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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 1 February 1988, at 4.30 p.m.

President: Mr. OKUN

(United States of America)

Members: Algeria

Mr. DJOUDI

Argentina

Mr. DELPECH

Brazil

Mr. NOGUEIRA-BATISTA

China

Mr. LI Luye

France

Mr. BLANC

Germany, Federal Republic of

Mr. Count YORK von WARTENBURG

Italy

Mr. BUCCI

Japan

Mr. TANIGUCHI

Nepal

Mr. JOSSE

Senegal

Mr. SARRE

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics

Mr. BELONOGOV

United Kingdom of Great

Sir Crispin TICKELL

Britain and Northern Ireland

Mr. DJOKIC

Yugoslavia

Mr. CHABALA

Zambia

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The meeting was called to order at 4.35 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 605 (1987) (S/19443)

THE PRESIDENT: In accordance with decisions taken at the previous meetings on this item, I invite the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Czechoslovakia, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Qatar, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Zimbabwe to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Zapotocky (Czechoslovakia), Mr. Badawi (Egypt), Mr. Gharekhan (India), Mr. Alatas (Indonesia), Mr. Netanyahu (Israel), Mr. Salah (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Treiki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Yusof (Malaysia), Mr. Slaoui (Morocco), Mr. Al-Kawari (Qatar), Mr. Adam (Sudan), Mr. Al-Masri (Syrian Arab Republic) and Mr. Mudenge (Zimbabwe) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/19466, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Algeria, Argentina, Nepal, Senegal, Yugoslavia and Zambia.

The first speaker is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia): I should first like to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Security Council for giving me the opportunity to participate in this debate on a question of such vital interest and importance to the Indonesian people and Government.

Let me at the outset extend my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency fo the Council for the month fo February and to express my confidence that, with your rich experience and proven diplomatic skills, you will be able to provide effective guidance to the proceedings of the Council. I also cannot fail to pay a deserved tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Sir Crispin Tickell, for the impeccable manner in which he acquitted himself of his task during the critical and busy month of January.

Further, I would like to associate myself with those who have spoken before me in expressing deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for the dedication and diligence with which he has carried out the mandate entrusted to him by the Council and for the detailed report (S/19443) he has submitted in accordance with Security Council resolution 605 (1987).

My delegation has requested to participate in the Council's debate owing to our deep concern over the shocking deterioration of the situation in the Palestinian Arab territories illegally occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem. Together with the rest of the international community we have followed with profound anguish and mounting indignation the brutal repression unleashed by the Israeli military forces against Palestinian protestors in Gaza, the West Bank and the Holy City of Al-Quds. The intensification of violence has resulted in the killing and wounding of scores of innocent Palestinians, in the arrest and arbitrary detention of thousands more and in savage and indiscriminate shooting and beatings, including bone-breaking reprisals against protestors and innocent bystanders alike, including women and children. These outrages have been

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accompanied by such other measures of collective punishment as round-the-clock curfews lasting for weeks at a time, as well as the denial of entry of the personnel of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) into the affected areas to provide emergency food and medical supplies. Even Al-Quds Al-Sharif has not been spared, since it too was placed under emergency powers for the first time since it was occupied and illegally annexed 21 years ago. The desecration of the Al-Aqsa Mosque is particularly offensive to the Indonesian people.

Indeed, the events as they continue to unfold bring into sharp relief the appalling dimensions of the oppression and tyranny, the dispossessions and deportations, the deprivation and death to which the Palestinian people have for so long been subjected. They also manifest Israel's obsessive intent continuously to exacerbate the already intolerable situation and to erect new obstacles to peace.

The gravity with which my Government views the situation in the occupied territories is fully reflected in the statement issued on 22 December 1987 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, which states, inter alia:

"Indonesia strongly condemns this further manifestation of the 'iron-fist' policy of the occupying Power as a blatant and gross violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949."

"The dangerous escalation of the repression and the perpetration of such atrocities are the direct consequences of prolonged occupation and the intolerable political, economic and social conditions to which the Palestinian population continues to be subjected. This deplorable state of affairs will continue as long as the Palestinian people are denied their inalienable right to self-determination, including an independent homeland in Palestine. Any further deterioration of the situation can only lead to an exacerbation of the

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

acute tensions and confrontation in the region, which pose a grave threat to international peace and security." (A/43/61, annex)

It is self-evident that the gruesome spectacle of wanton repression we are witnessing makes a mockery of Israeli assertions to the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Marrack Goulding, contained in the Secretary-General's report, that its only purpose is to restore law and order and that it was taking steps to minimize casualties, for such assertions are belied not only by what is happening and has been happening in the occupied territories for the past two months but also by the arrogant pronouncements by high Israeli officials that "the first priority is to use force, might, beatings", while in the same breath they blithely proclaim that the goal is "tranquillity" in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. Incidentally, it is also a telling measure of Israel's insolence that such a belligerent and unrepentant attitude was enunciated on the very day that the Secretary-General issued his report.

It is clear that Israel has no intention whatsoever of complying with Security Council resolution 605 (1987) of 22 December 1987. Israel's flouting of the decisions of the Council was again underscored when it went ahead with the illegal deportation of Palestinian civilians, despite Security Council resolutions 607 (1988) and 608 (1988) enjoining Israel from doing so and further calling for the immediate return of those already deported.

Israel cannot be allowed to hide behind the flimsy and totally unacceptable pretext of self-defence to justify its illegal presence in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories. Neither can it in any way rationalize its inhuman acts and practices of repression and persecution, and certainly not by resort to such legal sophistry as the invocation of laws and regulations in force during the British Mandate. Israel must be compelled to assume full responsibility for its gross

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

violations of the Charter, of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and of other universal norms of civilized behaviour.

Under the circumstances, to say that the dimensions of the present crisis in the occupied territories surpass everything experienced in the preceding two decades is to state the obvious. Indeed, a qualitative change has taken place in the nature and the level of struggle of the Palestinian people against the Israeli oppressor, portending far-reaching and inexorable ramifications for the further evolution of the situation. The spontaneous protests have spread throughout the occupied territories and have now assumed the proportions of a sustained popular uprising.

It would be equally short-sighted and even dangerous to view the present turmoil and strife in the occupied territories in isolation from the historical injustices inflicted on the Palestinians, injustices under which a whole generation has grown up knowing nothing other than persecution, humiliation and suffering under foreign occupation. The fact that for so long no surcease or solution could be found or be allowed to obtain for this continuing human tragedy only exacerbates the pent-up feelings of anger, frustration and despair that have been the daily lot of the Palestinians for the past two decades and which provoked the present rebellion in the occupied territories.

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

Their bitter disappointment is further accentuated by the perceived inability or unwillingness of this august body to fulfil its responsibilities under the Charter to restore to the Palestinians the exercise of their inalienable rights.

Deprived of any other recourse, the courageous Palestinian people, under the unquestionable leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), their sole and legitimate representative, have pursued the only alternative left to them: that of continuing their legitimate resistance and just struggle to regain their usurped national rights. Thus, even as we are now dealing with the report of the Secretary-General and his recommendations on how to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation, it should be clear to everyone that the central question is not how to make the Israeli security forces behave more humanely, nor how to make occupation more palatable to the Palestinians, for, as was confirmed to Mr. Goulding by all the Palestinians with whom he spoke in the occupied territories, there is

"no way in which the Israeli occupation could be made acceptable to the Palestinian people of the occupied territories". (S/19443, para. 20)

We therefore fully concur with one of the main conclusions underlined in the Secretary-General's report, namely that measures to ensure greater safety and protection of the civilian population are certainly necessary but can only be palliatives. I quote further from the report:

"... such measures ... urgently required though they are, will neither remove the causes of the tragic events which prompted Security Council resolution 605 (1987) nor bring peace to the region". (para. 52)

Hence the basic problem and the basic challenge before us is and remains the achievement of a comprehensive, just and durable settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the core of which is and has always been the question of Palestine. A settlement which recognizes and realizes the Palestinian nation's inalienable right

(Mr. Alatas, Indonesia)

to self-determination in a State of its own in Palestine, a settlement which effects Israel's withdrawal from all illegally occupied Arab territories including Jerusalem. For only then will one be able to speak of and ensure the right of all the States of the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized borders.

The overwhelming majority of Member States is already convinced that the International Peace Conference envisaged and endorsed in General Assembly resolution 38/58 C offers the best chance, perhaps the only chance, of successfully negotiating such a settlement.

On their part, the Arab States and the PLO have again affirmed their support for the Conference, and as a further tangible manifestation of their commitment they have - at the Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting of the Arab League held at Tunis last week - established a Ministerial Committee to conduct talks with the Governments of the permanent members of the Security Council with a view to the early convening of the Conference.

What is now needed is increased and sustained political and diplomatic pressure to convince Israel that the only path to peace is through a comprehensively negotiated and equitably conceived political solution. It is imperative therefore that especially Israel's friends and allies co-operate with the Secretary-General and, in the context of the Security Council, agree on concrete steps that would make the holding of the International Peace Conference possible. For the only real option before us is to mobilize the full authority and determination of the United Nations and the machinery of the Security Council in order to start the process of genuine negotiations leading to a comprehensive, just and peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

What is now needed more than ever is the courage to strike out for peace, real peace, not for undending belligerency, repression and war.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Indonesia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of India. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. GHAREKAN (India): I join those who have spoken before me in expressing happiness at seeing the United States in the presidency for the conduct of the deliberations of the Security Council for this month. It will be a period of intense activity and will demand diplomatic skills of the highest order, which Ambassador Walters and you, Ambassador Okun, possess in abundant measure.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to your distinguished predecessor, Sir Crispin Tickell, for his excellent stewardship of the Council during the month of January. It was not an easy period, and Sir Crispin displayed his characteristic consummate grasp of the issues involved and the necessary tact and patience in dealing with those issues.

My delegation has asked to speak in this debate in the spirit of the appeal of the Secretary-General in paragraph 54 of his report.

The Security Council is meeting for the fourth time in as many weeks to consider the situation in the occupied territories. This is indicative of the gravity of the situation and the extent of international concern. We have before us the report of the Secretary-General submitted in accordance with Security Council resolution 605 (1987). The report is a carefully worded document and contains an excellent analysis of the underlying causes of the tragic situation in the occupied territories as well as very wise prescriptions for tackling the problem in a mature and objective manner. I should also like to express our appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding for his mission to the area.

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

The report makes for sad and disturbing reading. Paragraph 13, for instance, reads in part as follows:

"It was said that, in addition to harsh methods of riot control, random and capricious violence against individuals was normal (e.g. the beating of young bystanders who happened to be present at the scene of a stone-throwing incident or the beating, in front of his pupils, of a schoolteacher who refused to suspend his class to remove obstacles placed by others in the road outside). Equally common was the complaint (which was also made against officials of the Israeli Civilian Administration in the territories) that Palestinians were treated with a contempt and arrogance that seemed to be deliberately intended to humiliate them and undermine their dignity as human beings." (S/19443, para. 13)

This insensate use of force in occupied territories, in flagrant violation of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, has resulted in the death of many, the injury of hundreds and the detention of thousands, many of them, according to the Secretary-General's report, under the age of 16 and some as young as 11 or 12.

This attempt at the deliberate humiliation of an entire population discourages any evidence that the Israeli authorities comprehend the meaning and significance of the events of the past few weeks in the occupied territories and in Israel itself. For the widespread demonstrations have been nothing short of an unequivocal and clear political statement: that years of occupation have not dimmed the spirit of Palestinian nationalism.

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

The Secretary-General's report vividly describes the situation.

"... The unrest of the past six weeks has been an expression of the despair and hopelessness felt by the population of the occupied territories, more than half of whom have known nothing but an occupation that denies what they consider to be their legitimate rights. The result is a tragedy for both sides. Nothing illustrates this more clearly than the daily sight of young unarmed Palestinians in confrontation with Israeli soldiers of their own age." (S/19443, para. 52)

The Secretary-General's principal recommendation is that the international community should make a concerted effort to persuade Israel to accept "the de jure applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied territories and to correct its practices in order to comply fully with that Convention". (para. 51)

My delegation trusts that the Security Council will act and make such an appeal.

Sad as these events have been, it would be sadder still if we were to lose the momentum generated by international opinion to move towards a serious and concerted effort at resolving the underlying causes that have given rise to the unrest and demonstrations in the first place.

On that, there is little difference of opinion. The core problem remains the denial of the right of self-determination to the Palestinian people, making them as refugees in their own land.

A comprehensive, just and lasting settlement must be found through negotiations which must include, as stated in the Secretary-General's report, the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including self-determination. Other essential elements of this settlement are also well understood and must include Israel's withdrawal from the territories occupied by it since 1967, including

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

Jerusalem, and the recognition of the right of all States in the region to live in peace and security within internationally recognized borders.

A process of negotiation must begin soon. India and an overwhelming majority of the Members of the United Nations believe that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East envisaged in resolution 38/58 C remains the most appropriate framework for those negotiations. Dialogue and consultation must proceed immediately with the Palestinians and their representatives - the Palestine Liberation Organization - as well as other parties involved. The United Nations bears a special responsibility in this process.

Misconstrued or short-sighted notions of security will only lead to increased insecurity for Israel and continued turbulence in the area. The time has come for greater realism, for accommodation and for the exercise of political will and statesmanship. What the Secretary-General calls "an effective negotiating process" must begin without delay. That such a process can only be under the auspices of the United Nations is accepted by all. A negotiated, political settlement is the only way towards the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the core of which is the Palestinian issue. The alternative is strife and violence and continuing deterioration in the situation in an already troubled region.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of India for the kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Czechoslovakia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ZAPOTOCKY (Czechoslovakia): May I first of all express to you our congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February and wish you much success in this responsible post. I should also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Permanent

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

Representative of the United Kingdom, Sir Crispin Tickell, for his efforts in his work as the President of the Council last month.

The report submitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council in accordance with resolution 605 (1987) has again convincingly demonstrated that the situation in the occupied Arab territories has become a serious problem which must be promptly resolved by political means. The report objectively documents that physical force is being used by the Israeli armed forces against civilians in the occupied territories, that fundamental human rights are not being observed, that economic pressure is being applied against the Palestinian population and that the unbearable and humiliating situation in the refugee camps is being perpetuated.

The report cites many examples of the illegal nature of Israeli policy in the occupied Arab territories which Israel has been seeking to annex definitively for more than 20 years. It is also obvious from the report that Israeli troops, armed to the teeth with the most sophisticated combat equipment, are not in a position, even by resorting to the most blatant terror, cruel beatings and killing, to thwart the embittered flare-up of the just anger of the Palestinian population. Therefore, it cannot be expected that it will be possible in the future to suppress the legitimate demands of the population of the occupied Arab territories through violence and deportations. On the contrary, the long-practised forceful denial of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the blind non-recognition of the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinians has led to manifestations of mass discontent, not only in the occupied territories, but even in Israel itself.

Less comprehensible is the position of the Israeli Government, which rejects the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly and does not want to understand that a peaceful and comprehensive solution of this problem

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

is in the interest of Israel as much as in that of the other parties concerned. We fully agree with the statement contained in the report of the Secretary-General that it is necessary to adopt additional measures aimed at ensuring the safety and protection of the civilian population, and join in the conclusion that real peace and security in the occupied Arab territories and in the whole Middle East region cannot be achieved without negotiations on a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Middle East situation. In this sense, we regard as fully justified the appeal to intensify efforts aimed at the convening of an international conference on the Middle East as contained in the letter from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

We regard an undelayed and concrete initiation of arrangements in the Security Council for an international conference on the Middle East, as proposed in the letter from the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Edward Shevardnadze, to the Secretary-General as a realistic way out of the present extraordinarily complex and dangerous situation. We resolutely support this proposal, which is fully in harmony with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, since it expresses, in the spirit of new thinking in the sphere of international relations, political will to find a generally acceptable solution to this problem.

We welcome the Soviet initiative to open, without delay, consultations within the framework of the Security Council aimed at identifying an effective negotiating process directed towards the creation of indispensable conditions which would make it possible, within a reasonable period of time, to convene the international conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, the PLO and the permanent members of the Security Council.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

We consider it necessary in the present situation to step up the Security Council's activity in order to create realistic prerequisites for a just solution to the question of Palestine. Israel's refusal of concerted United Nations efforts in the form of an international conference is a blind alley from which no escape is possible through armed force or separate deals - a fact confirmed quite convincingly by the past 20 years, as well as by recent events.

Throughout the world there is an ever stronger conviction about the urgent need for a political, all-embracing settlement of the situation in the Middle East region. We evaluate positively the fact that other international organizations are also striving for a political solution of this problem, be it the Non-Aligned Movement, the League of Arab States or the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and we hope it will be possible through such joint efforts to surmount Israel's present unconstructive approach and thus to unblock the process of peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic fully supports the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, including the establishment of its own State. Therefore, we will continue to extend political support to the just struggle of the heroic Palestinian people, and we hope that this series of Security Council meetings will be yet another significant step towards the implementation of the justified demands of the people of Palestine. We are convinced that an effective contribution can be made to this by the acceptance and implementation of the latest initiative of the Soviet Union aimed at seeking concrete and practical possibilities for resolving the situation in the occupied Arab territories and reaching an overall settlement in the Middle East through the collective efforts of Security Council members.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Czechoslovakia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Clovis Maksoud, Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations, to whom the Council extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure at its 2785th meeting, wishes to make a further statement. With the consent of the Council, I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MAKSOUD: Allow me to join in the consensus on congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and in the testimonials given to your predecessor, the Ambassador of the United Kingdom.

The need to address the Council once more is necessitated by the fact that several events have developed in the intervening period when the Council resumed its meetings and today. On the ground, the resorting again to firearms by the Israeli occupation authorities has led to the martyrdom of more than three, in addition to many wounded. It means that the Israeli occupying authority persists in its acts of defiance by not responding to the international community in its customary contempt of the United Nations and its resolutions, Charter and conventions.

It is as though Israel had no intention to comply with, to respond to, to be sensitized by or to be deferential to the international will as represented in this Council. We are faced with this obvious conclusion, especially since its methods, instead of subsiding, are intensifying. Its intention has now reached broader elements who are involved, namely, the settlers in the occupied territories who are considered "settlers" - in illegally established settlements there - but armed. They are called civilians - but they are armed, ostensibly to protect the illegal settlements. A new factor is thus being introduced, not only to the occupation

(Mr. Maksoud)

army but also to the illegal settlers who are supposedly civilians but armed.

Every day we are seeing a proliferation of means by which Israel executes its occupying authority.

The other day Mr. Herzog said he was worried about the spread of Islamic fundamentalism and Khomeinism. Yesterday the Israeli army attacked the Holy Sepulchre - people in the church - so I suppose that next they will be worried about the rise of Christian fundamentalism. Parenthetically, that goes to show that the resistance of the Palestinians to occupation is not sectarian, not religiously or ethnically motivated; it is that the Palestinians do not want but reject occupation. What they seek are their rights to self-expression and to self-determination. These are obvious elements.

In Nablus today the demonstrations have intensified and the oppressive measures have intensified. To equate the demonstrations by the Palestinian people with the occupying authority's behaviour is completely mind-boggling. The demonstrators have not resorted to violence.

We are told by Israelis that stone-throwing is a form of violence. Stone-throwing is a form of obstructing the occupiers from the pursuit of their occupation. Firearms, breaking bones, wounding people, entering homes at midnight, arresting persons, arresting children - that is occupation, that is violence.

(Mr. Maksoud)

That is violence inherent in the coercive measures that an occupying authority uses. Demonstrations, resort to the United Nations, trying to exhaust all peaceful means through civil disobedience - those are the methods of the resistance. As I said in my earlier statement, the Palestinians' uprising has undoubtedly opened the eyes of the people of the world to the insistence of the Palestinians on securing their rights by all means available under the United Nations Charter. The uprising cannot be stopped, and it ought not to be stopped. It has restored to the Palestinians the dignity that Israel seeks to deprive them of; it has restored to the Arabs a resilience that they almost lost when resort to the United Nations nearly became an exercise in futility.

That is why we come here today, in the light of the simultaneous developments taking place, developments on the ground and related developments in the so-called diplomatic atmosphere. We have heard in recent days about special envoys of the United States going to Jordan. Yesterday Secretary Shultz said "Neither the international conference nor direct negotiations. Those are processes. What is needed is emphasis on substance." We agree with him that what is necessary is to refocus on substantive issues.

In that respect, we have stated that a United Nations-sponsored international conference is the mechanism by which we can give priority to substantive issues. That is because we do not believe in direct negotiations as a mechanism when the outcome is not clearly spelt out. To us, negotiations are a desirable form of achieving results, which must be ascertained and then negotiated. To us, negotiations are not a fishing trip to discover what the outcome might be. That is why we reject the definition of negotiations - direct negotiations, bilateral negotiations - when they are perceived as a mechanism to ascertain the validity of occupation, or at least to concede part of the territories.

(Mr. Maksoud)

We are against negotiations that seek to ratify any inch of conquest - whether it is the occupation of the Golan or of East Jerusalem or the existence and proliferation of the illegal settlements. We want negotiations through the mechanism of a United Nations international conference, because then we shall be assured that they are not a form of diktat emerging from the assymetry of the occupying Power and the occupied population. In that respect the mechanism of a United Nations international conference becomes a commitment to substantive results, while the concept of direct bilateral negotiations becomes a way of dictating the hegemony of Israel and running away from the parameters of a clear-cut, genuine, authentic and mutually acceptable outcome.

We find the idea of negotiating interim agreements to be a possible way out or a dangerous trap to fall into. Here again, we think that what we ought to negotiate is a credible outcome. For negotiations to be of consequence they must be seen in the light of who can deliver the outcome of a negotiated settlement. Attempts to circumvent the Palestine Liberation Organization, as the credible, authentic representative of the Palestinian people, attempts to rule it out of the negotiating equation, mean that there is no intention of a serious negotiating process.

In the annals of diplomatic history no party has determined for its adversary who should represent it. To do so would mean that the negotiating process was of no consequence and that those who negotiated were ratifying the will of the occupier. That is why we do not think that any initiative or a resumption of the peace process should be construed as an alternative to what the United Nations, including the Security Council, is doing. The United Nations is bound to construct a peace in the Middle East in accordance with its various resolutions. If one of the big Powers - the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom or any

(Mr. Maksoud)

other - has its own concepts, ideas and priorities, they can be dealt with in the context of an international conference at that juncture.

The only State that categorically rejects the international conference is Israel, because it seeks to buy time through making minute responses to initiatives in order to derail the international community from building incrementally the elements, structures and institutions for peace-making. In other words, Israel intends to paralyse the Security Council, as it earlier trampled on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). It should not be allowed either to paralyse the Council or to marginalize the Council's efforts and responsibilities.

(Mr. Maksoud)

It is because of the important role we see for the Security Council, and especially its permanent members, in preparing the international conference that we find it necessary that tensions in the occupied territories be defused with a view to reaching a substantive resolution of the conflict. But if defusing tensions in the occupied territories is intended to dilute the resistance to occupation so Israel can buy more time to further its creeping annexation, and to license Israel's behaviour, it would constitute a very dangerous equation.

We do not consider ourselves to be unrealistic. We do not want to accept a definition of pragmatism or realism as a position that accommodates Israel's intransigence in one way or another. Realism is when the international community takes the law into its own hands and forces recalcitrant elements to abide by its laws and by the requirements of international peace.

It is in that sense that the events of last weekend and the attempt to find formulas outside the framework of the United Nations and its Security Council led us to the conclusion that if we allow that trend to be pursued without our serious opposition we would be directly or indirectly helping the effort to marginalize the Security Council. We in the Arab States reject this. We in the Arab League, through our various resolutions, have enunciated our commitment to the view that there is a need for an international conference, prepared by the permanent members of the Security Council, and with the participation of all those directly involved.

That is why we are eager to know that the super-Powers are committed to a substantive resolution of the conflict. During these debates and deliberations we have always sought to address the human problems that have arisen as a result of the savagery with which Israel has exercised its occupation in recent years. We think that if the Security Council addressed this in the light of the report of the Secretary-General and his analysis and recommendations, the Council would be able

(Mr. Maksoud)

at a later stage to address the substantive issues and finally resolve this endemic conflict.

But if the report of the Secretary-General and the functioning of the Security Council are threatened with paralysis, or at least with marginalization, we wonder how we can any longer continue to utilize the mechanisms of the United Nations to address the substantive issues that have agitated our volatile region for the past 40 years.

It is in that respect that we feel that the Security Council is called upon now to enhance the credibility and effectiveness of the Secretary-General. We feel too that his report, in both its substantive and its analytical portions, was a bold effort that has qualitatively improved confidence in the mechanisms of the United Nations. We hope the members of the Security Council will realize that this is an opportune moment historically; perhaps the uprising has unintentionally helped restore to the United Nations and the Security Council their functions of making and building peace.

It is in that spirit that we appeal to the members of the Security Council to redress the immediate grievances as a first step towards assuming its ultimate responsibility to bring peace and justice to the Palestinians and to the other peoples of the Middle East.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Mr. Maksoud for the kind words he addressed to me.

Sir Crispin TICKELL (United Kingdom): I wish you the best of good fortune as President of the Security Council, Sir, in the knowledge that you will certainly need it. We have every confidence that you and General Walters will carry out your negotiations and responsibilities with diligence, impartiality and grace.

(Sir Crispin Tickell,
United Kingdom)

The distress of the inhabitants of the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and the status of those territories themselves have long been questions of grave concern to my Government. We welcome the Secretary-General's report of 21 January 1988, which sets out the problems clearly and comprehensively, and points the way forward. We are most grateful to him, and we endorse the spirit of the report's narrative and its recommendations. I add our thanks to Mr. Goulding for his part in preparing the report under conditions which were far from easy.

In his report the Secretary-General describes what we ourselves have seen on television and in the press: the rejection by the Palestinians in the occupied territories of 20 years of Israeli occupation. We have also seen examples of conduct by the security forces of the occupying Power which scarcely conform with civilized standards. We are reminded in most unhappy fashion of the failure of the efforts by the international community to help the parties resolve the underlying problems of the Middle East conflict, and of the growing costs and risks of that failure.

Few here underestimate the complexity and intractability of the issues. I have been struck in recent weeks by the expressions on many sides, not least in this Council, of a readiness to tackle them seriously and to avoid acrimony and polemics. We agree strongly with the Secretary-General's appeal for a reduction in the virulence of debates on the Arab-Israel conflict, and for conscious action by the international community to promote understanding. We are grateful for interventions by Council members in that spirit; I saw them myself throughout my presidency. For ourselves, our simple aim, as friends of both Israel and the Arab people, is to help find the best means of reducing tension and to promote a just and honourable settlement.

(Sir Crispin Tickell, United Kingdom)

Now, we share the Secretary-General's conclusion that short-term measures to enhance the safety, protection and well-being of the Palestinian inhabitants of the occupied territories can be little more than palliatives. Of course, they still deserve our urgent attention. The priorities set by the Secretary-General are sensible, and we support his main recommendations. In particular, we endorse the call for Israel to abide by its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention and to ensure that its practices as the occupying Power conform to them. There is no doubt that the Convention applies in full to the occupied territories. We see no merit in Israeli arguments to the contrary. As a High Contracting Party to the Convention, we shall continue to do all in our power to persuade the Government of Israel in this sense.

In the meantime we join the Secretary-General's call for Israel to take specific measures to meet urgent humanitarian needs. Here, I pay warm tribute to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Its work in the occupied territories remains invaluable. We will give urgent and sympathetic consideration to any appeal for an increase in its resources.

I also pay tribute to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), whose achievements over decades of devoted and insufficiently recognized work the Secretary-General rightly commends. We note his recommendation for an extension of the Agency's mandate and for an increase in its capacity to provide assistance to the refugee population. We look forward to seeing the Commissioner-General's detailed proposals. We also note the assurances by the Government of Israel recorded in the report that it will co-operate fully with the Agency and with other relief agencies working with the Palestinians. We welcome those assurances. The United Kingdom has consistently supported UNRWA and is one of its largest contributors. In addition to the recently announced increase in our contribution to the regular UNRWA budget we stand ready to consider urgently any appeal for

(Sir Crispin Tickell, United Kingdom)

extra funds. We have already provided additional emergency aid through the European Community.

Those are all practical steps, and it is right for the Secretary-General to concentrate on them. We concur, too, in his view that Palestinians in the occupied territories should be given more scope to direct their own economic activities. As the Secretary-General recognizes, many of his recommendations depend for their application upon the consent and compliance of Israel. We urge Israel to respond to the constructive spirit of his report.

The Secretary-General's central message, echoed by many other speakers, is that no short-term relief, no emergency protection measures and no economic band-aids can make the occupation acceptable to the Palestinians in the occupied territories. We agree. Such measures risk tackling the symptoms, not the illness itself. A real cure requires treatment of the underlying causes of the conflict in order to bring genuine peace. The main elements of a solution have long been widely recognized. They are: the withdrawal of Israel from territories occupied since 1967 and the resolution of the status of those territories; the guaranteed right of all States in the region, including Israel, to secure existence within recognized borders and provision for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination.

Those elements provide the basis for a solution. But that solution will remain beyond our grasp until the parties concerned make a conscious decision to prepare for negotiations in a spirit of compromise and by avoiding acts that make peace all the harder to achieve. The first step, and perhaps the most difficult one, involves acknowledging the legitimate interests and grievances of the other side. As the British Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, said in a speech in Amman in November last year, that will require hard decisions by all concerned. Some cherished dreams will have to abandoned on both sides. But the

(Sir Crispin Tickell, United Kingdom)

alternatives - terrorist blackmail, armed struggle, the unstable and deteriorating status quo - are all far worse.

In our view a real opportunity lies in the proposal for an international conference involving all the parties to the conflict and the five permanent members of the Council, under the auspices of the United Nations. Such a conference should act as a framework for negotiations between the parties directly concerned. The more they can talk to each other directly the better. Last year much progress was achieved by the parties towards agreement on the modalities of the conference. That process should now be resumed, and it is for outside countries with influence in the region to give it their full backing.

We are aware of the important role played by the Secretary-General and his staff in promoting the convening of such a conference, and we are grateful for all their hard work to that end. We contributed to it in the past and will happily contribute again. The co-operation of the five permanent members, which has been such a noteworthy feature of the Council's work over the tragic conflict in the Gulf over the past year, sets an encouraging example of how they can and should work closely together to resolve major questions of international peace and security.

For 40 years we have seen millions of people trapped in a continuing tragedy. The report of our Secretary-General points towards a way out. Let us take it.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his kind words addressed to me and to General Walters.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

(The President)

I shall first call upon those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting. I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States of America.

The prestige and authority of the United Nations Security Council are very important assets. At critical moments in the past the Council has exercised its authority effectively in furthering international peace and security, with lasting influence. The adoption of resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which remain the foundation for a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue and which are accepted by virtually all parties, were examples of effective intervention by the Council. Unfortunately, the Council has been convened too many other times, especially in recent years, to consider unhelpful initiatives concerning this conflict.

(The President)

The draft resolution before us today is, regrettably, such an effort. This is the fourth time the Council has met to consider the situation in the West Bank and Gaza since demonstrations and violence erupted there in December. The United States believes that the three resolutions adopted during this period have amply expressed the Council's views on this subject. Further resolutions at this time are, in our view, redundant and inappropriate at best. At worst, they can detract from diplomatic efforts under way which are designed to address in a practical way the current unrest, which is a symptom of the failure to achieve a solution of the Palestinian issue and the larger goal of a just and lasting peace for all concerned.

The United States will veto the draft resolution before us today because we believe it is an untimely effort to involve the Security Council on issues which are, at this time, best dealt with through diplomatic channels.

Since the disturbances began my Government has been intensively engaged to encourage all those who have influence over the situation to work for the restoration of civil order in the West Bank and Gaza. This is essential for efforts to achieve a settlement to proceed. Even more important, the United States is consulting with the parties directly concerned on ways to resolve the Palestinian conflict and achieve a permanent and comprehensive peace through negotiations on the basis of resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Agreement on a negotiating process and the appropriate auspices for negotiations can succeed only through the consent of the parties directly concerned. It cannot be imposed upon them, even by implication, as this draft resolution attempts to do.

My Government acknowledges and respects the interest of the United Nations and the Security Council in seeking a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. We respect the efforts of the Secretary-General and his representative to assess the

(The President)

current situation at the request of the Council, and we support the vital work which United Nations agencies perform to improve the welfare of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. We disapprove, however, of the Council's effort, in this instance, to address the current unrest and Israel's response in a fruitless and redundant way and to direct a negotiating process before agreement is reached among the parties on appropriate auspices for negotiations. The authority of the Security Council on these issues should be invoked wisely and sparingly and at the proper time.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/19466.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, China, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Italy, Japan, Nepal, Senegal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against: United States of America

The PRESIDENT: The result of the voting is as follows: 14 in favour, one against and no abstentions. The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Security Council.

I shall now call on those representatives who have asked to be allowed to make statements after the voting.

Mr. BELONOGOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Since this is my first statement in the Council in February, and since we are at the very beginning of the month, I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the responsible post of President of the Security Council and to express my firm conviction that the well

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

known diplomatic skills and personal abilities of you, Mr. Okun, and Mr. Walters will facilitate the effective stewardship of the Security Council's activities in the month of February.

Of course my delegation must take into consideration both a person's activities as President of the Security Council and his activities in the Council as head of his delegation. I feel I should recall this so that all may understand this statement, which unfortunately cannot be entirely complimentary to the United States delegation, since it has commemorated the first day of its presidency of the Security Council with a veto - cast in isolation in spite of the unanimous views of all the other members of the Council - of a necessary and important decision the draft text of which is, it will be seen if viewed carefully and dispassionately, drawn up in very mild and modest terms and is quite effective and balanced.

Continuing my introductory remarks, I should like to pay tribute to the Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for his great professionalism and energetic leadership of the Council in the month of January. Sir Crispin has earned our great respect with his many admirable qualities. In particular we appreciate the fact that during his presidency we were finally able to move towards the prompt calling to order of the Council. Of course, that was not the greatest achievement of the Council under his presidency, but it was unique and therefore it is appropriate to mention it here today and to express the hope that members of the Council will continue the tradition established during Sir Crispin's presidency.

The Soviet delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution submitted by Algeria, Argentina, Nepal, Senegal, Yugoslavia and Zambia, first because we fully share the great concern expressed therein, concern voiced by all delegations save one or two who spoke during our discussion of the tragic situation of the Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territories.

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

No one can deny the fact that they are in urgent and baleful need of assistance and protection from the United Nations because of the cruel repression which the Israeli Government has exercised against Palestinians who live on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. The fact is that it is not a question of how many meetings we devote to this question and how many resolutions we have already adopted. Unfortunately a turn for the better has not come about and if it does not occur in the future what moral right will the Security Council have to refrain from exercising its responsibilities and not consider and not take the relevant decisions on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories? This is our obligation. This is our duty.

We voted in favour of the draft resolution because we agree with the ideas set forth in the report of the Secretary-General (S/19433). We should like once again to extend our gratitude to Mr. Perez de Cuellar for his objective and well-documented report and for the useful constructive ideas and practical views he expressed on further areas of activity for the United Nations with regard to the occupied territories and for a solution to the Palestine problem as the very linchpin of the entire Middle East settlement.

In this regard we attach great importance to the fact that during meetings on a discussion of the aforementioned report of the Secretary-General, there was broad, clearly expressed support for the proposal to speed up practical preparations for the convening of an international conference on the Middle East - now universally acknowledged - which is the only way we might extricate ourselves from the explosive situation in the Middle East and the current impasse.

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

In this connection, I should like once again to draw the attention of members of the Council to the great practical significance of the proposal contained in the letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR to the Secretary-General. That proposal by Mr. Shevardnadze sets forth specific steps to speed up and facilitate the convening of an international conference on the Middle East.

We deeply regret that the United States by casting its veto for the second time in the course of two weeks has prevented the Security Council from effectively carrying out its responsibilities, adopting draft resolutions on the important problem of Lebanon and the occupied Arab territories and living up to the expectations of the world community.

The delegation of the USSR expresses the hope that the Security Council's inability to adopt this draft resolution because of the position of one of the permanent members of the Council will not weaken the determination of the Secretary-General to continue to do his utmost, with his usual skill and dedication, to fulfil the mandate entrusted to him by the Security Council and the General Assembly. We further hope that the Secretary-General will act vigorously in the manner he himself described in his report to the Security Council. That report, of course, remains in force and retains its significance.

We also hope that the Security Council, in spite of the current setback in its work, will not only continue to show an active interest in the situation in the occupied Arab territories - a situation which cannot fail to arouse any rational person with feelings of indignation - but will also find the ways and means to have an impact on this difficult situation, thus mitigating the fate of the Palestinians and bringing about a just solution to the Palestinian problem through a comprehensive settlement.

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

We should also like to express the hope that the Government of Israel will not interpret the Council's failure to adopt a resolution - owing to the exercise once again of a veto by the United States - as condonement of the policy being pursued by Tel Aviv in the Middle East in general, and in the occupied Arab territories in particular.

World public opinion on this issue cannot be subjected to any dual interpretation. It is unanimous in condemning this policy as pursued by the current Israeli leadership, just as it is unanimous in demanding the immediate beginning of a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Soviet Union for the kind words he addressed to me and to General Walters in our capacity as President of the Security Council.

I call on the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Mr. TERZI (Palestine Liberation Organization): I know that it is a little difficult and that there may be some conflict for the United States to occupy the presidency of the Council. However, we welcome you, Sir, and trust that during the month of February there will be more positive work done in the Council.

Permit me, Sir, to express our deep appreciation to Sir Crispin Tickell for his dedication and diligence during the last two weeks. He has manifested a deep sense of objectivity in the discharge of the responsibilities of the Council and a commitment to the smooth running of its work.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine
Liberation Organization)

Sir Crispin was motivated by a desire to prevent the international community's failure to promote understanding and peace. He did not achieve all that he aspired to, but at least he did his best.

Allow me also to assure the Secretary-General of the United Nations that his report has received unanimous support, notwithstanding the veto. As we understand it, every single representative has praised the report and agreed with the recommendations therein. Notwithstanding the veto, we are sure he will read that in the records of the proceedings before the vote.

I should like to relate a few events, atrocities, that have taken place since the Council adjourned on Friday. Last night, for example, Zionist settlers and members of the Israeli forces kidnapped four children from Deishe refugee camp; this morning 30 more were kidnapped. We are still concerned about their fate.

Today, the forces of occupation opened fire on demonstrators in Qalqiliya and arrested a nine-year-old boy named Saber Daoud Tibaoui.

The result of the onslaught against Nablus which started on Friday is 72 wounded, of which 19 resulted from live ammunition. The wounded were taken to the Palestinian Women's Union hospital and there is now an appeal for more blood, more iodine, more bandage and all the supplies necessary to treat the wounded in the hospital.

In Hebron, Jamail Ata Ismail and Adnan Der'aoui from Ben in Nahim were taken to a hospital for treatment as a result of wounds inflicted with live ammunition.

In Anata, some 20 Palestinians were wounded and two killed: one Mouayyad Shaar, 21 years, and the other Murad Hamdallah, 17 years of age.

Naturally, we have all witnessed what happened in Jerusalem, outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We have learnt also of the attack on the Orthodox Church in Beit Sahour, next to Bethlehem. We are apprised of a similar situation

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in Ramallah, where on Sunday the worshippers were molested and attacked. But that came in the wake of the attacks that started last week against the mosques in Jerusalem and elsewhere.

We have heard and know that the City of Nablus has been declared a war zone. We, supposedly, know what that means: curfew was declared in Nablus for the ninth time in two weeks.

The situation in Gaza is not much different: the refugee camps are being subjected to more atrocious and brutal crimes by the forces of occupation. In this context, we wish the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to extend the services and activities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to those refugee camps.

We have two choices, one of which is to maintain the status quo. That would mean coming here every day to the Council about more victims, more wounded and more women with forced abortion as a result of inhaling the gas. And, who knows: we are informed that the Israeli army is dropping some sort of green liquid that seems much more lethal than tear gas. So far we have no precise information about the nature of that green liquid.

Of course, we fully agree that the prestige, dignity and authority of the United Nations Security Council should be maintained. It was out of respect for that dignity, prestige and authority that we came here. We came here, in the first place, to see to it that the Security Council is enabled to carry out the mission entrusted to it, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. We had hoped its members, individually and collectively, would ensure respect for the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Therefore, by coming to the Council no one is injuring its prestige or undermining its authority; on the contrary, we came here to invoke that authority.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine
Liberation Organization)

The representative of the United States has told us that resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) remain the foundation for the peaceful solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the question of Palestine. I beg to disagree, because I have read them - I think I can recite them from memory - and there is nothing in them, explicit or implied, that addresses the Palestinian issue. If I recall correctly, in 1978 the United States Government stated very clearly that resolution 242 (1967) did not address the political dimension of the Palestinian problem. How, then, can we think that the United States now believes that resolution 242 (1967) is the foundation for a peaceful solution of the Palestinian issue?

What is the Palestinian issue? That has been made very clear to every one: the Palestinians have been thrown out of their homes, denied their right to self-determination, denied the right to life, and now are being "transferred" from their homes - a euphemism for elimination.

(Mr. Terzi, Palestine
Liberation Organization)

So where do resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) address the Palestinian issue?

Then we are told that those resolutions have been accepted by virtually all the parties. I wonder who all the parties are, whether the Palestinian people is or is not a party to the conflict. We call it the Palestinian issue, so the Palestinian people, of necessity, is a party to it. I am not aware that the Palestinians have ever accepted resolutions 242 (1967) or 338 (1973).

We continue to read the statements by the representative of the United States, who says that three resolutions are enough. Are we negotiating on a commercial basis - three resolutions now, two later, and two vetoes to balance the balance sheet - or are we addressing live issues? There are people being killed. We are not playing a game and scoring 7-3, or whatever; we are dealing with the future of human elements.

Will the resolutions and the Council's work really detract from diplomatic efforts that are under way, so that those resolutions and that work are inappropriate? We have been hearing about diplomatic efforts since 1949. I belong to the age group that can remember diplomatic efforts then. Where did they get us? The number of registered refugees was then 800,000; it is now more than 2 million. Eighty per cent of Palestine was then occupied; now it is 120 per cent, if we include the other Arab territories. So where are those diplomatic efforts leading us?

Then we are told that the United States is consulting the parties directly concerned on ways to resolve the Palestinian conflict and achieve a permanent and comprehensive peace. I wonder who the United States Government is consulting. We have been seeing people on television, even in Washington, saying that the

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representative of the Palestinians is the Palestine Liberation Organization. So I do not know who the United States is consulting. More than that, if the United States is really consulting towards the attainment of a comprehensive peace, one would think that it was consulting, at least at first instance, with a party that could deliver, and to the best of our knowledge the United States is not consulting with the Palestinian party that can deliver, and we are not aware that the consultations are taking place with other people directly responsible for the future of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian territory.

Nobody is seeking an imposed solution. Attempted imposed solutions come through a method that has failed. The military option has not been successful in imposing a solution, because of the determination of those young boys whose sacred stones have proved to be much more powerful and effective than the tanks, the green liquid that is dropped and martial law.

Of course, we all respect the interest of the United Nations, including the Security Council. We must also respect the fact that the United Nations, including the Security Council, should be enabled to discharge its duties. The United States veto is making it impossible for the Security Council to do so.

In the draft resolution we see nothing to prevent the international community from saying, for example, that the Council

"Affirms the urgent need to achieve, under the auspices of the United Nations, a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab/Israeli conflict, an integral part of which is the Palestinian problem".

To start with, if the United States intention is to act outside the United Nations or to prevent it from assuming its responsibilities in this case, I can understand that. But I am taking a bona-fide approach, assuming that the United States

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Government also wants to function within the United Nations system, because all its efforts outside the United Nations system have not brought peace. I do not have to quote one of the clearest examples of failure in that regard.

Or perhaps the United States is opposed to the Council's expressing its determination to work towards the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. I am confused. Would the United States really say that it is against the Security Council's working towards the achievement of peace?

The Council's authority has always been invoked wisely, but not selectively. The fact that the Council has discharged its duties so correctly in the past does not really give the impression that it has been acting unwisely.

We are happy and grateful that the international community, as represented by the Council, has shown, with those 14 affirmative votes, that the United States Government has opted to single itself out and work against the peace efforts.

The PRESIDENT: There are no further speakers for this meeting. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.