment in the Middle East is infinitely more complex than that of even one year ago; but what is crystal clear in the midst of this complexity is that there is no alternative to a negotiated solution in the Middle East. Such negotiation must have as its objective a comprehensive solution to the Middle East question, one in which the Palestinian people will participate on an equal footing through their representative organization, the PLO.

145. In this context, my delegation would like to express its support for the call of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine for an international peace conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned. My delegation endorses the view expressed by the Secretary-General in his report that such a negotiating process deserves serious consideration by the membership of the Assembly. We are strongly of the opinion that such an approach offers the best chance for a peaceful resolution of the Middle East question, based on the principles expressed in the various relevant

decisions of the United Nations, in particular Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

146. Meanwhile, Guyana has taken note of the efforts of the various factions in Lebanon to heal their differences through negotiation. We encourage the continuation of that process, even as we call for full respect by all for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon and for the prompt implementation of Security Council resolutions 508 (1982) and 509 (1982).

147. We also reiterate our hope that there will soon be an end to hostilities between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq so that the efforts of the international community can be concentrated, among other things, on the historic contribution to world peace which a Middle East settlement would represent.

148. Mr. AL-QASIMI (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation endorses the words of the Secretary-General when he points out in his report on the situation in the Middle East that developments "during the past year have given little cause for hope that the problems of that region are nearer to solution" [*ibid.*, para. 39]. However, we feel that these events are a natural corollary of Israeli policy aimed at securing hegemony and imposing solutions on the peoples of that region by violence and intimidation, carried out by proxy.

149. Indeed, Israel has made aggression and terrorism a means of carrying out its expansionist designs, at the cost of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples. It is these methods which permitted it to be born and it is by these methods that it intends to remain alive. It was Israel which introduced violence and terrorism into the Middle East, particularly in their worst manifestations. The current Israeli leaders committed the massacres of Deir Yassin 36 years ago against the defenceless Palestinians. It was those same leaders who committed the massacres at Sabra and Shatila hardly a year ago. It was they who murdered Count Bernadotte, the United Nations Mediator, in 1948. It was they who brought about the assassination attempts in 1980 against the three Mayors in the West Bank. In an article in *The New York Times* of 5 June 1980, William Paroder reported on these crimes as follows: "Although military occupation is not new to them, Israeli terrorism—if that is what it was—is virtually without precedent in the last 30 years."* It was they who engaged in acts of piracy in this region. In fact, 29 years ago—to be precise on 12 December 1954—just as today, Israeli fighter planes forced a Syrian civilian aircraft to land at Lod airport, holding its crew and its passengers hostage and interrogating them for two whole days. They were then freed because of the wave of indignation aroused by that act of aerial piracy on the part of Israel.

150. On 22 December 1954, Moshe Sharett, former Israeli Prime Minister, wrote in a note sent to Mr. Lavon, Minister of Defence, which is quoted in his diary:

"It must be clear to you that we had no justification whatsoever to seize the plane, and that, once forced down, we should have immediately released it and not held the passengers under interrogation for 48 hours. I have no reason to doubt the truth of the factual affirmation of the United States State Department that our action was without precedent in the history of international practice."*

151. Even if we tried to contain the terrorist acts of Israel against the Palestinian people and the Arab States, we should never succeed in doing so. Suffice it to consider what sort of life is led by the inhabitants of the West Bank, Gaza and southern Lebanon; what is their daily

life like under Israeli occupation, under the Israeli jackboot? They are shot down just for having thrown stones at the occupying troops. Their houses are blown up, and the houses of their relatives too, on the mere suspicion of any resistance to the occupation forces. Their towns and villages are besieged, their schools and universities are closed, just because they resisted occupation. It is regrettable to note that in spite of the terrorist policy of Israel, some are misled by Zionist propaganda which portrays Israel as a democratic State, a small State that its Arab neighbours will not allow to live in peace. As for Israeli democracy, it is only to be found in the treatment of Zionists, while Israel's daily racist behaviour and practices against the Arab inhabitants in the occupied Arab territories could not be the actions of a State which is truly democratic. As to Israel's claim that it is a small State which wants to live in peace but is threatened by its Arab neighbours, those allegations have clearly been shown up as false by the policy of aggression and expansionism that Israel has pursued ever since its foundation. This is sufficiently demonstrated by the fact that Israeli troops are occupying the territory of four Arab States. Ben-Gurion himself referred to this Israeli expansionist inclination in the summer of 1937 in a speech made at Zurich to the Po'alei Agudat Israel:

"The Jewish State which is now proposed to us, even with all the possible preparations and improvements in our favour, is not the Zionist aim, in this territory one cannot solve the Jewish problem . . . What will happen, in another 15 or any other number of years, when the proposed territorially limited State reaches the point of saturation of population? . . . Anyone who wants to be frank with himself should not prophesy about what there will be in another 15 years . . . The adversaries of partition were right when they claimed that this country was not given for us to partition it, for it constitutes a single unit, not only historically, but also from the natural and economic standpoint."*

152. The whole world is well aware how Israel has put this ideology into effect. As soon as Israel became a Member State of the United Nations, the terrorism against the Palestinians began with the confiscation of their houses and their property. The Palestinians were driven from their homes and replaced by Zionist settlers. Settlements were encouraged in what remained of the occupied Palestinian territory.

153. The events which have occurred recently in Lebanon are fraught with catastrophic consequences for the Middle East, indeed for the whole world. We hold Israel and its accomplices responsible for the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon and its consequences for the region and the world at large. Even more serious—and we cannot disregard this—the United States has been transformed from a mediator into a devoted partner of Israel. This is all the more true since the strategic alliance recently concluded between the United States and Israel, which makes it very difficult to imagine that the United States could confine itself to the role of mediator with regard to the problems of the Middle East. In fact, that country has now openly become an interested party through the strategic alliance concluded with a warmongering State, a State which is occupying Arab territory and denying the Palestinian Arab people their national rights.

154. In the debate on the Palestinian problem last week [81st meeting], my delegation outlined the position of my Government on this alliance and on the agreements which followed. Now I simply wish to say why we condemn this alliance. First of all, this alliance seriously jeopardizes the independence of the States of the area and their

*Quoted in English by the speaker.

territorial integrity. Secondly, it encourages Israel in its policy of annexation and escalation of tension against our States and against the Palestinian people, under the United States umbrella. Thirdly, it sets a seal on Israel's occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories and encourages Israel to annex those territories. Fourthly, it will increase Israel's obvious intransigence in its refusal to recognize Palestinian rights as evidenced by increased violations against the inhabitants of the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories. Fifthly, it encourages Israel to persist in its defiance of United Nations resolutions on the problem of Palestine and the problem of the Middle East.

155. The Charter of the United Nations confers a special responsibility on the United States, as a permanent member of the Security Council responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. Moreover, that country has taken on the role of mediator, working to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the problem of the Middle East and the problem of Palestine. We urge that country, therefore, to reconsider its alliance on the basis of its responsibilities, in order to preserve its credibility.

156. No State in the history of the United Nations has given rise to such an impressive number of United Nations resolutions condemning its acts of aggression, its practices and its policies. No State in the history of the United Nations has so defied the resolutions of the Organization. No State has been threatened by the Security Council more than Israel with the imposition of the sanctions provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter if it did not make amends by complying with those resolutions. The Charter states what should be done in cases resulting from aggression or violation of its principles, or those of international law or international legality, and this applies to all States without exception. It provides for action under Chapter VII and expulsion from the Organization. In addition, Article 4 of the Charter indeed makes it a condition of membership of the United Nations that a State must be peace-loving, must accept the obligations laid down in the Charter and must be able and willing to fulfil these obligations. Consequently, failure to respect these obligations entails the loss of all rights of membership.

157. The General Assembly took an unambiguous decision with regard to Israel, stating that Israel's aggression entailed the loss of its rights to membership. In its resolution 37/123 A of 16 December 1982, it stated, in paragraph 12, that:

"Israel's record and actions confirm that it is not a peace-loving Member State, that it has persistently violated the principles contained in the Charter and that it has carried out neither its obligations under the Charter nor its commitment under General Assembly resolution 273 (III) of 11 May 1949".

158. In view of all the foregoing, the United Nations must impose on that State the sanctions provided for under Chapter VII of the Charter and expel Israel from the Organization as an example to any one else that might pursue the policy of the law of the jungle in international relations.

159. It is high time the Arab people of Palestine were allowed to enjoy stability and peace, to regain possession of its assets and territory and the homeland from which it was driven and to recover its right to self-determination and to establish an independent State in Palestine. It is high time it found real peace, not the eternal rest imposed by the Israeli leaders on the victims of Deir Yassin, Kafr Kassem, Sabra and Shatila—a genuine peace resulting from a free and honourable life, free from occupation, terrorism and extermination.

160. Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia): The current debate on the situation in the Middle East coincides with new and dangerous developments in that region, fraught with the risk of further aggravation. The crisis is becoming increasingly an integral part of the overall deterioration of international relations.

161. The Middle East crisis is second to none in its threats to the independence and even to the very survival of the Palestinian people and in the involvement of non-regional interests and Powers. There is alarming evidence of ever greater foreign interference, presence and influence. This is being multiplied on the scene, already overburdened by the aggressiveness of domination and denial of the right to self-determination.

162. The persistent aggressive policy, expansionism and intransigence of Israel cannot be tolerated. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination has been and still is at the core of the Middle East crisis, and any solution which disregards the will of the Palestinian people cannot provide a just and lasting peace. A solution cannot be achieved without the participation of the Palestinian people, or against its will.

163. It may be appropriate to recall here that the participants in the first Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade 22 years ago, resolutely pronounced themselves in favour of full implementation of all the rights of the Palestinian people in conformity with the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations. The Seventh Conference, held from 7 to 12 March this year at New Delhi, as well as all the ones in between, reconfirmed that position, stressing that the independence and freedom of the Palestinian people were the prerequisites for a comprehensive solution in the Middle East.

164. Under the pretext of defending its own security and existence, Israel is continuing its aggression and expansion. This has become the main obstacle to peace and security in that region and is contrary to international law, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and United Nations resolutions and decisions relating to the question of the Middle East.

165. Gaza, Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Syrian Golan Heights remain under Israeli occupation. These areas are subject to intensive, illegal measures designed to change their demographic and administrative character, and oppression is the daily practice of the occupying forces. The occupation of a part of non-aligned Lebanon, a sovereign and independent country, is in its second year, and the sufferings of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians continue. The requests by the United Nations for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and for the restoration of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of that country remain ignored by the aggressor.

166. There is no doubt that the grave consequences of such an aggressive policy are not limited to the Middle East and the Mediterranean region alone.

167. Israel should understand that its behaviour is not a way to ensure its own security. It is unacceptable to claim one's own rights while denying the same rights to others. No one can deny the right of the Palestinian people to a national and cultural identity, to self-determination and to the creation of an independent State.

168. The PLO has been and remains the mouthpiece expressing the sovereign will of the Palestinian people, and its Chairman, Yasser Arafat, has participated in a number of meetings of the non-aligned countries. It is indispensable that the legally elected leadership of the PLO be respected, that foreign interference in the internal

matters of the PLO cease and that solidarity with the Palestinian people and with the PLO be strengthened. Otherwise, developments will favour Israel in its attempts to eliminate the PLO as an independent military and political factor, to prevent the strengthening of Arab solidarity and to preserve the positions acquired by aggression.

169. Despite adverse developments, there does exist a consensus in the international community concerning the content and methods of solving the crisis, and this consensus should be further enhanced. The proposals made by various international bodies and conferences make us even more convinced that further joint efforts should be exerted to achieve a political solution of the crisis within the framework of the United Nations. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine adopted a comprehensive political platform and a detailed Programme of Action aimed at that objective.¹

170. The non-aligned countries contributed substantially to the results of that Conference and an impressive number of other countries gave significant and encouraging support to these endeavours. All these countries, non-aligned and others, are proceeding from the principle of the non-acquisition of foreign territories by aggression or force, as well as from that of the right of each and every people to decide freely on its own destiny.

171. The decades of an unbroken series of wars of expansion and aggression and denial to the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination are now followed by developments that threaten to broaden the conflicts in the region and beyond. We feel that the Middle East crisis is at a crucial crossroads. All those involved must show the highest degree of restraint and exert further efforts, on their own and through the United Nations, to limit and remove the dangers of further exacerbation. New possibilities and prospectives for political settlement of all aspects of this crisis and, above all, of the question of Palestine, must be opened as well.

172. The interests and rights of the oppressed and homeless Palestinian people cannot be safeguarded and the ultimate security of all States in the region will not be achieved through alliances with outside Powers. This can be achieved only by curbing Israeli aggression and expansion and by recognizing that the lesson of human history is also applicable to the Middle East, namely, that self-determination is the paramount rule, and that includes the self-determination of the Palestinians.

173. Throughout history there have been attempts to deny the right of the peoples of Yugoslavia to live in peace and attempts to question their right to existence. They repulsed these attempts and maintain and safeguard their freedom and independence. It was President Tito who said that independence and equality of peoples is not a slogan; it is an achievement that will, with time, gain strength and importance.

174. Thus we have always supported the solution of the Middle East crisis on the basis of respect for all the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the policy of non-alignment.

175. In this context, it should be recalled that a dialogue on national reconciliation in Lebanon began not long ago at Geneva. The continuation of this dialogue and its success would be an important asset towards settlement of the situation in the area.

176. As in all other cases of aggression and denial of the basic rights of peoples, Yugoslavia will continue to support all actions and efforts aimed at a lasting, just and comprehensive solution.

177. We feel that such a solution should be built on the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab and Palestinian

territories occupied since June 1967, including Jerusalem; on the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable right to self-determination, national identity and sovereignty, and the right to establish its own State; on the participation of the PLO as the independent, sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing in all efforts towards, and negotiations on, a peaceful solution within the framework of the United Nations; and on ensuring to all countries and peoples in the Middle East the right to live in peace and security and the right to independent social development within recognized boundaries, free from the threat or use of force.

178. Finally, we believe that the implementation of all decisions to this effect is the responsibility of the United Nations.

179. Mr. PASHKEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): Because of the continuance of the aggressive policy of Israel, supported by the United States, the situation in the Middle East has become greatly overheated, and as the Secretary-General points out in his report, the developments in the Middle East during the past year have given little cause for hope that the problems of that region are nearer to solution.

180. The situation is not only alarming, it has become potentially explosive, indeed more so than at any other time in recent years. With striking cynicism and contempt, Tel Aviv, encouraged by its overseas protector, has been trampling underfoot decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly demanding the cessation of Israeli aggression in Lebanon and the guarantee of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and the liberation of the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem.

181. The unsettled state of the Middle East conflict and the tension which has been exacerbated by Israel are being used by the United States as a convenient pretext for sending to that region its naval forces and marines, building military bases and engaging in large-scale military manoeuvres aimed at a military build-up in the Middle East in a manner contrary to the interests of the Arab States of the region. This was demonstrated in particular by the escalation of United States military operations in Lebanon. United States interventionist actions in Lebanon which have already been carried out and those currently planned, are all part of the general aggressive militaristic policy of the current United States Administration, which has raised international terrorism and subversive operations to the status of official State policy.

182. The recent unprovoked United States air raid on positions of the Lebanese national patriotic forces and Syrian troops belonging to the Pan-Arab forces of containment was carried out clearly in order deliberately to exacerbate the situation in Lebanon and the surrounding area and to create a pretext for further expansion of United States aggressive actions against the Syrian Arab Republic.

183. Israel has been using the tense situation which it has brought about in Lebanon in order to divert the attention of world public opinion from the Israeli occupation forces and the systematic annexation of the Arab territories seized by them.

184. One cannot fail to see a direct link between the recent piratical raids of the United States Air Force and the far-reaching anti-Arab strategic conspiracy between Washington and Tel Aviv, which was formalized in the recent talks between President Reagan and the Israeli leaders.

185. United States aggressive action has yet again shown very clearly that Washington and Tel Aviv are not interested in the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the

Middle East but that they would like to subjugate that entire region to their military and political control.

186. The current United States Administration has now definitely thrown off its mask as an "impartial mediator" in Middle East affairs and has openly espoused a policy of military pressure and force against those opposing Israeli expansionism and United States diktat.

187. The Byelorussian delegation wishes to support the view expressed by a large number of delegations here to the effect that the latest act of aggression by the United States constitutes a challenge to the United Nations and a gross violation of the decisions of the Security Council designed to restore the sovereignty of Lebanon and to guarantee its independence and territorial integrity. No one now believes the solemn assurances given at Camp David, and since, that the agreements signed there were a major step towards peace in the Middle East. Subsequent events have completely disproved those affirmations. Israeli policy in the Middle East has become even more aggressive and expansionist. The separate deal made at Camp David has been followed by Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights and the piratical incursion into Lebanon. The so-called "peace agreement" between Israel and Lebanon, prepared with United States participation at a time of military occupation and under the threat of United States and Israeli tanks, constitutes a continuation of the Camp David policy, and is a new step designed to strengthen the American military presence in Lebanon. Israel has been stepping up its acts of terror and other repressive measures against the Arab population of the occupied territories.

188. Encouraged by United States support, Israel continues to ignore the appeals to it in United Nations resolutions to respect the rights of the civilian population in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, and is systematically and single-mindedly taking steps to perpetuate Israeli occupation.

189. The situation in the Middle East creates a direct threat to international peace and security, and not only in that region. Therefore, what is needed is the most resolute action designed to secure a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. As experience has shown, no partial or separate solutions can lead to a lasting peace in the region, nor can they guarantee the legitimate inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to self-determination and to establish its own homeland. Without such a guarantee, the problem of the Middle East cannot be solved.

190. The Soviet Union long ago proposed collective action to bring about a comprehensive, lasting settlement in the Middle East.³ The Soviet proposal to convene an international peace conference, with the participation on

an equal footing of all the parties concerned, including the PLO, is winning ever broader support. Evidence of this is the decision of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine to support this important Soviet proposal. Such a conference should be convened with the participation on an equal footing of all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the PLO, and the Soviet Union, the United States and other interested States. The Security Council, or its permanent members, could guarantee the implementation of any arrangements agreed on at such an international peace conference. The principles for such a settlement must be such as to ensure the elimination of the whole range of causes of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Such principles are contained in the proposals of the Soviet Union and in the Arab peace plan⁴ adopted on 9 September 1982 by the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference, held at Fez, as well as in the decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

191. The Soviet plan for a settlement in the Middle East is based on the following elements, as widely recognized within the United Nations: the need for strict compliance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of other people's territory by force; recognition and restoration of the right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination and to establish its own independent State on Palestinian land, which must be liberated from Israeli occupation; and assurance of the right of all States of the region to a secure existence and development in conditions of mutual respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, with appropriate international guarantees.

192. My delegation believes that the most important task now facing us is to take practical steps without further delay to bring about a comprehensive, lasting settlement in the Middle East—in particular, through the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East, which, given sufficient good will, could lead to a comprehensive settlement in that region which has suffered for so long.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.

NOTES

¹ See *International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21), chap. I.

² See *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1982, vol. 18, No. 35, p. 1081.

³ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-seventh Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1982*, document S/15403.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Supplement for October, November and December 1982, document S/15510.