

**REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF
THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: FORTIETH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 35 (A/40/35)



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New York, 1985

NOTE

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[1 October 1985]

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

23 September 1985

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose herewith the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for submission to the General Assembly in accordance with paragraph 4 of resolution 39/49 A.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Massamba SARRE
Chairman of the Committee
on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights
of the Palestinian People

His Excellency
Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar
Secretary-General of the United Nations

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, established by General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, is currently composed of 23 Member States. 1/
2. The first report of the Committee 2/ contained specific recommendations designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights, as previously recognized and defined by the General Assembly. Those recommendations were first endorsed by the Assembly at its thirty-first session as a basis for the solution of the question of Palestine.
3. In its subsequent reports to the General Assembly, 3/ the Committee retained its original recommendations unchanged. On each occasion and with stronger emphasis, they were again endorsed by the Assembly which each year has also renewed its mandate of the Committee.
4. Despite repeated urgings by the Committee, however, the Security Council has not yet been able to act on or implement the recommendations of the Committee. Meanwhile, arising from a continuation of Israeli policies and practices, tension and violence persist in the Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem, illegally occupied by Israel.
5. Israel has not yet begun to implement the Security Council resolutions requesting its complete and unconditional withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories. Lebanon has also been caught in the turmoil. Israel has prevented UNIFIL from deploying along the internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon. The Committee has therefore continued to stress that this situation will prevail in the area as long as the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people remain unattained. The United Nations has a clear responsibility to ensure the achievement of the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty and to return to their homes and property, as well as to their physical protection and welfare in the refugee camps.
6. To secure United Nations objectives on the question of Palestine, during the year under review, the Committee gave priority to the early convening of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East, under United Nations auspices and in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, and continued to urge the understanding and co-operation of all concerned for the resolution of a problem which is fundamental to international peace and security. The Committee regrets it has not so far sensed any change in the negative attitude of Israel and the United States of America concerning the convening of the Conference, and expresses the sincere hope that a positive change will urgently be forthcoming.

II. MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE

7. The Committee's mandate for the year 1985 is contained in General Assembly resolutions 39/49 A and B, the relevant parts of which are paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of resolution 39/49 A and paragraph 2 of resolution 39/49 B, through which the Committee was required:

(a) To continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine as well as the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and to report and make suggestions to the General Assembly or the Security Council, as appropriate;

(b) To continue to exert all efforts to promote the implementation of its recommendations, to send delegations or representatives to international conferences where such representation would be considered by it to be appropriate and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fortieth session and thereafter;

(c) To continue to extend its co-operation to non-governmental organizations in their contribution towards heightening international awareness of the facts relating to the question of Palestine.

8. The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the Division for Palestinian Rights continue to discharge the tasks detailed in previous resolutions, in consultation with the Committee and under its guidance.

III. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. Election of officers

9. The Committee, at its 111th meeting, on 8 January 1985, decided to re-elect the following officers:

Chairman: Mr. Massamba Sarré (Senegal)
Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Oscar Oramas-Oliva (Cuba)
Mr. Mohammed Farid Zarif (Afghanistan)
Rapporteur: Mr. Victor J. Gauci (Malta)

10. At its 112th meeting, on 24 January 1985, the Committee adopted its programme of work for 1985 (A/AC.183/L.39) in implementation of its mandate.

B. Participation in the work of the Committee

11. As in previous years, the Committee reconfirmed, at its very first meeting, that all States Members of the United Nations and Permanent Observers to the United Nations desiring to participate in the work of the Committee as observers were welcome to do so. The Committee also decided to invite the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to participate in its work as an observer, to attend all its meetings and to make observations and proposals for the consideration of the Committee.

12. During 1985 the Committee again welcomed as observers all the States and organizations that had participated in the preceding year. ^{4/} The Committee also welcomed the additional participation of China and Sri Lanka as observers from 14 May 1985.

13. The Committee stressed its priority objective in seeking to promote the convening of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East, as endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 38/58 C. Accordingly, a letter to that effect was addressed on 5 February 1985 by the Chairman to the Secretary-General who subsequently transmitted it, on 20 February 1985, to States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies, as well as to intergovernmental regional organizations.

C. Re-establishment of the Working Group

14. The Committee, at its 111th meeting, re-established its Working Group to assist in the preparation and expedition of the work of the Committee. The Working Group was constituted as before, on the understanding that any Committee member or observer could participate in its proceedings. ^{5/}

15. At its first meeting, on 18 January 1985, the Working Group unanimously re-elected Mr. Victor J. Gauci (Malta) as its Chairman and Ms. Savitri Kunadi (India) as its Vice-Chairman.

IV. ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE

A. Action taken in accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/49 A

1. Review of the situation relating to the question of Palestine and efforts to implement the recommendations of the Committee

16. In accordance with its mandate, the Committee continued to keep the situation relating to the question of Palestine under review, and to exert all efforts to promote the implementation of its recommendations as endorsed by General Assembly resolutions.

17. In reaction to events in the region affecting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, whenever urgent action was required, the Chairman of the Committee repeatedly drew the attention of the Secretary-General and of the President of the Security Council to such developments, and called for appropriate measures in accordance with United Nations resolutions (see below, section (2) (a)). Those communications were sent against a backdrop of continued military occupation by Israel of the Palestinian and Arab territories, and of resulting growing conflict and tension in the region.

18. The Committee noted with mounting concern that the situation relating to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people had continued to deteriorate in the year under review, as described in various studies and documents prepared by United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies, and by experts, as well as in press reports.

19. The information reviewed by the Committee made it clear that the Israeli policies of illegally maintaining and establishing new Jewish settlements, and confiscating Arab-owned land, in the occupied Palestinian territories, had continued. Data submitted to the International Symposium on Israeli Settlements in the occupied Arab territories, organized by the League of Arab States, in Washington D.C., in April 1985, showed that Israel had seized 51.2 per cent of the total area of the West Bank as of May 1984. By that date, Israel had about 179 settlements in the West Bank, of which 31 were in and around Jerusalem, involving an estimated total of approximately 146,000 settlers. Instances of the creation of new settlements and confiscation of additional Arab land continued to be reported in letters by the Chairman of the Committee and by the Permanent Representative of Jordan addressed to the Secretary-General during 1985.

20. The Committee noted that the continuing momentum towards settlement of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories was accompanied by measures designed to stifle all forms of political, cultural, social and economic expression of the Palestinian people, as well as violence, harassment and provocation of Palestinians by armed Israeli settlers, in an apparent effort to drive the Palestinians out of their land and facilitate its eventual annexation by Israel.

21. The Committee noted that according to a report published by Law in the Service of Man, a West Bank-based affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, indiscriminate detention, accompanied by torture and various forms of ill-treatment, was used for the purpose of political intimidation of Palestinians. Further evidence of detention without charges, torture and ill-treatment of Palestinians in Israeli prisons and detention centres, including arbitrary

beatings, overcrowding, lack of food, of water and health care, denial of educational materials, and discrimination, was provided by witnesses in hearings held in the area by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population in the Occupied Territories (Press Releases HR/2792-2864).

22. In their effort to repress Palestinian opposition to occupation, the Israeli military authorities repeatedly broke up demonstrations, raided houses in villages and refugee camps, declared selected areas "military zones" and closed them, and engaged in forms of collective punishment such as bulldozing houses, closing shops, and imposing curfews.

23. In response to growing resistance against the occupying Power by Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, the Israeli Government in August 1985 decided to reinstate its policies of administrative detention without charges for up to six months and deportation of persons considered security risks, and it engaged in a massive campaign in implementation of those policies.

24. At the same time, the Israeli occupation authorities continued to resort to measures designed to restrict the right to freedom of movement of the Palestinian people. The Committee deplored in particular that two women from the West Bank, Ms. Sameeha Khalil and Ms. Siham Barghouty, invited by the Committee to participate in the International NGO Meeting held at Geneva from 9 to 12 September 1985, had been refused a travel permit by the Israeli authorities. It was also brought to the attention of the Committee that a number of members of Law in the Service of Man were also detained on the eve of the meeting.

25. The Committee further noted that the Israeli occupation authorities had continued to deny trade union rights to Arab workers and to engage in repressive measures against the trade union movement and its leaders, as described in the 1985 report on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories prepared by the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation.

26. Academic and cultural freedom continued to be violated in the occupied Palestinian territories, as shown by the repeated closing of educational institutions, the confiscation of cultural materials, the banning of cultural exhibits and the armed repression and detention of student activists, as detailed in the reports submitted by the Director-General of UNESCO on educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories.

27. These repressive policies and practices, aimed at stifling Palestinian national expression and resistance to the military occupation, have been accompanied by continuing measures to strengthen control over most aspects of life, with the objective of obstructing self-generating development of the occupied territories and to turn them into a dependent entity aiming at its final absorption and annexation. Industry, trade, agriculture, water resources, health, services, education, employment and economic life in general continue to be under strict control to ensure that the population of the occupied territories remain dependent on Israel for their well-being while Israel benefits from exploiting the area's natural and human resources.

28. The Committee noted, in this connection, that, in their respective reports on the labour, health, and educational situation in the occupied territories, ILO, the World Health Organization and UNESCO had found little or no improvement in the conditions of the Palestinian and Arab population. The specialized agencies

pointed out that the continued occupation and the policies and practices of Israel in the occupied territories conflicted with the objectives of development in their respective fields.

29. The Committee further noted the corroborating information contained in the reports of the Secretary-General on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/40/373-E/1985/99), on permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Palestinian and other territories (A/40/381-E/1985/105), and on the situation of women and children in the occupied Arab territories and other occupied territories (A/CONF.116/6).

30. A report on the Israeli road plan for the West Bank, also prepared by Law in the Service of Man and submitted to the General Assembly by the Chairman of the Committee (A/40/119-S/16943) provided further evidence of Israel's policy of de facto annexation of the area through its economic integration as a dependent entity.

31. The Committee wishes to express its utmost concern at these policies and practices and to bring them forcefully to the attention of the General Assembly and the Security Council as they clearly violate the Fourth Geneva Convention and have serious repercussions not only on the enjoyment by the Palestinians of their inalienable rights, but also on peace and security in the region, and on international efforts to achieve a just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine, the core of the Middle East conflict.

32. The Committee further reviewed with grave preoccupation the deteriorating situation of Palestinian refugees in South Lebanon, which had reached increasingly dramatic proportions in the wake of Israel's invasion. The Committee followed closely the Security Council debates in the matter (see section 2 (b)) and repeated their warning that conflict and violence in the region would continue as long as the Palestinian people were prevented from exercising their inalienable rights in their own State.

2. Reaction to developments affecting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people

(a) Communications to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

33. In response to developments affecting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, whenever urgent action was required, the Chairman of the Committee repeatedly drew the attention of the Secretary-General and of the Security Council to such developments and called for appropriate measures in accordance with United Nations resolutions.

34. In addition to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, the Committee also had to express concern over developments in the Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon. The invasion and occupation by Israeli armed forces had left in its wake an ever-growing spiral of violence and bloodshed aimed in particular at the Palestinians. On that account, in a press release issued on 24 May 1985 (GA/PAL/266), the Chairman called upon the United Nations and, in particular, the Security Council, to exercise their responsibility to ensure the physical safety of the Palestinians and to bring about the exercise of their inalienable rights.

35. In his letters, the Chairman detailed violations of the fundamental rights of Palestinians by the Israeli authorities in contravention of international law and United Nations resolutions. He pointed out that such measures aggravated tensions in the region and posed a constant threat to international peace and security. He reiterated the urgent necessity for a concentrated international effort to find a just solution to the question of Palestine, and reaffirmed that the Committee attached the utmost importance to the early convening of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

36. On 26 November 1984, the Chairman expressed by letter the Committee's grave concern at reports of renewed acts of repression against Palestinians, including the shooting of unarmed demonstrators, by the Israeli forces in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/39/692-S/16841). The shootings, which had taken place in Bir Zeit and Ramallah, had resulted in the deaths of two students and the wounding of several others.

37. On 15 January 1985, the Chairman again drew attention to further action taken by the Government of Israel in its continuing policy of annexing the occupied Palestinian territories (A/40/84-S/16896). Sites for six new settlements had been approved on 10 January 1985; in addition, the establishment of another 20 new settlements had been requested by the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Israel.

38. On 5 February 1985, the Chairman sought the publication, as a document of the General Assembly, of a study prepared by Law in the Service of Man concerning an Israeli proposed road plan for the west Bank (A/40/119-S/16943). According to the study, the project, which had recently been promulgated by the occupying authorities, would greatly increase integration of the West Bank road system into that of Israel, and entail the seizure of 78,000 dunums of private Palestinian land and the destruction of refugee camps, buildings and facilities.

39. The study had concluded that the plan must therefore be seen as the most significant step of recent times towards Israel's eventual annexation of the West Bank, as well as a direct physical threat to the lands, communities and livelihood of the Palestinian population, thus serving the purpose of encouraging their emigration.

40. On 12 February 1985, the Chairman drew urgent attention to the grave situation and growing tension in and around the Palestinian refugee camps in South Lebanon and the occupied West Bank (A/40/128-S/16954).

41. Acts of repression had been carried out by the Israeli troops against residents of Burj Al-Shamali refugee camp in the Tyre area and Dheisheh refugee camp near Bethlehem; several residents had been wounded and scores of others arrested. Moreover, Israeli planes had repeatedly attacked Palestinians in South Lebanon, with resulting loss of life among the civilian population.

42. In a letter dated 19 March 1985 (A/40/183-S/17043), the Chairman expressed the Committee's concern at press reports regarding raids carried out by the Israeli authorities at Bir Zeit University, the arrest of several students and other persons and the subsequent closing of the university.

43. The Chairman further referred to the detention of residents of the Dheisheh refugee camp and reports of their torture in an Israeli prison.

44. Grave concern was also caused by the fact that the Israeli Housing Ministry had begun construction of three permanent settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, which showed that the Israeli Government was continuing its policy of establishing settlements in the occupied territories.

45. On 29 March 1985, the Chairman drew attention to recent policy statements made by Israeli government officials concerning the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza (A/40/215-S/17069). Jewish settlers in the Katif region of Gaza had reportedly been assured by the Israeli Defence Minister that the region would in any event remain an inseparable part of the State of Israel. Similar assurances had been given to the Jewish settlers in the Jordan Valley by the Prime Minister of Israel.

46. The Chairman expressed the Committee's grave concern at such statements which were yet a further confirmation of the policy of annexation of the occupied territories by the Government of Israel.

47. In a letter dated 2 May 1985 (A/40/281-S/17146), the Acting Chairman referred to a number of reports concerning serious incidents that had taken place in the occupied territories. The Israeli authorities had taken repressive measures against demonstrations and strikes in celebration of Land Day at various locations in the West Bank and Gaza. Subsequently, the authorities had also carried out raids at al-Ibrahimiyyah College in East Jerusalem and Bethlehem University. A number of persons had been injured in these and other incidents, and there had been several arrests.

48. On 23 May 1985, the Chairman once more expressed the profound concern of the Committee at the tragic developments in and around the Palestinian refugee camps at Sabra, Shatila and Burj al Brajneh, which were again the object of armed attack (A/40/339-S/17219).

49. The Committee had repeatedly pointed out that conflict and violence in the region would continue as long as the Palestinian people were prevented from exercising their inalienable rights in their own State. He wished to assert once again that the United Nations and particularly the Security Council had a clear responsibility towards the Palestinians, and called on the Security Council to act positively on the recommendations made by the Committee and the General Assembly.

50. In his letter of 12 July 1985 (A/40/480-S/17340), the Acting Chairman of the Committee reported still further repressive measures on the part of the Israeli authorities that could not but increase tensions and aggravate threats to peace and security in the region. He cited reports that the occupying military forces had demolished seven villages in the area of Hebron on 18 June 1985, thereby displacing some 200 families in order to convert their land into a military training zone.

51. In the same letter, the Acting Chairman said it had been reported that the Israeli Defence Ministry was proposing drafting new laws that would allow for rapid deportation of Palestinian residents of the occupied territories who take part in "anti-Israel activity", since existing laws were considered insufficient. It was proposed further that formerly applied methods of punishment be revived, that is to say, imprisonment without trial or charges for an unlimited period.

52. On 18 July 1985, the Acting Chairman of the Committee reported action taken by the Israeli authorities that would lead to the closing of the Hospice Hospital in occupied East Jerusalem - the only government hospital in the Arab part of

Jerusalem caring for the poor (A/40/494-S/17346). It was the considered view of the Committee that this action represented still further evidence of the way the Government of Israel is failing to abide by international agreements regarding the status of citizens under occupation.

53. In a letter dated 31 July 1985 (A/40/523-S/17375), the Chairman referred to newspaper reports of the delivery of armoured tanks, which may adversely affect the rights and lives of the Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon. In this connection, the representative of Lebanon drew attention to a letter dated 9 August 1985 (A/40/537-S/17389) and, concerning paragraphs 59 to 60, to the statement before the Security Council made on 31 May 1985 (S/PV.2582).

54. On 8 August 1985, the Acting Chairman reported that the Israeli authorities had adopted a number of decisions adversely affecting the rights of the Palestinian people (A/40/540-S/17392). These included the reinstatement of administrative detention without trial and deportation, the closing of newspapers and the expansion of prisons in the occupied territories. Several repressive and discriminatory measures against Palestinians had also been taken recently.

55. The Acting Chairman expressed the view that such policies and practices, which had been accompanied by escalating violence, were designed to stifle all forms of political, economic and cultural activity by the Palestinian people and thus to pressure them into emigrating from their land, with a view to facilitating its eventual annexation by Israel.

56. In a letter dated 11 September 1985 (A/40/628-S/17455), the Chairman of the Committee provided information on recent measures taken by the Israeli military authorities in implementation of those policies. Among other repressive measures, the authorities had engaged in a massive campaign of detention of Palestinians and were holding upwards of 50 persons in the West Bank; curfews had been imposed in several towns and refugee camps; at least three persons were threatened with deportation; and four Arab youths, including a 12-year old boy, had been shot and wounded by Israeli soldiers.

57. The Chairman further stated that the measures described were taking place in an atmosphere of growing provocation by the Jewish settlers in the occupied Palestinian territories, and reiterated the Committee's concern at those developments and at the continuing denial by Israel of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

(b) Action taken within the Security Council

58. In addition to transmitting urgent letters to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council, the Committee followed closely activities of the Council regarding matters relating to its mandate as periodically defined by the various General Assembly resolutions since the establishment of the Committee.

59. The Committee took note of the statement (S/17215) issued by the President of the Security Council on 24 May 1985 expressing the serious concern of the Council members at the heightened violence in certain parts of Lebanon, and voicing support for the appeal of the Secretary-General dated 22 May 1985, which also referred to the situation in and around the Palestinian refugee camps, for an end to violence involving the civilian population.

60. The Committee noted that, at its 2582nd meeting, on 31 May 1985, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 564 (1985). In the resolution, the Council inter alia called on all concerned to end acts of violence against the civilian population in and around Palestinian refugee camps and reaffirmed its intention to continue to follow the situation closely.

61. On 12 and 13 September 1985, at the request of the Arab Group contained in a letter dated 11 September 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations (S/17456), the Council met to consider "Israeli practices against the civilian population in the occupied Palestinian territories".

62. The Chairman of the Committee intervened in the debate (S/PV.2605) and stated that the Committee had expressed its deep concern at Israel's decision to renew its policy of "administrative detention" as well as the deportation of persons considered a "threat to security" and the strengthening of censorship and other measures against the Palestinian population. Such measures had been taken in an atmosphere of growing provocation on the part of Jewish settlers living in the occupied territories - provocation that was designed to drive the Palestinians away from their homes.

63. He further stated that the situation of the Palestinians continued to deteriorate. The Israeli authorities were defying international law and United Nations resolutions. Tension and violence would only increase in the Palestinian and other occupied territories until the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people were fully recognized. The United Nations had a responsibility to assure the realization of those rights as well as the physical protection of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

64. He said that the Palestinian question had reached a critical stage and urged the Council to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee and the recommendations of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, particularly with regard to the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. The Conference would offer the interested parties great possibilities to participate in negotiations and lead to a just and lasting settlement in the region. He appealed to the Council to take appropriate measures to revive, on the basis of the principles and objectives of the Charter and United Nations resolutions, the policy of dialogue among all parties interested in putting an end to the present tragic situation.

65. The Security Council had before it a draft resolution sponsored by Burkina Faso, Egypt, India, Madagascar, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago (S/17459) by which the Council, inter alia, would deplore the repressive measures taken by Israel since 4 August 1985 against the civilian Palestinian population in the occupied territories; would call on Israel to immediately stop such measures, release the detainees and refrain from further deportations; and would call on Israel to abide scrupulously by the provisions of the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949.

66. Because of the negative vote of the United States of America, the Security Council did not adopt the draft resolution.

3. Action taken by the Committee to promote the convening of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East

67. In resolution 39/49 D, the General Assembly inter alia reaffirmed its endorsement of the call for convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East; expressed its regret at the negative response of two Governments and called upon them to reconsider their position towards the Conference; urged all Governments to make additional constructive efforts and to strengthen their political will in order to convene the Conference without delay and for the achievement of its peaceful objectives; requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Security Council, to continue his efforts with a view to convening the Conference and to report thereon to the General Assembly not later than 15 March 1985; and decided to consider the report of the Secretary-General at its fortieth session.

68. Accordingly, in its programme of work for 1985 (A/AC.183/L.39) the Committee decided that it would continue, as a matter of priority, to exert all efforts to promote the early convening of the proposed Peace Conference, in accordance with resolutions 38/58 C and 39/49 D.

69. For this purpose, the Committee decided to send delegations to selected capitals to discuss how best to promote progress on its recommendations for a peaceful solution. In view of its busy schedule, the Committee this year limited its contacts to members of the Security Council.

70. During 1985, delegations of the Committee were received by a number of Governments, as indicated below.

71. On 25 April 1985, a delegation of the Committee composed of Mr. Massamba Sarré (Senegal), Chairman; Mr. Victor J. Gauci (Malta), Rapporteur; Mr. Azraai Zain (Malaysia); Mr. Mohamed Lessir (Tunisia); and Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization) was received by Mr. Zhao Ziyang, Prime Minister of China, as well as by Mr. Geng Piao, Vice-Chairman of the National People's Congress and Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the National People's Congress; Mr. Ho Ying, Member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress; Mr. Qian Qichen, Deputy Foreign Minister; and Mr. Zhen Jua, Assistant Foreign Minister.

72. The delegation subsequently travelled to Bangkok where, on 29 April 1985, it met with Mr. Siddhi Savetsila, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

73. On 3 May 1985, a Committee delegation composed of Mr. Massamba Sarré (Chairman); Mr. Mohammed F. Zarif (Vice-Chairman); Mr. Victor J. Gauci (Rapporteur) and Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization) was received by Mr. Khurshid Alam Khan, Minister of State for External Affairs of India.

74. A delegation composed of Mr. Massamba Sarré (Chairman); Mr. Alberto Velazco-San José (Vice-Chairman); and Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi (PLO) visited Peru and Trinidad and Tobago from 6 to 11 June 1985. In Peru, the delegation was received by Mr. Luis Percovich Roca, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, on 6 June 1985. On 10 June, the delegation met with Mr. Rabindranath Permanand, Acting Permanent Secretary for External Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago. Subsequently, the Chairman and the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization were received by Mr. Errol Mahabir, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, on 14 June 1985 in New York.

75. A delegation composed of Mr. Massamba Sarré (Chairman); Mr. Victor J. Gauci (Rapporteur); Mr. Ilter Türkmen (Turkey); and Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi (PLO) visited Egypt from 23 to 26 July 1985. The delegation was received by Mr. Kamal Hassan Ali, Prime Minister; Mr. Ahmed Esmat Abdel-Meguid, Foreign Minister; Mr. Boutros Ghali, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs; and it held in-depth discussions with senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The delegation also participated in a national journalists' encounter organized by the United Nations Department of Public Information.

76. Subsequently, a delegation composed of Mr. Victor J. Gauci (Rapporteur); Mr. Alberto Velazco-San José (Cuba); and Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi (PLO) visited Madagascar from 28 to 30 July and Burkina Faso from 1 to 3 August 1985. In Madagascar, the delegation was received by Mr. Jean Bemananjara, Minister of Foreign Affairs; and by Mr. Albert Zakariasy and Mr. Amido, Vice-Presidents of the National Assembly. It also participated in a national journalists' encounter organized by the United Nations Department of Public Information.

77. In Burkina Faso, the delegation was received by the President, Mr. Thomas Sankara; Mr. Basile L. Guissou, Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Mr. Wattamou Lamien, Minister of Information and Culture.

78. A delegation composed of Mr. Mohammed F. Zarif (Vice-Chairman) and Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi (PLO) visited the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from 11 to 14 August and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic on 15 and 16 August 1985.

79. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the delegation was received by Mr. A. E. Voss, Chairman, Chamber of Nationalities, Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and it held in-depth discussions with high-ranking officials in the Foreign Ministry and participated in a press conference and other activities organized by the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee. The visit was extensively covered by the media.

80. In the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the delegation was received by Mr. Vladimir A. Kravets, Minister for Foreign Affairs. It also met with representatives of non-governmental organizations at the Ukrainian Society of Friendship and Cultural Relations and with the media.

81. In its exchanges of views with the above-mentioned Governments, the Committee delegation emphasized the imperative necessity of the early convening of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East and stressed the paramount role to be played by the Security Council in this respect.

82. The Committee was greatly encouraged by the positive response of the Governments concerned and by their understanding of the need for urgent concrete action, as well as by their determination to contribute positively to the efforts to bring about a just and comprehensive solution of the Palestinian question under United Nations auspices, and on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

83. The Committee further noted that, in pursuance of his mandate under General Assembly resolution 39/49 D, the Secretary-General had reported having been informed by the President of the Security Council, following consultations, that almost all its members were in favour of the principle of holding the proposed conference (see A/40/168-S/17014). Many of the members of the Security Council believe that the conference should be convened as early as possible; some others consider that the conditions that would make it possible to convene such a conference have not as yet been met.

84. The Committee noted with appreciation that the Secretary-General intended to pursue consultations on the subject and to inform the General Assembly and the Security Council of any new developments.

85. In this connection, it should be mentioned that in seminars and symposia of non-governmental organizations on the question of Palestine held under the aegis of the United Nations, it was strongly held that the convening of such a conference was a priority which offered the best and most comprehensive approach to a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

4. Attendance at international conferences and meetings

86. In accordance with its mandate, since its preceding report to the General Assembly, the Committee was represented at the following international conferences and meetings:

Twentieth Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, Addis Ababa, 12-15 November 1984

Fifteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Sanaa, 18-22 December 1984

Regional Seminar on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, Port Moresby, 4-7 March 1985

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, New York, 21 March 1985

Regional Seminar on Activities of Foreign Economic and Other Interests which are Impeding the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, Havana, 8-10 April 1985

Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries, New Delhi, 19-21 April 1985

Extraordinary session of the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, Tunis, 13-17 May 1985

International Day of Solidarity with the Struggling People of South Africa - Soweto Day, New York, 14 June 1985

Special meeting convened by the Special Committee against Apartheid, in co-operation with the African National Congress of South Africa in observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Freedom Charter, New York, 26 June 1985

The forty-second session of the Council of Ministers and the twenty-first session of the Assembly of Heads of State of the Organization of African Unity, Addis Ababa, 18-20 July 1985

Seminar on the Intransigence of the South African régime with regard to Namibia: Strategies for Hastening the Independence of Namibia, Georgetown, 29 July to 2 August 1985

Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, Luanda,
2-7 September 1985

Solemn meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia in commemoration of
Namibia Day, 26 August 1985

International Seminar on Racist Ideologies and Organizations Hindering Efforts
for the Elimination of Apartheid in South Africa, Budapest, 9-11 September 1985

Symposium on Zionism and the International Community, Havana,
12-13 September 1985

5. Action taken by United Nations bodies, the Movement
of Non-Aligned Countries and intergovernmental
organizations

87. The Committee continued to follow with great interest and to note action taken by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, United Nations bodies and other intergovernmental organizations on matters relevant to its mandate since the submission of its report to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session.

(a) Meeting of the Mediterranean members of the Non-Aligned Movement held at ministerial level, Valletta, 10-11 September 1984

88. The Final Declaration adopted by the meeting (A/39/526-S/16758 and Corr.1), inter alia, endorsed the Geneva Declaration and the Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held at Geneva in 1983, including the call for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. The Ministers renewed their commitment to strive persistently towards a solution of the problem on the basis of the decisions and principles of the United Nations and the declarations and communiqués of the Non-Aligned Movement.

(b) Meeting of the Non-Aligned Committee of Eight on Palestine at ministerial level, New York, 3 October 1984

89. The Ministers reviewed the situation, particularly with regard to the endeavours of the United Nations Secretary-General concerning the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East, and decided to continue actively their collective and individual efforts to mobilize all means available with a view to ensure the convening of such a Peace Conference under the auspices of the United Nations.

(c) Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, New York, 1-5 October 1984

90. In the Final Communiqué (A/39/560-S/16773), the Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries, inter alia, reaffirmed their total support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and their determination to act for early achievement of those rights.

91. They reaffirmed that the question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem and the root cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict. They affirmed that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and that it alone has the full right to represent its people.

92. They condemned any agreement or treaty which violates or infringes the rights of the Arab nation and of the Palestinian people as recognized by the Non-Aligned Movement, and in accordance with international law, the United Nations Charter and its relevant resolutions. They reaffirmed their commitment to the resolutions of the New Delhi Summit Conference expressing its support and adoption of the Fez Peace Plan.

93. They supported the Final Declaration and the Geneva Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in 1983 and stressed anew the necessity for the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, emphasizing the major responsibility shouldered by the Security Council in this respect. They condemned the negative position of Israel and the United States of America towards the proposed conference.

94. They further reaffirmed their opposition to occupation and rejection of the Israeli practices and policies in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and in particular the establishment of settlements. They affirmed that such practices and policies are contrary to international law and relevant resolutions of the United Nations. They reaffirmed their adherence to the resolutions adopted by the New Delhi Conference calling for measures against Israel by the Non-Aligned Countries and the United Nations.

(d) Co-ordinating Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, New York, 4 October 1984

95. At the Co-ordinating Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, held in New York on 4 October 1984, the participants decided, inter alia, to refer the report of the Committee of Six on Palestine to the Islamic Group in order to exert a greater effort to attain its recommendations during the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly (A/39/585-S/16783).

(e) Twentieth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, Addis Ababa, 12-15 November 1984

96. In a resolution on the situation in the Middle East, the Assembly inter alia reaffirmed all its previous resolutions and its support for the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization; recommended that Member States renew their determination not to establish or re-establish diplomatic ties with Israel; and called upon the Security Council to take the necessary measures to compel Israel to put an end to its occupation of Arab and Palestinian territories and to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their national rights in conformity with the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

97. In a resolution on the question of Palestine, the Assembly commended the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its efforts and called for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 38/58 C on the holding of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East (A/40/87).

(f) Meeting of the European Council, Dublin, 3-4 December 1984

98. The Heads of State or Government of the 10 members of the European Economic Community, in the conclusions adopted on the situation in the Middle East, reaffirmed, inter alia, their desire to see urgent efforts made to establish peace and security in the area and their willingness to assist such efforts.

99. They reiterated their call for direct negotiations among the parties themselves, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, based on mutual recognition of each others' existence and rights. They further called for full implementation of the provisions of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and for an end to the illegal policy of settlements in the occupied territories.

(g) Fifteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Sanaa, 18-22 December 1984

100. The Conference adopted a Final Communiqué and a number of resolutions on the question of Palestine and the Middle East conflict (A/40/173-S/17033), stating inter alia that:

"the Conference reaffirmed that the cause of Palestine - the foremost cause of the Muslim Ummah - is the crux of the Middle East problem and the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict; that just peace in the region can only be based on the total and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli enemy from all the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, the regaining, by the Palestinian people, of their inalienable rights including their right to return to their homeland, Palestine, their right to self-determination and their right to establish their own national independent State on their national soil with Al-Quds as its capital".

101. The Conference affirmed that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people and has, alone, the full right to represent these people; that resolution 242/1967 of the Security Council is not compatible with Arab and Palestinian rights and does not constitute a sound basis for the solution of the problem of Palestine and the Middle East; and that no Arab party shall unilaterally seek a solution to the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict. It called for continued resistance against the Camp David approach and Accords, as well as for full and effective support to the Palestinian people.

102. The Conference reaffirmed its support for all international initiatives for a solution of the question in accordance with the seven principles stipulated in the resolutions of the Islamic Conference, including primarily the Fez Peace Plan.

103. The Conference strongly condemned Israel for measures aimed at imposing its legislation on the occupied territories and called for implementation of the Islamic Programme of Action against the Zionist Enemy adopted by the Third Islamic Summit Conference, and of the resolutions and recommendations adopted by the Al-Quds Committee.

104. The Conference condemned the United States of America for its hostile attitude towards the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and called upon the European community to take a more positive stand in this connection. It also called on Member States to review their relations with the United States of America and other States in the light of their policies with regard to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

105. The Conference strongly condemned the crimes committed by the Israeli enemy in 1982 in Sabra and Shatila. It also condemned the continued criminal reprisals carried out by the Israeli enemy against Lebanese villages and towns and Palestinian camps in southern Lebanon.

106. The Conference strongly condemned the strategic alliance between the United States of America and the Zionist enemy, and also condemned all treaties concluded under this alliance.

(h) Urgent session of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on the situation in the areas occupied by Israel in southern Lebanon, the western Bekaa and the Rashaya district, New York, 6 March 1985

107. In its communiqué (A/40/163-S/17008), the Bureau expressed its grave concern at the deteriorating situation, which threatened peace and security in the area as a result of Israeli practices. It condemned such practices, which were in violation of the rules and principles of international law, and demanded that Israel desist forthwith from them.

108. Recalling the previous declarations and communiqués adopted by the Non-Aligned Movement, the Bureau called on the Security Council urgently to implement Security Council resolutions on Lebanon, particularly resolutions 425 (1978), 508 (1982) and 509 (1982), to ensure Israel's immediate and unconditional withdrawal from the Lebanese territories to the internationally recognized borders.

109. The Bureau expressed its support for the efforts of the Government of Lebanon to extend its authority over all of its territory and for its determination to restore peace and order in the areas to be evacuated by Israel and to ensure the safety and security of the civilian populations in those areas, including the Palestinian refugees in the camps.

110. The Bureau affirmed that the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 applied to the territories occupied by Israel in southern Lebanon, the western Bekaa and the Rashaya district and that the occupying Power is duty bound to respect and uphold the provisions of the said Convention and other norms of international law. It demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, desist forthwith from its illegal and abusive practices against the civilian population in these areas in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and other norms of international law and immediately lift all restrictions and obstacles to the restoration of normal conditions in the areas under its occupation.

(i) Commission on Human Rights, forty-first session, Geneva, 4 February-15 March 1985

111. The Commission considered an agenda item entitled "Question of the violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine" and adopted two resolutions.

112. In resolution 1985/1 A, the Commission inter alia denounced the continued refusal of Israel to allow the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories access to the occupied territories; reiterated the deep alarm expressed by the Special Committee at Israel's policies towards those territories; confirmed its declaration that Israel's breaches of the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 and Additional Protocols were war crimes and an affront to humanity; called upon Israel to refrain from such policies and to implement all pertinent United Nations resolutions; reiterated its call to all States not to recognize any changes carried out by Israel in the occupied territories, and to avoid taking any action or extending any aid which might be used by Israel in pursuit of such policies; and requested the General Assembly to recommend to the Security Council the adoption against Israel of measures under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

113. In resolution 1985/1 B, the Commission reaffirmed that the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 was applicable to all the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem; condemned Israel's failure to acknowledge such applicability; and urged once more all States parties to the Convention to make every effort to ensure respect for and compliance with the provisions thereof in the occupied territories.

114. The Commission further considered the item entitled "The right of peoples to self-determination and its application to peoples under colonial or alien dominated or foreign occupation" and adopted resolution 1985/4 by which it reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, to the establishment of an independent and sovereign State, to return to their homes and property and to regain their rights by all means in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

115. The Commission further reaffirmed its support for the Geneva Declaration on Palestine adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and welcomed the call to convene an International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations.

(j) Economic Commission for western Asia,* Twelfth Ministerial Session, 20-25 April 1985

116. By resolution 139 (XII) entitled "Economic and social conditions of the Palestinian Arab people under occupation", the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) decided to include in the programme of work and priorities for the period 1986-1987 such studies on economic and social conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories as might serve to strengthen the resistance of the Palestinian people in those areas. It also requested the preparation of studies on the population situation, Israeli settlement policies and on the industrial sector with a view to solving the problems from which it suffers. It also requested that information and data on the occupied Palestinian territories be included in all regional studies and statistical abstracts.

117. By resolution 141 (XII), entitled "General study of the economic and social situation and potential of the Palestinian Arab people", ECWA called for the completion of the study in question and its adoption at a special session of the Commission to be convened no later than the end of October 1985.

(k) Commemorative Meeting in Observance of the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Asian-African Conference, Bandung, 24-25 April 1985

118. In the Declaration adopted by the Commemorative Meeting (A/40/276-S/17138, annex, appendix, para. 11), participating States expressed their full solidarity with and support for the struggle of the Palestinian people, under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole and legitimate representative. They condemned Israeli practices against the population of the Palestinian and Arab occupied territories and reaffirmed their conviction that there could be no just and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict until Israel totally and unconditionally withdrew from all territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem.

* As of September 1985: Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ECSWA).

(l) Fifty-seventh Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Ten States Members of the European Economic Community, Luxembourg, 29 April 1985

119. The Ministers adopted a Declaration on the Arab-Israeli conflict (A/40/291-S/17162, annex) in which they welcomed recent moves towards a reactivation of the process of negotiations in the search for a solution to that conflict, notably the Jordan/Palestinian agreement reached on 11 February at the initiative of King Hussein, which contained a commitment to negotiation for peace in accordance with United Nations resolutions, including the resolutions of the Security Council. In the view of the Ten, this represented a constructive step forward. They also welcomed the ideas put forward by the President of Egypt. They considered that these important initiatives reflect a desire for movement towards a peaceful solution. This deserved encouragement and a positive response.

120. The Ten reaffirmed their conviction that the achievement of a just and lasting peace calls for the participation and active support of all the parties concerned, and reconfirmed their willingness to contribute to such a process on the basis of the principles stated by them on previous occasions.

(m) Economic and Social Council, Second regular session, Geneva, 3-26 July 1985

121. The Economic and Social Council adopted three resolutions of relevance to the question of Palestine. Resolution 1985/57, on "Assistance to the Palestinian people", requests the Secretary-General to finalize the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to convene in 1986 a meeting of the relevant bodies of the United Nations system to consider such assistance, with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The resolution further invites all concerned to intensify such assistance.

122. In resolution 1985/58, on "Economic development projects in the occupied Palestinian territories", the Council called for the urgent lifting of the Israeli restrictions imposed on the economy of the occupied territories; and called upon all concerned to facilitate the establishment of a seaport and a citrus plant in the occupied Gaza strip and of a cement plant in the occupied West Bank.

123. In resolution 1985/177, on "Israeli economic practices in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories", the Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the financial and trade practices of the Israeli occupation authorities in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories.

(n) Twenty-first ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, Addis Ababa, 18-21 July 1985

124. The Assembly adopted two resolutions regarding the question of Palestine and the Middle East conflict. It reaffirmed, inter alia, all previous resolutions on the question and reiterated its unwavering support for the people of Palestine led by the Palestine Liberation Organization, their sole legitimate representative. It strongly condemned any initiatives, measures or agreements which do not take into account the aspirations of the people of Palestine and of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and considered null and void any agreement on the Palestine question which excludes the Palestine Liberation Organization.

125. The Assembly further condemned strongly the policies and practices of Israel in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, and called upon the international community to increase pressure on Israel in all fields so as to compel it to conform to the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions.

126. The Assembly emphasized the efforts deployed by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and called on the Security Council to implement the Committee's recommendations. It further called for the convening of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East, and requested Member States to ensure the application of General Assembly resolution 39/49 D to this end.

(o) World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985

127. The Forward-Looking Strategies adopted by the Conference contain paragraph 259 relating to Palestinian women and children, in which it is stated that for more than three decades, Palestinian women have faced difficult living conditions in camps and outside, struggling for the survival of their families and the survival of the Palestinian people who were deprived of their ancestral lands and denied the inalienable rights to return to their homes and their property, their right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty. Palestinian women are vulnerable to imprisonment, torture, reprisals and other oppressive practices by Israel in the occupied Arab territories. The confiscation of land and the creation of further settlements has affected the lives of Palestinian women and children. Such Israeli measures and practices are a violation of the Geneva Convention. The Palestinian woman as part of her nation suffers from discrimination in employment, health care and education.

128. It was recommended that the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights should be kept under review and co-ordinated between the United Nations units and agencies concerned, with emphasis on the role of Palestinian women in preserving their national identity, traditions and heritage and in the struggle for sovereignty. Palestinian people must recover their rights to self-determination and the right to establish an independent State in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions. The special and immediate needs of Palestinian women and children should be identified and appropriate provision made. United Nations projects should be initiated to help Palestinian women in the fields of health, education, and vocational training. Their living conditions inside and outside the occupied territories should be studied by the appropriate United Nations units and agencies assisted, as appropriate, by specialized research institutes from various regions. The results of these studies should be given broad publicity to promote actions at all levels. The international community should exert all efforts to stop the establishment of new Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Palestinian women should be allowed to enjoy security in a liberated homeland also in accordance with United Nations resolutions.

(p) Extraordinary Summit Conference of Arab States, Casablanca, 7-9 August 1985

129. The Committee noted with appreciation that the Extraordinary Summit Conference of Arab States reaffirmed the need for continued Arab support for the resolutions of the Fez Summit. The Conference also reiterated its previous resolutions regarding the Palestinian question and its support for the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The Conference also considered that the convening of an international conference

under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America and the other permanent members of the Security Council, as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization, along with the other concerned parties, would contribute to the promotion of peace in the region (A/40/564).

(a) Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, Luanda, 2-7 September 1985

130. The Ministers reaffirmed that the question of Palestine is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and emphasized that a comprehensive, just and durable solution cannot be achieved without the total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights.

131. The Ministers reaffirmed their firm support for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and that the PLO alone has the full right to represent the Palestinian people. They affirmed the right of the PLO to participate on an independent and equal footing in all endeavours, international conferences and activities aimed at ensuring the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. They further reaffirmed their strict adherence to the principles of non-interference and non-intervention in the internal and external affairs of the Palestinian people and the right of the PLO to free and independent decision-making.

132. The Ministers stressed anew the necessity for the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C. They expressed the hope that the United States of America and Israel would reconsider their negative attitude in this respect. They further stressed that every encouragement and support should be extended to the United Nations Secretary-General to pursue his consultations to this end, and expressed their appreciation of the endeavours of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

133. Condemning Israeli policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, the Ministers reaffirmed their adherence to previous decisions of the Non-Aligned Countries urging action against Israel by the Non-Aligned Countries, the Security Council and the international community.

134. Finally, the Ministers reaffirmed that the Arab Peace Plan proclaimed at Fez in 1982, and reaffirmed by participants at the Extraordinary Summit Meeting held in Casablanca in August 1985, constitutes an important contribution to the establishment of a comprehensive, just and durable peace in the Middle East.

B. Action taken by the Committee in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 38/58 B and 39/49 B

1. Co-operation with non-governmental organizations

135. A number of activities were undertaken by the Committee and by the Division for Palestinian Rights, under the Committee's guidance, in implementation of the objective of further increasing co-operation with non-governmental organizations active on the question of Palestine.

136. A Symposium for Non-Governmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine was held in Geneva from 3 to 4 November 1984, to discuss inter alia future co-operation between the Committee and the NGO community, and NGO participation in the observance of the International Day of Solidarity on 29 November.

137. The Symposium was attended by 15 experts, members of the Interim Co-ordinating Committee of NGOs, and made a number of recommendations for future action. In particular, it elaborated the text of an international petition in support of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East, which was subsequently launched by NGO representatives on 29 November at United Nations observances held in New York, Geneva and Vienna (see annex III).

138. Following the adoption of resolution 39/49 B, the Committee included in its programme of work for 1985, the holding of regional symposia for NGOs in North America, Asia and Africa, and of an international NGO meeting, to be preceded by a preparatory meeting.

139. The Committee further decided to emphasize the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East in all its activities relating to NGOs.

140. The preparatory meeting for the International NGO Meeting took the form of a seminar for 15 experts, members of the Interim Co-ordinating Committee of NGOs, and was held at Geneva on 4 and 5 March 1985. The seminar reviewed actions undertaken by the Committee and NGOs, with special reference to the progress achieved in the signature campaign. It also discussed plans for the international NGO meeting and adopted its provisional agenda.

141. The United Nations Asian Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine was held at New Delhi from 1 to 3 May 1985; the North American Regional NGO Symposium at New York from 10 to 12 July 1985 and the African Regional NGO Symposium at Dakar from 5 to 7 August 1985.

142. The Committee noted with appreciation that the symposia adopted declarations endorsing the global signature campaign in support of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East and expressing the determination of NGOs to work for a greater understanding of, and support for, the question of Palestine in their region (see annexes V, VIII and IX).

143. The International NGO Meeting was held at Geneva from 9 to 12 September 1985. The Committee noted with appreciation that the Meeting concluded its work by the adoption of a declaration which is annexed to the present report (see annex X).

2. Seminars

144. In its programme of work for 1985, the Committee decided that regional seminars would be held in Asia and Latin America. In addition, the Committee decided to hold a regional seminar in North America in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/120 B, and to combine that seminar with a symposium for North American NGOs.

145. The Committee further decided that all seminars held in 1985 would give priority attention to the convening of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

146. The Committee appreciated the decision of the Government of China, a permanent member of the Security Council, to provide the venue for the Tenth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, which was held in Beijing from 22 to 26 April 1985. The report of that Seminar is annexed to the present report (see annex IV).

147. The Committee also appreciated the decision of the Government of Guyana, a member of the Committee, to provide the venue for the Eleventh United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, which was held at Georgetown from 17 to 20 June 1985. The report of that Seminar is annexed to the present report (see annex VI).

148. The Twelfth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 8 and 9 July 1985. The report of that Seminar is annexed to the present report (see annex VII).

3. Studies

149. The Committee noted with appreciation that, in pursuance of the programme of work for 1985, the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat had published the following additional studies:

NGO activities on the question of Palestine at the United Nations;

Living conditions of the Palestinian people.

150. The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was duly observed by the United Nations on 29 November 1984 at its Headquarters in New York and at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna. The Committee noted with appreciation that the day had been equally commemorated in many other cities throughout the world in 1984.

V. ACTION TAKEN BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION IN
ACCORDANCE WITH GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 39/49 C

151. By resolution 39/49 C of 11 December 1984, the General Assembly requested the Department of Public Information (DPI), in full co-operation with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to:

- (a) continue the implementation of all parts of General Assembly resolution 38/58 E; (b) disseminate all information on the activities of the United Nations system relating to Palestine; (c) expand and update publications and audio-visual material on the facts and developments pertaining to the question of Palestine; (d) publish newsletters and articles in its respective publications on Israeli violations of the human rights of the Arab inhabitants of the occupied territories; (e) organize fact-finding missions to the area for journalists; (f) organize regional and national encounters for journalists.

152. The Committee noted with appreciation that during the past year, DPI continued its information programme on the question of Palestine in accordance with resolutions 38/58 E of 1983 and 39/49 C of 1984 with a view to furthering the world-wide dissemination of accurate and comprehensive information on the question. The information programme included publications, audio-visual coverage, a fact-finding mission for journalists and a series of national and regional journalists' encounters.

153. In publication activity, the Department continued to disseminate information on the question of Palestine through articles, press releases and special publications. In particular, it published a pamphlet entitled The Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories. After a brief introduction on the Committee's establishment in 1968 and its mandate, the pamphlet focuses on the 1984 report of the Committee to the General Assembly. The provisions of the eight resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in 1984 on the Committee's report are also summarized. The 12-page pamphlet is to be made available in Arabic, English, French, German and Spanish.

154. The UN Chronicle reported on the consideration given to the question of Palestine by the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session. Its first issue of 1985 contained an article detailing the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and an accompanying interview with the Agency's Commissioner-General. An article on United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people appeared in the September 1984 issue of Development Forum.

155. DPI coverage of the question of Palestine included radio news programmes broadcast in all the official languages of the United Nations, as well as in many other languages. The subject was also addressed by special feature programmes. In its work of expanding and updating its audio and visual coverage of the question of Palestine, DPI is making preparations for the production of a short film on the subject.

156. Activities which focused on acquainting the media with the facts and developments pertaining to the question of Palestine included a fact-finding mission to the Middle East. A team of prominent media persons from around the world visited Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic from 1 to 18 April 1985. The participants met leading personalities and visited refugee camps.

157. The purpose of the mission was to provide an opportunity for members of the team to acquaint themselves with first-hand and in-depth information regarding the various aspects of the Palestinian question. The mission received extensive media coverage in all the countries it visited and participants published numerous articles on their return to their home countries.

158. In 1985, as in 1984, DPI organized two regional journalists' encounters, bringing high-level journalists together with experts on the question of Palestine. An encounter for the North American-Caribbean region was held at Bridgetown in February 1985, and another for Asian journalists was held in Jakarta in May 1985.

159. The objective of these encounters was to promote a better understanding of the question among leaders of the media by bringing them together with experts on the subject for brief, informal discussions. Accordingly, around 15 high-level journalists from the press, radio and television media participated in each encounter. The journalists were impressed by the high calibre of the panelists and by the informal and candid character of the presentations made. It was their belief that the encounter, which they found useful, informative and interesting, had greatly increased their knowledge of the subject.

160. As requested by resolution 39/49 C, DPI in 1985 began organizing national encounters in which a team of expert panelists held meetings, in the form of in-depth press conferences, with national journalists in various countries. Three African journalists' encounters were held between 24 July and 7 August, in Egypt, Madagascar and Senegal. European national encounters were held in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, and Czechoslovakia, between 21 and 29 August.

161. United Nations information centres throughout the world continued to carry out information activities in connection with the question of Palestine and made available to the public United Nations publications on the subject. The centres also organized the world-wide observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November 1984.

162. At Headquarters and in the information centres, the Department continued to screen the films "Palestinian People do have Rights" and "Palestinians of 1983". More than 100 copies of the films have been distributed in four languages among the information centres and the offices of the United Nations Development Programme.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

163. The Committee contends that action is now required by the Security Council to take positively into account the recommendations of the Committee, and those adopted by consensus at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva in September 1983 and endorsed by General Assembly resolution 38/58 C. It once again recalls that those recommendations are solidly founded on fundamental and internationally recognized principles relating to the problem of Palestine, the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

164. The Committee therefore annexes its recommendations and those of the Geneva International Conference to the present report (see annexes I and II).

165. The Committee stresses that its original recommendations were specifically designed to enable the Palestinian people to attain its inalienable rights, as affirmed in General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX).

166. The Committee also stresses that the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held at Geneva in 1983 contained specific guidelines for the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, of which an essential element would be the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine. Those guidelines were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 38/58 C, and reaffirmed in resolution 39/49 D, which, inter alia, urged all Governments to make additional constructive efforts and to strengthen their political will in order to convene the Conference without delay and for the achievement of its peaceful objectives.

167. The Committee strongly points out that the question of Palestine has reached a critical phase and urges a renewed, concentrated and collective effort to find a just solution under United Nations auspices and on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions to end the unacceptable plight of the Palestinian people.

168. To this end, the Committee is convinced that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, as endorsed in General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, and generating quasi-unanimous support, provides a comprehensive opportunity for all the parties concerned to participate in negotiations which should lead to a just and lasting solution of the question.

169. The Committee expresses appreciation and is encouraged by the responses it has received so far in the course of its official visits to the capitals of a number of States members of the Security Council. The Committee intends to complete the process of sending delegations to the capitals of the other members of the Council in the year ahead.

170. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly should renew the mandate of the Secretary-General, with a sense of urgency, asking him to continue his contacts on the preparations in consultation with the Security Council for the convening of the proposed Conference, and appeals to all countries to exert their best efforts for its successful and peaceful outcome.

171. The Committee also believes it should continue to consolidate its efforts to increase awareness and understanding of the question of Palestine, and of the Committee's recommendations, and those of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, specifically designed to enable the Palestinian people to

attain its inalienable rights, as well as to achieve peace in the Middle East, with due regard for the legitimate concerns of all the parties to the conflict in the region.

172. The Committee is pleased and greatly encouraged by the widespread understanding it has already secured, and the favourable reaction of non-governmental organizations and other organizations through which public opinion is manifested. The Committee intends to review its programme for the future in the light of experience gained and progress achieved.

Notes

1/ The Committee is composed of the following members: Afghanistan, Cuba, Cyprus, German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Nigeria, Pakistan, Romania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Yugoslavia.

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/31/35).

3/ Ibid., Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/32/35); *ibid.*, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/33/35 and Corr.1); *ibid.*, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/34/35 and Corr.1); *ibid.*, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/35/35 and Corr.1); *ibid.*, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/36/35); *ibid.*, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/37/35 and Corr.1); *ibid.*, Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/38/35); and *ibid.*, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/39/35).

4/ The observers of the Committee are as follows: Algeria, China, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Nicaragua, Niger, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, League of Arab States and Organization of the Islamic Conference. The Palestine Liberation Organization, as the representative of the Palestinian people, the principal party to the question of Palestine, is also an observer.

5/ Current membership of the Working Group is as follows: Afghanistan, Cuba, German Democratic Republic, Guinea, Guyana, India, Malta, Pakistan, Senegal, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and, as representative of the people directly concerned, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Recommendations of the Committee endorsed by the General Assembly
at its thirty-first session a/

I. Basic considerations and guidelines

59. The question of Palestine is at the heart of the Middle East problem, and consequently, the Committee stressed its belief that no solution in the Middle East can be envisaged which does not fully take into account the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people.
60. The legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and property and to achieve self-determination, national independence and sovereignty are endorsed by the Committee in the conviction that the full implementation of these rights will contribute decisively to a comprehensive and final settlement of the Middle East crisis.
61. The participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with other parties, on the basis of General Assembly resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3375 (XXX) is indispensable in all efforts, deliberations and conferences in the Middle East which are held under the auspices of the United Nations.
62. The Committee recalls the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and stresses the consequent obligation for complete and speedy evacuation of any territory so occupied.
63. The Committee considers that it is the duty and responsibility of all concerned to enable the Palestinians to exercise their inalienable rights.
64. The Committee recommends an expanded and more influential role by the United Nations in its organs in promoting a just solution to the question of Palestine and in the implementation of such a solution. The Security Council, in particular, should take appropriate action to facilitate the exercise by the Palestinians of their right to return to their homes, lands and property. The Committee, furthermore, urges the Security Council to promote action towards a just solution, taking into account all the powers conferred on it by the Charter of the United Nations.
65. It is with this perspective in view and on the basis of the numerous resolutions of the United Nations, after due consideration of all the facts, proposals and suggestions advanced in the course of its deliberations, that the Committee submits its recommendations on the modalities for the implementation of the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

II. The right of return

66. The natural and inalienable right of Palestinians to return to their homes is recognized by resolution 194 (III), which the General Assembly has reaffirmed almost every year since its adoption. This right was also unanimously recognized by the Security Council in its resolution 237 (1967); the time for the urgent implementation of these resolutions is long overdue.

67. Without prejudice to the right of all Palestinians to return to their homes, lands and property, the Committee considers that the programme of implementation of the exercise of this right may be carried out in two phases:

Phase one

68. The first phase involves the return to their homes of the Palestinians displaced as a result of the war of June 1967. The Committee recommends that:

- (i) The Security Council should request the immediate implementation of its resolution 237 (1967) and that such implementation should not be related to any other condition;
- (ii) The resources of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and/or of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, suitably financed and mandated, may be employed to assist in the solution of any logistical problems involved in the resettlement of those returning to their homes. These agencies could also assist, in co-operation with the host countries and the Palestine Liberation Organization, in the identification of the displaced Palestinians.

Phase two

69. The second phase deals with the return to their homes of the Palestinians displaced between 1948 and 1967. The Committee recommends that:

- (i) While the first phase is being implemented, the United Nations in co-operation with the States directly involved, and the Palestine Liberation Organization as the interim representative of the Palestinian entity, should proceed to make the necessary arrangements to enable Palestinians displaced between 1948 and 1967 to exercise their right to return to their homes and property, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly General Assembly resolution 194 (III);
- (ii) Palestinians not choosing to return to their homes should be paid just and equitable compensation as provided for in Assembly resolution 194 (III).

III. The right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty

70. The Palestinian people has the inherent right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty in Palestine. The Committee considers that the evacuation of the territories occupied by force and in violation of the principles of the Charter and relevant resolutions of the United Nations is a conditio sine qua non for the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights of Palestinians to their homes and property and with the establishment of an independent Palestinian entity, the Palestinian people will be able to exercise its rights to self-determination and to decide its form of government without external interference.

71. The Committee also feels that the United Nations has an historical duty and responsibility to render all assistance necessary to promote the economic development and prosperity of the Palestinian entity.

72. To these ends, the Committee recommends that:

(a) A timetable should be established by the Security Council for the complete withdrawal by Israeli occupation forces from those areas occupied in 1967; such withdrawal should be completed no later than 1 June 1977;

(b) The Security Council may need to provide temporary peace-keeping forces in order to facilitate the process of withdrawal;

(c) Israel should be requested by the Security Council to desist from the establishment of new settlements and to withdraw during this period from settlements established since 1967 in the occupied territories. Arab property and all essential services in these areas should be maintained intact;

(d) Israel should also be requested to abide scrupulously by the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949 and to declare, pending its speedy withdrawal from these territories, its recognition of the applicability of that Convention;

(e) The evacuated territories, with all property and services intact, should be taken over by the United Nations, which with the co-operation of the League of Arab States, will subsequently hand over these evacuated areas to the Palestine Liberation Organization as the representative of the Palestinian people;

(f) The United Nations should, if necessary, assist in establishing communications between Gaza and the West Bank;

(g) As soon as the independent Palestinian entity has been established, the United Nations, in co-operation with the States directly involved and the Palestinian entity, should, taking into account General Assembly resolution 3375 (XXX), make further arrangements for the full implementation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, the resolution of outstanding problems and the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region, in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions;

(h) The United Nations should provide the economic and technical assistance necessary for the consolidation of the Palestinian entity.

Notes

a/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/32/35).

ANNEX II

A. Geneva Declaration on Palestine a/

In pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 36/120 C of 10 December 1981, ES-7/7 of 19 August 1982 and 37/86 C of 10 December 1982, an International Conference on the Question of Palestine was convened at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983 to seek effective ways and means to enable the Palestinian people to attain and to exercise their inalienable rights. The Conference was opened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, and presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Senegal, Moustapha Niassé.

* * *

1. The Conference, having thoroughly considered the question of Palestine in all its aspects, expresses the grave concern of all nations and peoples regarding the international tension that has persisted for several decades in the Middle East, the principal cause of which is the denial by Israel, and those supporting its expansionist policies, of the inalienable legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The Conference reaffirms and stresses that a just solution of the question of Palestine, the core of the problem, is the crucial element in a comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement in the Middle East.

2. The Conference recognizes that, as one of the most acute and complex problems of our time, the question of Palestine - inherited by the United Nations at the time of its establishment - requires a comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement. This settlement must be based on the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions concerning the question of Palestine and the attainment of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and the right to the establishment of its own independent State in Palestine and should also be based on the provision by the Security Council of guarantees for peace and security among all States in the region, including the independent Palestinian State, within secure and internationally recognized boundaries. The Conference is convinced that the attainment by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights, as defined by General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, will contribute substantially to the achievement of peace and stability in the Middle East.

3. The Conference considers the role of the United Nations in the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East to be essential and paramount. It emphasizes the need for respect for, and application of, the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the resolutions of the United Nations relevant to the question of Palestine and the observance of the principles of international law.

4. The Conference considers that the various proposals, consistent with the principles of international law, which have been presented on this question, such as the Arab peace plan adopted unanimously at the Twelfth Arab Summit Conference (see A/37/696-S/15510, annex), held at Fez, Morocco, in September 1982, should serve as guidelines for concerted international effort to resolve the question of Palestine. These guidelines include the following:

(a) The attainment by the Palestinian people of its legitimate inalienable rights, including the right to return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine;

(b) The right of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East;

(c) The need to put an end to Israel's occupation of the Arab territories, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and, consequently, the need to secure Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem;

(d) The need to oppose and reject such Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and any de facto situation created by Israel as are contrary to international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly the establishment of settlements, as these policies and practices constitute major obstacles to the achievement of peace in the Middle East;

(e) The need to reaffirm as null and void all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purported to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, including the expropriation of land and property situated thereon, and in particular the so-called "Basic Law" on Jerusalem and the proclamation of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel;

(f) The right of all States in the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, with justice and security for all the people, the sine qua non of which is the recognition and attainment of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as stated in subparagraph (a) above.

5. In order to give effect to these guidelines, the Conference considers it essential that an international peace conference on the Middle East be convened on the basis of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, with the aim of achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, an essential element of which would be the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine. This peace conference should be convened under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and other concerned States, on an equal footing. In this context the Security Council has a primary responsibility to create appropriate institutional arrangements on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions in order to guarantee and to carry out the accords of the international peace conference.

6. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine emphasizes the importance of the time factor in achieving a just solution to the problem of Palestine. The Conference is convinced that partial solutions are inadequate and delays in seeking a comprehensive solution do not eliminate tensions in the region.

**B. Programme of Action for the Achievement of
Palestinian Rights**

The International Conference on the Question of Palestine agreed that no effort should be spared to seek effective ways and means to enable the Palestinian people to attain and exercise their rights in Palestine in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights b/ and the principles of international law. The Conference, taking into consideration the Geneva Declaration on Palestine (see sect. A above), recommended the following Programme of Action.

"I

The International Conference on the Question of Palestine recommends that all States, individually or collectively, consistent with their respective constitutions and their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and in conformity with the principles of international law, should:

(1) Recognize the great importance of the time factor in solving the question of Palestine;

(2) Intensify efforts for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State within the framework of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the relevant United Nations resolutions and the guidelines of the Geneva Declaration on Palestine;

(3) Consider the continued presence of Israel in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem, as exacerbating instability in the region and endangering international peace and security;

(4) Oppose and reject, as a serious and continuing obstacle to peace, the expansionist policies pursued by Israel in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and in particular the alteration of the geographic nature and demographic composition, and the Israeli attempt to alter, through domestic legislation, the legal status of those territories, and all the measures taken in violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, c/ and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, d/ both of 12 August 1949, and of the Hague Regulations of 1907, e/ such as the establishment and expansion of settlements, the transfer of Israeli civilians into those territories and the individual and mass transfers therefrom of the Arab Palestinian population;

(5) Refrain from providing Israel with assistance of such a nature as to encourage it militarily, economically and financially to continue its aggression, occupation and disregard of its obligations under the Charter and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

(6) Not encourage migration to the occupied Arab territories until Israel has put a definitive end to the implementation of its illegal policy of establishing settlements in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967;

(7) Fully comply with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and its specialized agencies on the Holy City of Jerusalem, including those which reject Israel's annexation of Jerusalem and its declaration of that city as its capital;

(8) Undertake universal efforts to protect the Holy Places and urge Israel to take measures to prevent their desecration;

(9) Consider ways and means of meeting the threat that Israel poses to regional security in Africa in view of Israel's disregard of United Nations resolutions, and its close collaboration with the apartheid régime in the economic, military and nuclear fields, thereby contributing to the continued illegal occupation of Namibia and enhancing the régime's repressive and aggressive capacity;

(10) Encourage, through bilateral and multilateral contacts, all States, including Western European and North American States which have not done so, to welcome all peace initiatives based on the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, which were also welcomed by Chairman Yasser Arafat in his address to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine;

(11) Seek and develop ways and means to enable the Palestinian people to exercise sovereignty over their national resources;

(12) Express concern that Israel debars Palestinians from economic activity and access to national resources on Palestinian territory, in consistent violation of General Assembly resolutions on the right of the Palestinians to permanent sovereignty over their national resources;

(13) Declare null and void and counter such measures and practices applied by Israel in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem, as the annexation and the expropriation of land, water resources, and property and the alteration of the demographic, geographic, historical and cultural features thereof;

(14) Undertake measures to alleviate the economic and social burdens borne by the Palestinian people as a result of the continued Israeli occupation of their territories since 1967;

(15) Consider contributing or increasing special contributions to the proposed budgets, programmes and projects of the relevant organs, funds and agencies of the United Nations system that have been requested to provide humanitarian, economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, with particular reference to:

(a) General Assembly resolution 33/147 of 20 December 1978 and the appeal of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme at its thirtieth session for additional special contributions amounting to at least \$8 million during the third programming cycle (1982-1986) aimed at helping to meet the economic and social needs of the Palestinian people; f/

(b) The proposed programme budget of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for the biennium 1984/85 regarding the establishment within the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development of a special economic unit, g/ as requested by that Conference at its sixth session at Belgrade; h/

(c) Establishing a special legal aid fund to assist Palestinians in securing their rights under conditions of occupation, i/ in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

(16) Ensure that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East can meet the essential needs of the Palestinians without interruption or any diminution in the effectiveness of its services;

(17) Review the situation of Palestinian women in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories and, in view of their special hardships, urge the Preparatory Committee of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, to be held at Nairobi in 1985, to include this item on the agenda of the Conference;

(18) Review, if they have not yet done so, in conformity with their national legislation, their economic, cultural, technical and other relations with Israel, and the agreements governing them with the aim of ensuring that these regulations and agreements will not be interpreted or construed as implying in any way recognition of any modification of the legal status of Jerusalem and of the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, or an acceptance of Israel's illegal presence in those territories;

(19) Recognize that the process of enabling the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights in Palestine is a significant contribution to the restoration of the rule of law in international relations;

(20) Assure the observance of the stipulations provided in General Assembly resolution 181 (II) guaranteeing to all persons equal and non-discriminatory rights in civil, political, economic and religious matters and the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion, speech, publication, education, assembly and association;

(21) Express concern that the laws applicable in the occupied Arab territories have been totally eclipsed by a plethora of military orders that have been designed to establish a new 'legal régime' in violation of the Hague Regulations of 1907, and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

(22) Act in accordance with their obligations under existing international law, in particular with regard to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 which require States Parties to respect and to ensure respect for those Conventions in all circumstances, and in particular ensure the respect by Israel for the Geneva Conventions of 1949 in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories;

(23) Express concern that the Palestinians and other Arabs in the occupied territories are deprived of juridical and other kinds of protection, that they are victims of repressive legislation, involving mass arrests, acts of torture, destruction of houses, and the expulsion of people from their homes, acts which constitute flagrant violations of human rights;

(24) Recognize the necessity that Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners detained by Israel be accorded the status of prisoners of war in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 1949, c/ if combatants, or in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949, d/ if civilians;

(25) Strive for the adoption of international measures so that Israel will implement in the West Bank and Gaza the provisions of the Hague Regulations of 1907 and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons, in the light of Security Council resolution 465 (1980);

(26) Recognize, if they have not yet done so, the Palestine Liberation Organization as the representative of the Palestinian people and establish with it appropriate relations;

(27) Encourage, in conformity with their national legislations, the formation of national committees in support of the Palestinian people;

(28) Encourage the observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, in a most effective and meaningful way;

(29) Request the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session to designate a Year of Palestine, to be observed at the earliest possible time, taking into consideration the factors necessary to ensure its effective preparation for the purpose of galvanizing world-wide public opinion and support for further implementation of the Geneva Declaration on Palestine and the Programme of Action.

"II

The International Conference on the Question of Palestine stresses the obligation of all Member States, under the Charter of the United Nations, to enable the United Nations through an expanded and more effective role to fulfil its responsibility for achieving a solution to the question of Palestine. To this end:

"A

States participating in the Conference invite the Security Council, as the organ with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security:

(1) To suppress continuing and growing acts of aggression and other breaches of the peace in the Middle East which endanger peace and security in the region and the world as a whole;

(2) To take prompt, firm and effective steps and actions to establish an independent sovereign Palestinian State in Palestine through the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions, by facilitating the organization of the international peace conference on the Middle East, as called for in paragraph 5 of the Geneva Declaration on Palestine (see sect. A above), and by creating in this context the appropriate institutional arrangements on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions in order to guarantee and carry out the accords of the international peace conference, including the following:

(a) Taking measures consistent with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force to ensure Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, with a specific timetable;

(b) Undertaking effective measures to guarantee the safety and security and legal and human rights of the Palestinians in the occupied territories pending the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem;

(c) Subjecting those territories, following the withdrawal of Israel, to a short transitional period, under the supervision of the United Nations, during which period the Palestinian people would exercise its right to self-determination;

(d) Facilitating the implementation of the right to return of the Palestinians to their homes and property;

(e) Supervising elections to the constituent assembly of the independent Palestinian State in which all Palestinians shall participate, in exercise of their right to self-determination;

(f) Providing, if necessary, temporary peace-keeping forces in order to facilitate the implementation of subparagraphs (a) to (e) above.

"B

Meanwhile the Security Council is also invited to:

(1) Take urgent action to bring about an immediate and complete cessation of such Israeli policies in the occupied territories and, in particular, the establishment of settlements as have been determined by the Security Council to have no legal validity and as a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East;

(2) Consider urgently the reports of the Commission established under its resolution 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979, which examined the situation concerning settlements in the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and to reactivate the above-mentioned Commission;

(3) Initiate action to terminate Israel's exploitative policies which go against the indigenous economic development of the occupied territories, and to compel Israel to lift its restrictions on water use and well-drilling by Palestinian farmers as well as its diversion of West Bank water resources into the Israeli water grid system;

(4) Keep under its constant attention the actions committed by Israel against the Palestinian people in violation of the stipulations provided for in relevant General Assembly resolutions, in particular the stipulations of resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 guaranteeing to all persons equal and non-discriminatory rights and freedoms;

(5) Consider, in the event of Israel's persistent non-compliance with the relevant United Nations resolutions which embody the will of the international community, appropriate measures in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, to ensure Israel's compliance with these resolutions.

"C

(1) Taking into account the recommendations of the five regional preparatory meetings of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine j/ and United Nations resolutions concerning economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, the Secretary-General of the United Nations is requested to convene a meeting of the specialized agencies and other organizations associated with the United Nations, as well as representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization and of those countries which are hosts to Palestinian refugees and other potential sources of assistance to develop a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to ensure its implementation;

(2) The meeting should also look into the most effective inter-agency machinery to co-ordinate and sustain and intensify United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people.

"D

The dissemination of accurate and comprehensive information world wide and the role of non-governmental organizations and institutions remain of vital importance in heightening awareness of and support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian State. To these ends:

(1) The United Nations Department for Public Information, in full co-operation and constant consultations with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, should:

(a) Co-ordinate all information activities of the United Nations system on Palestine through the Joint United Nations Information Committee;

(b) Expand publications and audio and visual coverage of the facts and of developments pertaining to the question of Palestine;

(c) Publish newsletters and articles in its respective publications on Israeli violations of human rights of the Arab inhabitants in the occupied territories and organize fact-finding missions for journalists to the area;

(d) Organize regional encounters for journalists;

(e) Disseminate appropriate information on the results of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine;

(2) The relevant organizations of the United Nations system should organize meetings, symposia and seminars on topics within their terms of reference and relating to specific problems of the Palestinian people by establishing closer liaison with non-governmental organizations, the media and other groups interested in the question of Palestine.

"III

The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, convinced of the important role of world-wide public opinion in resolving the question of Palestine, and in the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action, urges and encourages:

(1) Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to increase awareness by the international community of the economic and social burdens borne by the Palestinian people as a result of the continued Israeli occupation and its negative effects on the economic development of the West Asian region as a whole;

(2) Non-governmental organizations and professional and popular associations to intensify their efforts to support the rights of the Palestinian people in every possible way;

(3) Organizations such as those of women, teachers, workers, youths and students to undertake exchanges and other programmes of joint action with their Palestinian counterparts;

(4) Women's associations, in particular, to investigate the conditions of Palestinian women and children in all occupied territories;

(5) The media and other institutions to disseminate relevant information to increase public awareness and understanding of the question of Palestine;

(6) Institutions of higher education to promote the study of the question of Palestine in all its aspects;

(7) Various jurists' associations to establish special investigative commissions to determine the violations by Israel of the Palestinians' legal rights and to disseminate their findings accordingly;

(8) Jurists to initiate with their Palestinian counterparts consultations, research and investigations on the juridical aspects of problems affecting the southern African and Palestinian struggles, in particular the detention of political prisoners and the denial of prisoner-of-war status to detained members of the national liberation movements of southern Africa and Palestine;

(9) Parliamentarians, political parties, trade unions, organizations for solidarity and intellectuals, particularly in Western Europe and North America, to join their counterparts in other parts of the world in giving their support, where it has not been done, to an initiative which would express the desire of the international community to see the Palestinian people at last living in their own independent homeland in peace, freedom and dignity."

Notes

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

b/ See General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

c/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 972, p. 135.

d/ Ibid., No. 973, p. 287.

Notes (continued)

e/ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907 (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915), p. 100.

f/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1983, Supplement No. 9 (E/1983/20).

g/ A/C.5/38/4, para. 8 (c).

h/ Recommendation 146 (VI) of 2 July 1983 of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

i/ Recommendation 19 of the Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting, Managua, Nicaragua, 12-15 April 1983 (A/CONF.114/2).

j/ African region, A/CONF.114/1; Latin American region, A/CONF.114/2; Western Asian region, A/CONF.114/3; Asian region, A/CONF.114/4; European region, A/CONF.114/5.

ANNEX III

United Nations Symposium for Non-Governmental Organizations
on the Question of Palestine

(Geneva, 3-4 November 1984)

NGO Appeal for an International Peace Conference
on the Middle East

(Statement read by the representative of the Interim Co-ordinating
Committee on 29 November 1984, International Day of Solidarity
with the Palestinian People)

1. In August 1984, representatives of 98 non-governmental organizations participating in the International NGO meeting on the Question of Palestine in Geneva called upon all peoples and Governments to take definitive steps to secure peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict, at the core of which is the question of Palestine. Since that momentous meeting, these organizations have recommitted themselves to this important quest.
2. As the representative of the Interim Co-ordinating Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine for the non-governmental organizations that attended that meeting, I am here today to offer a global challenge. We believe that it is in the interest of all the world's peoples to secure genuine peace in the Middle East. All our lives have been punctuated by war and the prospect of war emanating from that historic region. But these wars have brought neither peace nor security to the antagonists in the region. We must search for an alternative, sane path to peace with justice.
3. On this day, 29 November, the United Nations rightly calls for us to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their struggle for self-determination and statehood. Today, in New York, Geneva and Vienna, and many other places in the world, a global campaign is being launched to gather the signatures of the world's peoples in support of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. We, the non-governmental organizations committed to the attainment of the rights of the Palestinian people and especially a just and lasting peace for all peoples in the Middle East, offer the following world petition:

An Appeal for an International Peace Conference
on the Middle East

"The unresolved Arab/Israeli conflict, the core of which is the question of Palestine, and other Middle East conflicts pose a threat to world peace.

"The Middle East is a nuclear-weapons zone.

"The Middle East is one area in the world where a chain of events could lead to a Third World War.

"Without contact among all parties concerned there can be no negotiation. Without negotiation, there can be no peace.

"We, the undersigned, recognize the right of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples to statehood and self-determination. We recognize the right of all States in the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries with justice and security for all the peoples of the region. We call for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East attended by all parties to the conflict, including the representatives of Israel, the Palestine Liberation Organization, those Arab States party to the conflict, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, under the auspices of the United Nations as called for by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/58 C."

4. Through this petition we are declaring that there is an alternative to successive wars in the Middle East and the continued deprivation of the Palestinian people. We firmly believe that the process initiated by such a conference may begin to counter the misperception and mistrust that plague the region. We do believe that it is the first step in a sane process towards resolving them.

5. All the world's peoples are jeopardized by the threat of war. All the world's peoples are affected by the plight of the Palestinian people. All the world's peoples concerned with peace must also be concerned with justice.

6. Over the coming 12 months, non-governmental organizations around the world will be offering the people of their respective countries a chance to be peace-makers, to help restore the rights of suffering peoples by asking them to sign this petition.

7. On 29 November 1985, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the results of this massive campaign will be presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

8. We are well aware of the magnitude of our project, but we are also painfully aware of the consequences of not acting. We ask all of you to join us in this quest to make peace in the Middle East a possibility through the promotion of genuine dialogue. That process could be set in motion by the convening of an International Conference on Peace in the Middle East.

ANNEX IV

Report of the Tenth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine

(Beijing, 22-26 April 1985)

1. The Tenth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine with the title "The Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People" was held at the Fragrant Hill Hotel, West Beijing, People's Republic of China from 22 to 26 April 1985 in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 38/58 B. Seven meetings were held and sixteen panelists presented papers on selected aspects of the question of Palestine.
2. The United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by a delegation consisting of Mr. Massamba Sarré (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee; Mr. Victor J. Gauci (Malta), Rapporteur of the Committee; Mr. Zain Azraai (Malaysia); Mr. Mohamed Lessir (Tunisia); Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization). Mr. Sarré was Chairman and Mr. Gauci Rapporteur of the Seminar.

Opening statements

3. The opening session of the Tenth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine was addressed by His Excellency Mr. Gang Biao, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, who had earlier received the representatives of the Committee and the Palestine Liberation Organization at a private meeting.
4. He stated that the purpose of the Seminar was to mobilize public opinion in the world, to support the just cause of the Palestinian people, and to explore ways and means for a just settlement of the Palestine question. Recognizing that this was an arduous task, he stressed that China remained prepared to work towards the achievement of this objective, and appealed to all peace-loving States and peoples to strive for positive results at an early date.
5. In tracing the course of events in the Middle East, he contrasted Israel's policy of aggression and expansion with the heroic resistance of the Palestinian people and the efforts made by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Arab States to seek a just and reasonable solution to the question of Palestine.
6. The Fez Peace Plan, adopted in September 1982, had been welcomed and supported by the international community. The Palestine Liberation Organization and the Arab countries were sincere in their efforts to seek peace in the Middle East. Unfortunately, Israel and its supporters have so far refused to recognize the national rights of the Palestinian people; this constituted the basic obstacle to peace in the Middle East.
7. The Chinese Government firmly supported the just struggle of the Palestinians and other Arab people and the basic principles affirmed by the relevant United Nations resolutions. Any effort which was conducive to the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the recovery of the occupied Arab territories and was in conformity with an equitable solution to the Middle East question, would receive the backing of the Chinese Government and its people.

8. At the same opening session, Mr. Massamba Sarré, Chairman of the Committee, gave a brief account of the Committee's work to date. He stressed the particular importance that the Committee attached to the seminars in the various regions. He indicated the Committee's conviction that objective information on the question of Palestine would help to ensure more comprehensive coverage of developments in the region, and promote public support in favour of an equitable and peaceful solution. Once all the facts surrounding the question of Palestine were known, the resultant better understanding of the question would help to convince even those who so far have been somewhat indifferent to the just cause of the Palestinian people.

9. The widely attended International Conference on the Question of Palestine held in 1983 in Geneva had formulated a number of basic principles necessary for a solution, including the right of all States in the region to existence within secure and recognized boundaries and justice and security for all the people, including a future Palestinian State. That Conference had also recommended the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation on an equal footing of all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization - as the representative of the people directly concerned - together with the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

10. Strongly supported by the majority of the Member States of the United Nations, the Committee fully endorsed the importance of such a peace conference and had decided that this should be the main focus of its work programme in 1985. It had therefore decided that in all the seminars and symposia that it organized this year, there would be at least one panel which would deal exclusively with the question of the peace conference.

11. The Committee placed special emphasis on the development of public opinion on the question of Palestine. The views of several influential policy-makers who participated in the Seminar on the role of Asian public opinion, and wide dissemination of their views would assist the Committee and the entire membership of the United Nations in assessing what still needed to be done in this field.

12. Mr. Shafiq Al-Hout, member of the Palestine National Council and head of the delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, conveyed a message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and Commander-in-Chief of the Forces of the Palestine Revolution.

13. In his message, Chairman Arafat stated that the Palestinian cause had entered an even more dangerous phase as a result of the intensification of Israel's aggressive policies, supported by successive United States Administrations. These policies had as their sole aim the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their lands and homes. It was a part of Israel's declared policy not to withdraw from the occupied territories, not to return Jerusalem to Palestinian sovereignty, not to permit the establishment of a Palestinian State and not to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization.

14. The economic, financial and military aid provided by the United States to Israel's aggression hindered the observance of international law and denied the Palestinian people the exercise of its inalienable rights.

15. Despite these enormous challenges, the Palestinian people continued their heroic struggle and resistance to the hostile Israeli policies abetted by the United States. The hardships they endured would not impair their resolve to maintain their struggle which was gathering overwhelming support from all democratic and peace-loving forces.

16. The Palestine Liberation Organization had availed itself of every opportunity to search for peace, and continued its efforts to achieve a joint Arab political plan aimed at the attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict.
17. Chairman Arafat expressed his profound gratitude for the valuable efforts of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which had contributed to the clarification of the facts surrounding the cause of the Palestinian people. He also expressed his gratitude to Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and to all those who had worked for justice for the Palestinian people.
18. In conclusion, he reiterated the Palestine National Council's gratitude to the People's Republic of China, its leadership, its Party and its people, who were the very first nation to extend diplomatic recognition to the PLO and have unfailingly extended full support to the Palestinian cause.
19. At the same meeting, a statement was made by Mr. Abdul G. Koroma, Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. He opined that the decision of the General Assembly to hold this Seminar was not only a measure of the international community's deep concern for the Palestinian people, but also a reflection of its recognition that a just solution of the Palestinian problem was of overriding importance in the search for a lasting settlement of the Middle East question. In this decision, the General Assembly thus had reaffirmed its commitment to the Palestinian people for the realization of their inalienable rights, and sought to enlighten and mobilize international public opinion towards the attainment of the objectives of the United Nations on the question of Palestine.
20. The Special Committee attaches particular significance to the mobilization of international opinion towards the attainment of self-determination for all people under alien and colonial domination. The General Assembly had repeatedly called for the full and speedy exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination without external interference and to national independence and sovereignty as well as their right to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted.
21. It was all the more important therefore for the international community to rededicate itself to the promotion of a genuine and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict. Concerted action was necessary to persuade the supporters of Israel to induce it to respond to relevant United Nations resolutions and to the will of the international community on the question of Palestine. Recent events in the Middle East underline the heavy responsibility incumbent upon the international community to do everything in its power to preserve peace and security in the region.
22. Mr. Nihat Akyol, speaking on behalf of the United Nations Council for Namibia, stated that the question of Palestine could be compared to the problem of Namibia which had been controlled by South Africa in defiance of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. In both instances, great suffering had been caused to many innocent people. The Palestinian people continued to be denied the fundamental and inalienable rights to live in liberty, peace and dignity in their own country. The international community could not remain indifferent while Israel persisted in its acts of aggression against the Palestinian people and annexed the territories of its neighbouring States.

23. The United Nations Council for Namibia reaffirmed its adherence to the resolutions of the General Assembly relating to the rights of the Palestinian people. The Council for Namibia was also convinced that the persistent denial by Israel of the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland was in violation of the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter as well as United Nations resolutions on the question of the rights of people under colonial domination.
24. The Council for Namibia affirmed its solidarity with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and condemned Israeli policies and plans aimed at driving the Palestinian people from its homeland.
25. The twin questions of Palestine and of Namibia haunted the conscience of the international community. Both questions had been on the agenda of the General Assembly of the United Nations for many years, and a solution had not yet been found.
26. This Seminar was an occasion to reaffirm the Council's solemn commitment and determination to be associated with the defence of a noble cause. South Africa and Israel should be compelled to conform to universally accepted norms and should be condemned for their defiance of world opinion.
27. Mr. Nabil Maarouf, Director of Holy Jerusalem and Palestine Department of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, speaking on behalf of Mr. Sayed Sharifuddin Pirzada, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, stated that the organization had made it a point to participate in the series of regional seminars on the question of a Palestine organized by the United Nations, since these seminars were a valuable contribution towards making the cause of the Palestinian people better known to the world public.
28. The Organization of the Islamic Conference remained fully committed to all proposals and solutions that would ensure for the Palestinian people its inalienable historical rights, including its right to return, its right to self-determination and its right to establish its own independent State on its national soil with its capital of Al-Quds Al Sharif, and under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole legitimate representative.
29. In spite of world public opinion, the Palestinian people had not regained its rights. Israel's intransigence was due to continued political, economic and military support by the United States of America. It was this support that enabled Israel to violate international law and to defy world public opinion.
30. The Palestine Liberation Organization had displayed its desire for peace by accepting the Fez Peace Plan and publicly expressed support for the proposed Middle East Peace Conference which had however been rejected by Israel, whose negative attitude was encouraged by the United States. Ways and means should be found by which effective pressure could be brought to bear upon the United States Administration to recognize the rights of the Palestinian people. All States that supported the Palestinian people should join in this effort. It was very important that the European Community should be persuaded to exert its influence on the United States.
31. At the second meeting, Mr. Hans Teller, representative of UNESCO in China, outlined the assistance given to the Palestinian people by UNESCO, in accordance with resolutions adopted by its General Conference. UNESCO had renewed its

agreement with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for the period 1984-1985 whereby UNESCO assumed technical responsibilities for the educational programme for Palestinian refugees. UNESCO also continued its efforts to maintain the functioning of the cultural and educational institutions in the occupied Arab territories, including their projects concerning the Palestine Open University on which a study had already been approved.

32. With regard to the preservation of cultural properties in the Holy City of Jerusalem, the Director-General of UNESCO had entrusted a personal representative to visit Jerusalem on many occasions for the protection of the cultural heritage of the Holy City.

33. Some 50 fellowships had been granted to Palestinian students and a consultant had been hired to advise the Palestine Literacy Council. A special account had been opened to finance scholarships for Palestinian students and contributions had already been received from some Arab States. Another special account had been opened for assistance to the Palestine Liberation Organization with the financial contributions from the Government of Iraq.

34. At the 7th meeting, Ms. Savitri Kunadi, speaking on behalf of the Special Committee against Apartheid, reaffirmed the Special Committee's support for the General Assembly resolutions relating to the question of Palestine and stressed its solidarity with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in the task of securing the practical attainment of those rights. The Special Committee against Apartheid attached great significance to the mobilization of international public opinion for the attainment and realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and viewed the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East as a contribution to the just solution of the Middle East problem, the core of which is the question of Palestine.

35. On the occasion of the commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, in April 1955, the Seminar decided at its 3rd meeting on 23 April 1985, to send a message to His Excellency Dr. Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia extending felicitations, and recalled that the Bandung Declaration had affirmed its full support for the cause of the Palestinian people.

36. The delegation of the Committee on Palestinian rights was officially received by His Excellency Mr. Zhao Ziyang, the Prime Minister of China, on Thursday, 25 April 1985.

37. The closing session on Friday, 26 April 1985, was attended by His Excellency Mr. Qian Qichen, Deputy Foreign Minister of China. The meeting was addressed by the Deputy Foreign Minister, the Chairman of the Seminar and Mr. Shafiq al-Hout, the representative of Chairman Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

United Nations Asian Regional Non-Governmental Organizations
Symposium on the Question of Palestine

(New Delhi, 1-3 May 1985)

Declaration

1. We, the group of non-governmental organizations participating in the United Nations Asian Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, wish to thank the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for convening this meeting. We are indeed honoured by the presence of the Chairman, Members and Observers of the distinguished United Nations body.
2. We also wish to thank the Chief of the Division for Palestinian Rights, the NGO liaison officer, the staff of the Division, the Department of Conference Services including the services of the interpreters for their valuable assistance in the preparation and execution of this Symposium. We believe this meeting marks a pivotal point in the constructive interaction between the United Nations and the Asian NGO community concerned with the question of Palestine and we look forward to increasing levels of understanding, appreciation and co-operation.
3. Special thanks are extended to the Government of India for hosting this Symposium and for the generosity and co-operation extended to the participants. We were honoured by the presence and statement of His Excellency, Mr. Khurshid Alam Khan, Minister of State for External Affairs, at the official opening of the Symposium. We recognize and genuinely appreciate the long-standing and unfailing support that the Government of India has given to the just cause of the Palestinian people.
4. We also wish to sincerely voice our appreciation to the distinguished experts who spoke here and offered valuable historical, political as well as practical insights into the question of Palestine and the potential central role to be played by NGOs. The practical suggestions assisted us in formulating future plans for effective collaboration in Asia and the Pacific and in linking our efforts to a broader, global network.
5. We resolutely reaffirm the international consensus that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We affirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference, to return, and to the creation of an Independent Palestinian State on its own national territory under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions.
6. We further strongly support the convening of the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Peace in the Middle East as specified in United Nations resolution 38/58 C. The Palestine Liberation Organization strongly supported this resolution but it was opposed by both Israel and the United States of America. As the positions of these two Governments constitute a serious obstacle to world peace, we urge that more pressure be exerted on both States to join in the global consensus on the issue. We urge those undecided States, especially members of the

Security Council, to lend their support to this resolution. In this manner, we also uniformly support the declaration on this issue adopted by the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine held in August 1984 in Geneva.

7. We express our grave concern over the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict. We recognize that the basic cause of that conflict is the denial by Israel and its supporters of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. In particular, we regret the record of successive Administration of the United States of America which have supported Israeli State terrorism.

8. The convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, as endorsed by General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, offers the only realistic and practical way towards a solution to the problem of Palestine and the establishment of a Palestinian State.

9. We further reaffirm our belief that only a full and comprehensive solution involving the Palestine Liberation Organization and all concerned countries of the region and with the participation of the United States of America and the USSR can create the basis for a just and lasting peace. We reject partial and piecemeal agreements as such agreements have proved to be counterproductive and not conducive to a comprehensive peaceful solution and have totally ignored the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

10. This Symposium further asserts the close connection between the struggle of the Palestinian people and every struggle in each part of the world of peoples fighting for their independence, defending their freedom and building their life on the basis of their sovereignty. The cause of the Palestinian people is interconnected with the struggle of all peoples for world peace and against colonialism.

11. This Symposium of the NGOs of Asia and the Pacific positively points to the growing support in the United Nations for Palestinians and the Palestine Liberation Organization. It stresses the very significant role played by the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries representing over two thirds of the world's Governments in awakening global public opinion to the urgent need to resolve this issue and in exposing the parts played by the Governments of the United States of America and Israel.

12. We further endorse the global signature campaign to increase popular support for the proposed international peace conference on the Middle East and will endeavour to co-ordinate our efforts with the Interim Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs throughout Asia and the Pacific, culminating in the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November 1985.

13. We concur that influencing world public opinion is a key factor in the just resolution of the question of Palestine. As NGOs, we have access to local populations, "the grass roots", in many societies and are determined to work to increase their understanding of the question of Palestine and to effectively mobilize their potential political, social and spiritual power.

14. Beyond these principles, we firmly believe that non-governmental organizations are a unique asset in securing the rights of the Palestinian people, for we can present the issue in its vital human dimension to individuals and other non-governmental organizations.

15. We are aware of the forces opposed to our efforts. But the inherent justice of our cause and the sound construction of a genuine regional and global NGO network will be mutually reinforcing and demonstrably advance our endeavours.

16. We have reviewed and considered the initial activities of the Interim Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs (ICC) established at the International Meeting on the Question of Palestine, convened at Geneva in August 1984 and regard it as a suitable transitional mechanism for the initial co-ordination of the world-wide NGO effort on the question of Palestine. We look favourably upon its transformation from an "interim" to an "international" Co-ordinating Committee after the scheduled consideration of its future structure and composition at the International Meeting on the Question of Palestine to be convened from 9-12 September 1985 in Geneva.

17. We strongly urge the United Nations through the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to assist the ICC in every possible way in its worthwhile efforts to build a viable, global network of NGOs active on the question of Palestine. This assistance should include further serious efforts to secure an NGO liaison in Geneva in addition to the current New York-based liaison activities and to aid in the establishment of a properly resourced ICC secretariat. The central co-ordination of all common NGO activities on this issue is a necessary condition for influencing domestic and global public opinion.

18. We Asian NGOs present here for this Symposium see ourselves as a nucleus of a broader, regional effort. We must reach out, identify and involve many other NGO committees to a just resolution of the question of Palestine. To accomplish these worthy goals, we are requesting United Nations assistance, including financial help, to establish an Asian Regional Interim Co-ordinating Committee of NGOs to serve as a initial focus for our regional efforts. We visualize such a Co-ordinating Committee establishing close links with the work of ICC and its successor.

19. The Asian and Pacific Region is an area of increasing geopolitical importance. As a result, forces opposed to the Palestinian cause are attempting to neutralize the traditional commitment of the peoples of this region to the Palestinian cause. Such attempts, notably by the State of Israel and its alter ego, the World Zionist Organization, and as well as by imperialism, must be resisted as they constitute impediments to achieving a just, comprehensive and enduring resolution of the question of Palestine. We distinguish between Judaism as a religion and political zionism as manifested by Israel, an unjust, undemocratic, racist, and dangerous ideology. In combating such opposition, Asia and Pacific NGOs could be expected to play a key role as moulders of public opinion in the region.

20. To ensure proper representation of this region at the forthcoming International Meeting on the Question of Palestine, we strongly urge the United Nations through the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to fund the participation of a representative number of NGO delegates from the region. To be effective such aid should include transportation to Geneva and accommodation during the conference.

21. In co-operation with the stated objectives of the ICC, we Asian NGOs call for the compilation of a regional data base of information on NGOs in Asia and the Pacific, active on the issue as a potent addition to global networking efforts. NGOs in Melbourne, Australia, have offered to commence the effort and to assist in the production of regional materials.

22. We are determined to cultivate an expanding regional NGO constituency linked to a world-wide NGO network that will emerge as a significant complementary force in the campaign for the just resolution of the question of Palestine. We firmly believe that we can most effectively express our solidarity with the Palestinian people in this way. We call upon the United Nations, through the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to offer every assistance including financial support, to achieve these ends.

23. We look with great interest to the forthcoming United Nations-sponsored World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women in Nairobi, Kenya, as a prime opportunity to call attention to the question of Palestine with special focus on the plight of Palestinian women under occupation. We call upon the Committee to assist us in further strengthening the network of women working for a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

24. We urge the election of the Asian Regional Interim Co-ordinating Committee to be composed of representatives of organizations present at this Symposium.

25. We applaud the convening of this Regional Symposium and strongly request the United Nations, through the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to plan a follow-up symposium in Asia and Pacific as soon as possible but hopefully within the coming year.

ANNEX VI

Report of the Eleventh United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine

(Georgetown, 17-20 June 1985)

1. The Eleventh United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine was held at the Pegasus Hotel, Georgetown, Guyana, from 17 to 20 June 1985 in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 38/58 B. Five meetings were held at which eight panelists presented papers on different aspects of the question of Palestine.

2. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by Mr. Massamba Sarré (Senegal), Chairman, Mr. Alberto Velazco-San José (Cuba), Mr. David Karran (Guyana), Mr. Miklós Endreffy (Hungary) and Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi (Palestine Liberation Organization). Mr. Massamba Sarré was Chairman and Mr. David Karran Rapporteur of the Seminar.

Opening statements

3. The Seminar was opened by H.E. Mr. Rashleigh Jackson, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guyana and was attended by many distinguished personages, including H.E. Mr. Ptolemy Reid, Deputy Leader of the People's National Congress, Vice-Presidents and cabinet ministers as well as heads of diplomatic missions.

4. Mr. Jackson, in his opening remarks, warmly congratulated Ambassador Massamba Sarré of Senegal, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and stated that the Committee had played a valuable supportive role in the Palestinian struggle by drawing up a structured programme of action for the achievement of the objectives which had inspired its creation. The Seminar, which was part of that programme of action, had provided an opportunity for the Latin American region to have attention focused on the Committee's perspectives and thereby assist in the overall co-ordination of the strategies of the supporters of the Palestinian cause in all regions of the world.

5. In a sense, the Seminar was not restricted to the question of Palestine alone, because a number of principles were at stake which were of a universal nature and which were cardinal to the national policies of many States, including Guyana. Amongst them were the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, respect for independence, sovereignty and non-acquisition of territory by force.

6. The situation of the Palestinian people was one of the more sordid tragedies of recorded history. Like many people of Africa and Asia, the Palestinians were in the diaspora and had suffered the indignities of living in refugee camps and of being the objects of global compassion. However, dispersion and degradation, occupation and repression had served only to reinforce the determination of the Palestinian people to intensify their struggle under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Guyana congratulated the Palestine Liberation Organization for the effectiveness of its policies and its activities in the political and diplomatic fronts which had earned the Palestine Liberation Organization international respect and support.

7. The question of Palestine was the crux of the Middle East situation and lasting peace in the region would remain elusive until the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people were fully respected. The struggle of the Palestinian people was also an integral part of the world-wide struggle against foreign domination. The Government and people of Guyana had always been firm in their support for the rights of the Palestinian people. Guyana's participation in the work of the Committee was testimony of its commitment to that cause. The Committee could count on Guyana's abiding support.
8. Much needed to be done. Such issues had suffered much from media neglect or deliberate distortion and disinformation. The world's people needed to be educated about the question of Palestine. At the same time, every effort should be made to convene an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, a proposal which had great merit and enjoyed widespread international support. Israel should be made to realize that its best interests would be served by participating in such a Conference.
9. Mr. Massamba Sarré, welcoming participants, recalled that His Excellency the Foreign Minister had, as the distinguished representative of Guyana to the United Nations, been one of the earliest members of the Committee and participated actively in its work at a time when the Committee was charting its course. Guyana had always been an active member of the Committee and the fact that it had so kindly provided the venue for the Seminar as well as the presence of His Excellency the Foreign Minister and other distinguished guests at the opening were a reflection of the importance that Guyana attached to the question of Palestine and its commitment to finding a just and lasting solution to the problem.
10. The Committee laid great stress on the value of world public opinion on the Palestine question and was convinced that a knowledge of all the facts of the case would lead to a better understanding of the issues and promote a lasting solution. The Seminar was intended to alert public opinion in the Latin American and Caribbean region to the various aspects to the question of Palestine since public opinion could make a valuable contribution towards making the voice of reason heard in the formation of policies. In the course of the Seminar, the views of several influential policy-makers would be heard on the role of Latin American and Caribbean public opinion. Their views and the discussions that would take place would be of the greatest value in assessing what still needed to be done in that field.
11. The Committee also, along with a majority of States, fully endorsed the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East as a valuable step forward in the search for peace in the region. Consequently, it had made it the focus of its work in 1985. It was for that reason that one of the panels of the Seminar was devoted exclusively to the International Peace Conference. It was the Committee's hope that the views expressed at the Seminar would help to promote the convening of such an important Conference.
12. At the opening meeting, the Seminar also heard a message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, conveyed by Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi, Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations. In his message Mr. Arafat expressed his deep gratitude for the tremendous efforts being made to promote the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people and in defence of their inalienable rights.

13. The Palestinian cause was presently witnessing a dangerous phase since Israel was intensifying its repression of the Palestinian people both inside and outside the occupied territories. Those acts were perpetrated with the sole aim of expelling and forcibly deporting the Palestinian people from their land and homes. At the same time, the United States Administration was intensifying its hostile policies against the Palestinian people and increasing its support of Israel militarily and financially. In addition, it denied the Palestinian people their inalienable rights. In spite of such enormous challenges, the Palestinian people continued their struggle and resistance to the hostile policies of Israel and the United States.

14. The Palestine Liberation Organization had availed itself of every opportunity in the search for peace in the firm belief that justice, peace and stability in the area as well as international peace and security should be achieved. It would continue its efforts to achieve a joint Arab political plan aimed at the attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict.

15. Chairman Arafat expressed his gratitude to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and its Chairman, Mr. Massamba Sarré, and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. In conclusion, he thanked the people and Government of Guyana for hosting the Seminar and for Guyana's consistent and militant support.

16. Mr. Gajanan Wakankar, High Commissioner of India to Guyana, speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, stated that the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, had always felt a particular bond of kinship with the Palestinian people. The issue of Palestine had been in the forefront of the deliberations and activities of the Movement from the time of the first Non-Aligned Summit in 1961. The Non-Aligned countries had been particularly active in mobilizing international support in favour of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and against Israel's action in the occupied territories.

17. The Non-Aligned Summit held at New Delhi, in March 1983 had affirmed that a just and durable peace in the Middle East could not be established without a just solution of the problem of Palestine on the basis of the attainment and exercise in Palestine of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

18. The Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries to the thirty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly had, in October 1984, stressed the necessity for the early convening of the International Peace Conference in the Middle East. More recently, the Committee of Eight at the Level of Ministers had, on 20 April 1985, endorsed the proposal for the convening of the Conference. They had also decided to continue actively their collective and individual efforts to mobilize all means available with a view to realizing implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolutions and to ensure the convening of the Peace Conference.

19. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People had made a significant contribution in its search for a just solution to the question of Palestine. The efforts of the Committee towards an early convening of the Peace Conference and to mobilize public support for the Palestinian cause had been untiring.

20. India had consistently supported the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and that was one of the hallmarks of India's foreign policy. India's support was rooted in tradition and history and was matched by concrete action.

21. Mr. Miklós Endreffy, speaking on behalf of the Special Committee against Apartheid, stated that the international community had recently witnessed developments culminating in further suffering for the people of Palestine. Such events reaffirmed the view of peace-loving peoples all over the world that it was impossible to ensure a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict without resolving its core - the question of Palestine.

22. That could not be achieved while the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories continued. The Government of Israel persisted in its attempts to subdue the desire of the Palestinian people to free themselves. It carried out policies with cruelty and without respect for the human rights of the Palestinian people. However, in spite of Israel's denial of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and its policy of oppression and intimidation in the occupied territories, the desire of the Palestinian people for freedom could not be conquered.

23. Each year, the Special Committee against Apartheid submitted a special report to the General Assembly and the Security Council on recent developments concerning relations between Israel and South Africa. That report pointed out very clearly the seriousness of the alliance between those two régimes. Their collaboration constituted an alliance detrimental to the interests of the African and Arab peoples.

24. The Special Committee, in co-operation with the League of Arab States had convened in Tunis in August 1984, a Conference of Arab Solidarity with the Struggle for Liberation in Southern Africa. That Conference had considered the threat facing the Arab and the African peoples as a result of the alliance between Israel and South Africa and adopted several pertinent resolutions.

25. Mr. Engin Ansay, Deputy Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, in an address to the Seminar, on behalf of H.E. Mr. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, stated that the organization considered the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds al-Sharif the foremost cause of the Muslim Ummah because of its justness and because of the existence of Islamic holy shrines under occupation. Accordingly, the member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference had given their unreserved support to the cause of the Palestinian people.

26. In spite of Israel's aggressive policies, the Arab States had made clear their serious desire to bring about a lasting, comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East. For its part, the Palestine Liberation Organization had demonstrated total flexibility with regard to the peace process. The United States and Israel, however, had rejected every proposal and initiative and would no doubt reject any proposal that recognized the Palestinians' right to self-determination and statehood. The question of Palestine was first and foremost a problem of colonialism; secondly it was an issue brought about by the aggressiveness of one entity at the expense of another; thirdly it was an issue based on the dangerous doctrine of aggression against a neighbouring country.

27. The Organization of the Islamic Conference believed that as long as the question of Palestine was not settled on the basis of United Nations approved resolutions, there would be no peace or stability in the Middle East and world peace would continue to be threatened.

28. In defiance of all United Nations resolutions, Israel had announced in 1980, the annexation of Al-Quds and almost every day committed flagrant sacrilegious acts against Islam. Moreover, Israel's policy of settlements in the occupied Arab territories created one of the greatest threats to peace in the region. Its settlements policy was intended to pre-empt any achievement by the Palestinian people towards the affirmation of their inalienable rights.

29. The Organization of the Islamic Conference maintained that peace was essential to the Middle East but the minimum condition for its realization was the recognition of the Palestinian people's right to their own territory and homeland. Hence, the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East constituted the ideal solution since it ensured the participation of all parties concerned.

30. At the 4th meeting, H.E. Mr. Alberto Velazco-San José, speaking on behalf of the United Nations Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, stated that the tenets that governed the work of the Special Committee - the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples - proclaimed that the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constituted a denial of fundamental human rights, was contrary to the Charter and was an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation.

31. Within that context, the Special Committee viewed with deep concern the plight of the people of Palestine who had been denied their fundamental and inalienable right to determine their destiny and had been subjected to cruel, repressive measures at the hands of their oppressor.

32. Although the Palestinian question continued to be one of the most complex, difficult and dangerous issues facing the United Nations, that should not discourage the international community in its search for a just solution to the problem. On the contrary, it should reinforce with a grave sense of urgency, the international community's commitment to the goal as set forth in a number of resolutions of the United Nations. It became all the more important therefore that the international community should firmly rededicate itself to the promotion of a genuine and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict. The attainment of that objective would continue to be elusive unless the core of the Middle East conflict, namely the Palestine question, was resolved in its totality. Concerted action was long overdue to persuade the supporters of Israel to compel it to respond to relevant United Nations resolutions and to the will of the international community on the question of Palestine.

33. He acknowledged with appreciation the very important work carried out by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, under the outstanding and dedicated leadership of Ambassador Massamba Sarré of Senegal. It was his confident hope that the holding of the present Seminar would take everyone a step closer to the fulfilment by the United Nations of its obligations to the Palestinian people.

34. The closing meeting on 20 June 1985, was attended by Mr. Rudy Collins, Head of Department II in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guyana. The meeting was addressed by Mr. Rudy Collins and the Chairman of the Seminar.

Panel discussion

35. Three panels were established at the Seminar. These, and the panelists who presented papers on these aspects of the question, were as follows:

- (a) The role of the Palestine Liberation Organization: Prof. Juan Abugattás (Peru); Mr. Chas Mijnaals (Suriname);
- (b) The question of Palestine and Latin American public opinion: Prof. César Arias Quincot (Peru); Prof. T. O. Gittens (Guyana); Dr. Arturo Muñoz Ledo (Mexico);
- (c) The International Peace Conference on the Middle East, the need for such a conference; efforts and prospects to promote a successful outcome and benefits thereof: Mr. Joshua Chowritmootoo (Guyana); Mr. Ernesto Vera Méndez (Cuba); Mr. José Luis Villavicencio (Nicaragua).

36. It was decided that in accordance with established practice, the report of the Seminar would reflect only the main points that emerged during the discussions and that the full texts of the papers presented would be published in due course.

The role of the Palestine Liberation Organization

37. The first discussion panel in the Seminar dealt with the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

38. It was stated that the Palestine Liberation Organization had served the purpose of reconstructing Palestinian social existence. It was experiencing difficulty in this task because of the spiritual and socio-political complexities of the Middle East region.

39. There was no basis to the claim that the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian people were two distinct entities and that therefore it would be possible to deal with the Palestinian people without dealing with the Palestine Liberation Organization. The development of the Palestine Liberation Organization was nothing but the result of the development of the social, economic and political institutions of the Palestinian people and, particularly, their social and political conscience.

40. Moreover, the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homeland and their fragmentation into several communities of refugees living in several Arab countries were the consequence of both the Zionist denial of the existence of the Palestinian people and of British policies in mandated Palestine. Consequently, the Palestinian people had to struggle first and foremost not only to have their existence recognized but their existence as a people as well.

41. This struggle had started mainly in the refugee camps, where, unfortunately, traditional social solidarity had been broken and, consequently, new types of social relations based on social co-operation and mutual aid were the basis of the Palestine Liberation Organization's social and economic institutions as well as its educational and cultural efforts.

42. Reconstruction of social life had started with the displaced Palestinians and later extended to those living under occupation resulting in an open and democratic process which was now a basic character of all the institutions that constituted the Palestine Liberation Organization. In order to be effective, however, the

Palestine Liberation Organization had had to propose an alternate concept of "nationalism" in order to avoid both the dangers of sectarianism and of racism. The alternative proposed was the notion of the secular and non-sectarian State, a formula by which the Palestine Liberation Organization had been able to avoid the problems which divide and weaken States in the Middle East. It had placed itself in a position of antagonism, both in relation to Israel and zionism as well as to United States interests. It had also become a kind of vanguard of the anti-imperialist struggle in the Arab world. Moreover, its structure had proved that it was capable not only of withstanding political pressure, but also, and most importantly, military aggression.

43. Furthermore, by insisting on reminding the Arab States of their responsibility to continue to help in the task of liberating Palestine and by insisting that they should use their resources for the promotion of their common interests, the Palestine Liberation Organization had placed them in a position in which they were opposed to a power that some of them considered their ally. The Arab States had reaffirmed their support to the Palestine Liberation Organization at the summit meeting held in Fez in 1982, when they adopted a series of principles, including the reaffirmation of the recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Latin American public opinion and the question of Palestine

44. During the discussion on the question of Latin American public opinion and the question of Palestine it was stated that the development of informed public opinion on any issue or set of issues was rarely an easy or automatic process. It was indisputably, however, a necessary task in the context of the question of Palestine where the rights of a people were being infringed.

45. It was also difficult to discuss Latin American public opinion in general as a region, as its tradition of full participation of its peoples in decision-making varied and at varying junctures of history was interrupted and sometimes seriously disrupted. There were a number of reasons for this, among them low literacy rates, limited media coverage and access to media source, and a tendency for public debate and expression to be restricted to the middle and upper classes.

46. All this was accentuated by the fact that the main sources of information were the Western news agencies whose reporting of issues was not necessarily impartial or disinterested. In fact, there seemed often to be a deliberate effort at misinformation or disinformation. Furthermore, the extent of coverage was often circumscribed by the importance of the issue to the regional or national public.

47. There had been little interest in the question of Palestine in the Latin American region until the mid-1970s when the aggravation of the situation in the Middle East resulted in more media coverage and, in turn, more interest in the issues, particularly, the question of Palestine. Despite the fact that events in the Middle East in the 1980s tended to eclipse the real issue, which is the plight of the Palestinian people, it was essential that the international community should always remember that the crucial issue remained the question of Palestine.

48. It was important that the public media should play a more responsive role in providing a more balanced reporting on the Middle East and, in particular, on the plight of the Palestinians as a dispossessed and harassed people. It was also essential that greater efforts be made to reach the public at large with information that is presently confined to limited sections of the people.

Institutions such as universities, colleges, research institutes, churches and other religious establishments as well as national and international non-governmental organizations have a crucial role to play in the formation of public opinion. These institutions should be urged to give wider coverage and more balanced treatment to the question of Palestine through special features and articles, through the organization of lectures and seminars and through every other possible means of playing an educative role in the formation of informed public opinion. Furthermore, elementary school textbooks should take a new approach to third world history which breaks with the colonialist pattern found in encyclopaedias and with religious texts which, within a biased value system, stated the existence of "chosen people" and "master races" as fact.

49. Symposia organized by the United Nations or other organizations were a pressing necessity for the Latin American non-governmental organizations. Through these means, the powerful Latin American churches, labour unions, women's groups and service clubs could be sensitized. Special consideration should also be given to wider observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, which has been established by United Nations General Assembly resolution 34/65 D to be 29 November each year, and the occasion should be taken to give maximum coverage to the question of Palestine. United Nations offices in the region should make greater efforts to disseminate information on the issue.

50. The suggestion was also made that the Palestine Liberation Organization should be given facilities to establish information centres throughout the Latin American and Caribbean region and that its representatives should be invited periodically to tour the region, and be given the opportunity to present their case since this would dramatize the extent of the suffering endured by the Palestinian people and prove to be of inestimable value in the formation of public opinion.

The International Peace Conference on the Middle East

51. The Seminar discussed in depth the question of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. It was agreed that the international community needed peace now more than ever so that it could devote itself wholeheartedly to solving the present economic and developmental problems facing it and to halting the arms race to avoid the danger of another world conflagration which would have catastrophic effects on the human race. To achieve peace it was necessary to extinguish the hotbeds of tension that could reach dangerous proportions and bring mankind to the brink of war. The Middle East was undoubtedly one of the principal hotbeds of international tension today. Only by finding a just and lasting solution to that conflict could the international community move forward towards the elimination of the dangers of another holocaust.

52. An analysis of the ramifications of the Middle East conflict led to the conclusion that the only way to establish a just and lasting peace in the region was by convening a peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all parties concerned, particularly the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

53. The question of Palestine is at the core of the Middle East problem and there could be no peace in the region until a just and lasting solution was found for this issue. Such a solution had to be founded on the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the rights to self-determination and to a homeland in Palestine.

54. The International Conference on the Question of Palestine held at Geneva in August 1983 had recognized the essential linkage between the question of Palestine and peace in the Middle East and the call for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East was motivated by a sense of urgency and concern that no just solution to the problem of Palestine had been achieved over the years. A solution to the question of Palestine had to focus on the wider issues to make up a comprehensive settlement which would meet the guidelines endorsed by the overwhelming majority of the international community.

55. The Geneva Declaration adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine envisioned that the Peace Conference would be convened under the auspices of the United Nations. The United Nations, in addition to its sacred trust and responsibility to the Palestinian people, was eminently suited for providing an umbrella and a forum for negotiation and to facilitate the meeting of all the parties to the conflict. In spite of its shortcomings, the United Nations provided a forum where all parties could sit around the same table and express their views.

56. The Geneva Declaration had also called for the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and other concerned States on an equal footing and would take as its guidelines the various proposals consistent with the principles of international law.

57. The guidelines adopted by acclamation by the Conference and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly were:

(a) The attainment by the Palestinian people of its legitimate inalienable rights, including the right to return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine;

(b) The right of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East;

(c) The need to put an end to Israel's occupation of the Arab territories, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and, consequently, the need to secure Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem;

(d) The need to oppose and reject such Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and any de facto situations created by Israel as are contrary to international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly the establishment of settlements, as these policies and practices constitute major obstacles to the achievement of peace in the Middle East;

(e) The need to reaffirm as null and void all legislative and administrative measures and decisions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purported to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, including the appropriation of land and property situated thereon, and in particular the so-called "Basic Law" on Jerusalem and the proclamation of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel;

(f) The right of all States in the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, with justice and security for all the people, the sine qua non of which is the recognition and attainment of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as stated in subparagraph (a) above.

58. These guidelines were important and relevant for the focus on the central issues while fully acknowledging that the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people remained fundamental to any solution.

59. The Seminar regarded the fact that the majority of States in the international community as well as several major intergovernmental organizations had expressed their strong support for the holding of the Conference to be a significant factor and testimony to the vital importance of such a conference. It hoped that all those in support of the Conference, and this was the overwhelming majority of the international community, would unite to overcome the obstacles posed by the refusal of Israel and the United States of America to agree to participate in such a conference. It was the refusal of these two States alone that obstructed the progress desired by the international community.

60. The time was ripe to move forward in a peace process. Genuine peace was attainable through negotiations provided that all the parties to the problem participated actively and there existed the necessary political will. The proposal for the International Peace Conference provided such an opportunity and was the most viable mechanism to establish the process for ensuring a lasting peace in the Middle East.

61. The aims of the International Peace Conference should be to work out legally binding agreements which would combine in an organically interrelated fashion the various components of a settlement, ensuring the realization by the Palestinian people of their legitimate national rights, including that of self-determination, return to their homeland and the right to an independent State of their own and the establishment of peace between all States in the region. These elements could be combined with effective guarantees of compliance by the parties involved and the international community could perform its role as a guarantor for the agreement that emanated from the deliberations.

62. The Seminar conveyed to Chairman Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization its thanks for his message to the Seminar and expressed its support for the just cause of the Palestinian people. It also conveyed its strong support for the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council, as well as of the parties most directly involved in the conflict, particularly the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as a positive and constructive step in the search for a solution to the question of Palestine.

63. The Seminar also adopted by consensus a motion proposed by the panelists, which reads as follows:

"The Eleventh United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, meeting in Georgetown, the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, from 17 to 20 June 1985, wishes to convey its profound thanks to the people and Government of Guyana for hosting the Seminar and for the excellent arrangements it made, which greatly contributed to the success of the Seminar. It also expresses its sincere thanks for the generous hospitality extended to the participants.

"The Seminar wishes to express its particular appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Rashleigh Jackson, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guyana, for his personal concern and guidance.

"The Seminar also expresses its appreciation to the people and the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana for their consistent support of the struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole legitimate representative, for the exercise of its inalienable rights in Palestine."

ANNEX VII

Report of the Twelfth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine

(United Nations Headquarters, New York, 8-9 July 1985)

1. The Twelfth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, with its central theme "The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people", was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 8 and 9 July 1985 in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 38/58 B. Four meetings were held at which five panelists presented papers on different aspects of the question of Palestine.

2. Mr. Oscar Oramas-Oliva (Cuba), Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, was Chairman of the Seminar and Mr. Boris Tarasyuk (Ukrainian SSR) Rapporteur of the Seminar. In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Farid Zarif (Afghanistan), Vice-Chairman of the Committee, acted as Chairman of the Seminar.

Opening statements

3. The opening session of the Seminar on 8 July 1985 was addressed by Mr. William B. Buffum, Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs of the United Nations. In welcoming the participants on behalf of the Secretary-General, Mr. Buffum stated that the convening of the Seminar underscored the importance that the international community attached to solving the question of Palestine, which was at the very heart of the Middle East conflict. It was moreover a reflection of the realization that to permit a situation to remain critical to the point of endangering international peace and security had adverse effects not only on the States and peoples of the region but also on the entire international community.

4. The persistent efforts of the United Nations had over the years produced at least a consensus on the fundamental elements required for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem. The call for an international peace conference on the Middle East and the continued efforts for its convening could not but be viewed as a recognition of the fact that a comprehensive settlement would have to be reached through a process of negotiations with the participation of the parties concerned under the auspices of the United Nations. Any solution would have to take into consideration the interests and concerns of all States and peoples in the region, including those of the Palestinian people.

5. Mr. Oscar Oramas-Oliva, welcoming the participants, recalled the importance the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People attached to the question of Palestine and its commitment to finding a solution to the problem. He gave a brief account of the Committee's work and highlighted the significance of ensuring that all facts surrounding the question of Palestine reached the public so that a proper understanding of the issues could be achieved.

6. The Committee also, along with the majority of States, fully endorsed the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East as a valuable step forward in the search for peace, security and stability in the region. Consequently, it had made this the focus of its work in 1985. It was for this

reason that one of the panels of the Seminar was devoted exclusively to the International Peace Conference. It was the Committee's hope that the views expressed at the Seminar would help to promote the convening of such an important conference.

7. Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi, Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations, conveyed a message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and Commander-in-Chief of the Forces of the Palestine Revolution. In his message, Chairman Arafat thanked the participants in the Seminar for their continued efforts in defence of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

8. Israel's aggressive policies, supported by successive American Administrations, had resulted in the Palestinian cause entering a dangerous phase. However, in spite of enormous challenges, the Palestinians continued their struggle and resistance. The ordeals and hardships they had to undergo did not impair their resolve to continue this struggle, which met with the support of the peoples of the world.

9. The Palestine Liberation Organization had availed itself of every opportunity in the search for peace and would continue its efforts to achieve a joint Arab political plan which aimed to contribute to the attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict.

10. It was significant that the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was organizing two distinct activities - the Seminar and a symposium. The message carried by the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) of Canada and the United States of America would focus on the negative attitude of those two States to the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the hope that it would result in a positive response in those States.

11. Chairman Arafat extended to the representatives of NGOs his great appreciation for their unrelenting efforts to mobilize public opinion in support of the peace process as particularly manifested in their signature campaign launched internationally on 29 November 1984.

12. The opening session was also addressed by Mr. Natarajan Krishnan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement; Mr. Jonathan Mataa Sibitwa Lichilana on behalf of the United Nations Council for Namibia; Mr. Gennady Oudovenko on behalf of the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid; Mr. Ahmad Farouk Arnouss on behalf of the United Nations Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples; Dr. Clovis Maksoud on behalf of the League of Arab States; Mr. Mamoudou Kane on behalf of the Organization of African Unity and Mr. Youssouf Sylla on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. At the 4th meeting, the Seminar was addressed by Mr. Ben Mokwena on behalf of the African National Congress of South Africa.

13. Two panels were established at the Seminar. These, and the panelists who presented papers on these aspects on the question of Palestine, were as follows:

(a) The role of the Palestine Liberation Organization;
Prof. Ibrahim Abu-Lughod (Palestinian);

(b) The International Peace Conference on the Middle East, the need for such a conference; efforts and prospects to promote a successful outcome and benefits thereof; Prof. Naseer Aruri, Mr. Victor J. Gauci, Prof. W. Thomas Mallison, Dr. Igor Petrovich Belyaev.

14. In view of the well researched and in-depth analysis contained in the papers presented at the Seminar and in accordance with established practice, the papers will be published in full, together with the report of the Seminar, as a contribution to a wider understanding of the question of Palestine. The report of the Seminar should reflect only the main points that emerged during the discussions.

The role of the Palestine Liberation Organization

15. The Seminar heard an analysis of the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization. It was noted that the Palestinians today neither enjoyed nor exercised political rights as Palestinians anywhere in the world. Nevertheless, their determination, despite many adversities, to normalize their political status was reflected in their struggle to retrieve their national rights, including their right to independence and sovereignty in Palestine, to recovery of their national identity and representation by their own chosen representatives, namely, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

16. The Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian people were not two distinct entities, nor was it possible to deal with the Palestinian people without dealing with the Palestine Liberation Organization. The development of the Palestine Liberation Organization was nothing but the result of the development of the social, economic and political institutions of the Palestinian people and, particularly, their social and political conscience. Consequently, the Palestine Liberation Organization had assumed the responsibility for the cultural, economic, social and political development of the Palestinian people.

17. The Palestine Liberation Organization viewed the struggle of the Palestinian people as a struggle of a colonial population against a form of colonialism described as settler colonialism. In that sense, Israel was viewed as a colonial settler State that was implanted on part of an Arab national homeland with the active support and sustenance of the European/American system of power. To attain justice, the Palestinians would have to obtain the support of States that reject colonialism ideologically, structurally and culturally.

18. The Palestine Liberation Organization had defined the nature of Palestinian rights. It had articulated these national rights in the broad terms of self-determination. It was this articulation of Palestinian national rights that was essentially affirmed by the United Nations when it supported the Palestinian rights to independence and of return.

19. The Palestine Liberation Organization had struggled since 1968 for a democratic non-sectarian State. While conceiving of coexistence with the Jewish people in peace within the framework of a unitary State, the Organization recognized the difficulties in the way of the acceptance of such a solution, not only by Israel but by other States as well. The Palestine Liberation Organization had therefore elaborated its provisional solution, which conceived of the possibility of a de facto coexistence of two States in Palestine, one principally Jewish-Israeli and the other Palestinian Arab. By this it had placed itself in a position of antagonism, both in relation to Israel and zionism as well as to United States interests. It had also become a kind of vanguard of the anti-imperialist

struggle in the Arab world. Moreover, its structure had proved that it was capable of not only resisting political pressure, but also, and most importantly, military aggression.

20. In the 21 years since the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization, it had experienced various tests and hardships and become overwhelmingly recognized as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and as an active force to be reckoned with in the Middle Eastern political arena. In that regard, it had had a decisive influence in the search for a solution of the Palestine question, as well as the problem of the Middle East as a whole.

The International Peace Conference on the Middle East

21. The Seminar concluded its deliberations by discussing in depth the question of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. It was noted that, although almost 40 years had passed since the United Nations General Assembly had adopted resolution 181 (II), which recommended the creation of two States - an Arab State and a Jewish State - so far it had been implemented only to the extent of the creation of the State of Israel. One of the foremost commitments of the international community was to ensure the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination and creation of its own independent State in Palestine. It was felt that the principles enunciated by the United Nations commanded universal adherence and should be supported accordingly, within the framework of a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The question of Palestine represented a continuing responsibility of the United Nations and of all its Members who cherished the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and who respected the very decisions taken in the United Nations to which they had subscribed.

22. In that connection, it was strongly reaffirmed that the question of Palestine was at the core of that conflict, which itself was a multi-faceted problem. Over the years, a broad international consensus had been achieved on the necessity of a comprehensive, just and durable solution. This consensus was defined in the Geneva Declaration adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in 1983, and also stressed in United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, which called for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. It was noted that the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held at Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, which adopted the Geneva Declaration, was the first occasion at which so broad an international forum had met to consider the Palestinian question. No less than 117 States had participated fully in the Conference while 20 others had taken part as observers; in addition, for the first time ever, approximately 100 non-governmental organizations and several eminent personalities had been invited for that occasion. Amongst the NGOs, several came from Israel, thus demonstrating by their presence that there existed within Israel a group of peace-loving persons who also strove for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

23. The Geneva Declaration adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine envisioned that the Peace Conference would be convened under the auspices of the United Nations. The United Nations, in addition to bearing a sacred trust and responsibility to the Palestinian people, constituted the only forum for negotiation to facilitate the meeting of all the parties to the

conflict. The existing procedures at the United Nations made possible the participation of all parties concerned.

24. The Geneva Declaration had also called for the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization as well as the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and other concerned States on an equal footing and would take as its guidelines the various proposals consistent with the principles of international law.

25. The guidelines adopted by acclamation by the Conference and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly were:

(a) The attainment by the Palestinian people of its legitimate inalienable rights, including the right to return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine;

(b) The right of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East;

(c) The need to put an end to Israel's occupation of the Arab territories, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and, consequently, the need to secure Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem;

(d) The need to oppose and reject such Israeli policies and practices in occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and any de facto situations created by Israel as are contrary to international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly the establishment of settlements, as these policies and practices constitute major obstacles to the achievement of peace in the Middle East;

(e) The need to reaffirm as null and void all legislative and administrative measures and decisions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purported to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, including the appropriation of land and property situated thereon, and in particular the so-called "Basic Law" on Jerusalem and the proclamation of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel;

(f) The right of all States in the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, with justice and security for all the people, the sine qua non of which is the recognition and attainment of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as stated in subparagraph (a) above.

26. These guidelines were important and relevant for the focus on the central issues while fully acknowledging that the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people remained fundamental to any solution. They were based on a recognition of the indispensable role of law in achieving the greatest possible measure of justice and security for both Israelis and Palestinians. Law was not only the basis of a just solution, but provided the only practical solution. It was maintained that justice and coercion were required in peace settlements and where justice was used less, coercion needed to be used more.

27. An international peace conference on the Middle East could lead to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region and to the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and guarantee the existence and

the security of all States in the region, including Israel; lead to the development of economic ties between all nations of the world with the Arab States and with Israel; and lead to agreements which would satisfy all the parties concerned, put an end to the recurring Israeli-Arab wars and thus remove a constant threat to international peace and security. It would furthermore restore the authority of the United Nations and make it once more a potent force in the maintenance of peace.

28. The Seminar regarded the fact that the majority of States in the international community as well as several major intergovernmental organizations had expressed their strong support for the holding of the Conference to be a significant factor and testimony to the vital importance of such a conference. Its central task would be to implement the existing legal right of Palestinian self-determination. The Seminar urged the Governments of the United States of America and Israel to reconsider their negative attitude to the ongoing peace process within the United Nations system.

29. It also hoped that all those in support of the Conference, and this was the overwhelming majority of the international community, would unite to overcome the obstacles posed by the refusal of Israel and the United States of America to agree to participate in such a Conference. It was the refusal of those two States alone that obstructed the progress desired by the international community. When the other States Members of the United Nations acted without hesitancy to assert leadership in achieving a peaceful settlement under law, that would have a significant effect upon the United States of America and bring it back to its principled advocacy and practical support for the self-determination of the Palestinian people, which it had recognized at the time of the adoption of the Partition resolution (General Assembly resolution 181 (II)).

30. In that same connection, the Seminar appreciated the consistency and continuity of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' policy towards the Middle East settlement, as reiterated in its latest proposals of 29 July 1984, entitled "The proposals of the Soviet Union on the Middle East settlement", which took into account the basic interests of all sides involved in the conflict, including PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and suggested the convocation of an international conference on the Middle East as an instrument for such a settlement.

31. In confirmation of its efforts to bring about progress and to maintain the momentum of hope, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People had decided to exert every effort towards the early convening of the proposed Conference. The Committee therefore had made this aspect the main focus of its work programme in 1985. Consequently, in all the seminars and symposia organized this year, one panel would exclusively deal with the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. Furthermore, the Committee had decided to send a delegation of its members to a selected number of countries and, in particular, those who were members of the Security Council, with a view to promoting the early convening of the International Peace Conference.

32. The Seminar therefore considered that it was of paramount importance that the international community should intensify and unite its efforts to ensure the convening without delay of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, as an instrument to ensure the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace and of security and stability in the Middle East, while at the same time ensuring the attainment and exercise, long overdue, of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

33. The Seminar conveyed to Chairman Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization its thanks for his message to the Seminar and expressed its support for the just cause of the Palestinian people. It also conveyed its strong support for the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council, as well as of the parties most directly involved in the conflict, particularly the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as a positive and constructive step in the search for a solution to the question of Palestine.

ANNEX VIII

United Nations North American Regional Non-Governmental
Organizations Symposium on the Question of Palestine

(United Nations Headquarters, New York, 10-12 July 1985)

Declaration

1. We wish to thank the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights for making this Symposium possible.
2. We also wish to sincerely voice our appreciation to the distinguished expert panelists, workshop organizers and resource persons who spoke here and offered valuable insights into the question of Palestine as well as the potential central role to be played by non-governmental organizations. These practical suggestions assisted us in formulating future plans for effective collaboration in North America and in linking our efforts to a broader, global network.
3. We, the representatives of non-governmental organizations present at the North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, 10-12 July 1985, at United Nations Headquarters in New York, call upon the peoples and Governments of the United States and Canada to take all possible steps to secure a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the core of which is the question of Palestine.
4. We resolutely reaffirm the international consensus that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We affirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference, and to establish an independent Palestinian State on its own national territory under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions.
5. It is our belief that all the parties to the conflict should come together in an international peace conference on the Middle East as called for at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, August 1983, and as adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 38/58 C. It is essential that the conference be inclusive of and be attended by representatives of both Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, those Arab States party to the conflict, the United States and the Soviet Union.
6. We strongly encourage all regional NGOs to work diligently with the general public to develop public awareness and support for the Conference. We applaud the United Nations for this recommendation and request the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights to assist North American NGOs by producing a concise publication in mass quantity that clearly explains the objectives and advantages of such a Conference.
7. We strongly support the global signature campaign launched on 29 November 1984 by the Interim Co-ordinating Committee (ICC) for NGOs on the Question of Palestine on behalf of convening the International Conference. We are committed to develop creative ways of enlisting organizational support during the coming months. We will co-ordinate our efforts with ICC on this important project.

8. This Symposium has reminded us of the powerful and decisive role played by the media, especially television, in shaping North American public opinion on the question of Palestine. We are determined to seek more effective ways and means of utilizing this media potential in order to accurately inform the public of the actual facts pertaining to this issue with the expressed intention of positively impacting on United States and Canadian Middle East policies.

9. We hereby establish a North American Interim Co-ordinating Committee (NAICC) a/ on the question of Palestine as a mechanism to enhance our collective effectiveness and to organize our relationship with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights.

10. We define the initial responsibilities of NAICC to include:

(a) Co-operating closely with the United Nations in the planning of the 1986 North American Symposium;

(b) Recruiting other NGOs for participation in the 1986 Symposium;

(c) Serving as a channel of information among NGOs in North America;

(d) Circulating the minutes of the Co-ordinating Committee meetings;

(e) Building a vibrant, broadly based coalition of groups in North America in order to better inform the public and to influence public policy on the question of Palestine;

(f) Co-ordinating relations with the International Co-ordinating Committee and other international NGOs.

11. NAICC members should attend Committee meetings when possible and build a close working relationship with the Committee. The Division for Palestinian Rights could assist NAICC in contacting ICC and NGOs both in North America and other regions for the purpose of strengthening the global network supporting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

12. We urge the Committee to fund the participation of four North American delegates present for this Symposium in the NGO international meeting to be convened at Geneva in September 1985. We believe that such an initiative by the United Nations will ensure balanced, effective representation at the international meeting.

13. We believe that the effectiveness of United Nations NGO meetings will be significantly enhanced by the participation, as resource persons, of representatives of Israeli peace groups and of Palestinian groups inside Israel and the occupied territories (West Bank and Gaza). We note with satisfaction that some such groups did actively participate in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine (1983) and the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine (1984), and we call for invitations to be extended to them for regional symposia as well, in order that the discussions may focus on solutions to the question of Palestine that include relevant perspectives. NAICC should make a special effort to expand contacts with Palestinian organizations in North America, as well as North American Jewish and Arab organizations, to explain North American NGO work and to involve them in co-operative activities.

14. We NGOs intend to develop additional effective educational resource materials on the question of Palestine, including teaching aids and relevant bibliographies. We hereby ask the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights to provide technical and financial assistance in the final production of these materials.
15. We are distressed by the decline in international financial support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency as noted in the workshop report on religious institutions. We call on all NGOs to encourage both the United States and Canadian Governments to give top priority to funding UNRWA at its full budgeted level.
16. We gratefully note the emphasis by the many resource centres of the Presbyterian Church (USA) on the question of Palestine. We request that the Division provide copies of its publications and other relevant United Nations documents in quantity for their effective utilization by the resource centres.
17. We urge the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division to continue to emphasize and work on the integral issue of women under Israeli occupation. While clearly not separate from the whole situation, women's lives are beset with particular problems that must be addressed by all North American NGOs. The full report of the women's workshop outlines our recommendations for co-ordinating activities in the coming years.
18. We urge the Committee and the Division to extend their outreach into the region in every possible way. We specifically request that the Division's NGO liaison and information officers, as well as Department of Public Information officers, be encouraged to attend the conferences and activities of NGOs, trade unions, ethnic and other minority groups, peace and disarmament groups and others to demonstrate the linkage between their various areas of concern and the question of Palestine and to recruit their active participation in future NGO symposia, conferences and meetings sponsored by the United Nations. The process of achieving peaceful coexistence and justice in the region is essential to the success of the global struggle for disarmament, peaceful coexistence and justice.
19. We urge the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to convey this Declaration to the General Assembly at its fortieth session as part of the Committee's report.

Notes

a/ The 1985/1986 membership of the NAICC is the following: American Friends Service Committee; America-Israel Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace; Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church; Canadian Arab Federation; NAJDA (Women Concerned about the Middle East); Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada (NECEF); Palestine Human Rights Campaign.

ANNEX IX

United Nations African Regional Non-Governmental Organizations
Symposium on the Question of Palestine

(Dakar, 5-7 August 1985)

Declaration

1. We, the group of non-governmental organizations which participated from 5 to 7 August 1985, at the Centre International d'Echanges, Dakar, in the United Nations African Regional Non-Governmental Organization Symposium on the Question of Palestine held in implementation of paragraph 3 (b) of resolution 38/58 B on the Question of Palestine, adopted by the General Assembly on 13 December 1983, wish to thank the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for convening this meeting. We are indeed honoured by the presence of the Chairman, members and observers of the distinguished United Nations body.
2. We also wish to thank the Chief of the Division for Palestinian Rights, the NGO liaison officer, the staff of the Division, the Department of Conference Services, for their valuable assistance in the preparation and execution of this Symposium. We believe this meeting marks a pivotal point in the constructive interaction between the United Nations and the African NGO community concerned with the question of Palestine and we look forward to increasing levels of understanding, appreciation and co-operation.
3. Special thanks are extended to the Government and people of Senegal for hosting this Symposium and for the "Teranga", generosity and co-operation extended to the participants. We were honoured by the presence and perceptive statement of His Excellency Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Minister for Foreign Affairs, at the official opening of the Symposium, representing His Excellency President Abdou Diouf, current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity. We record with pride and genuinely appreciate the long-standing and unfailing militant and effective support that the Government and people of Senegal, as tireless pioneers, have given to the just cause of the Palestinian people.
4. We also wish to sincerely voice our appreciation to the distinguished experts who spoke here and offered valuable historical, political as well as practical insights into the question of Palestine and the potential central role to be played by NGOs. The practical suggestions assisted us in formulating future plans for effective collaboration in Africa and in linking our efforts to a broader, global network.
5. We emphasize the richness and depth of the exchanges of information, views and experience which ensued, and which all converged on support for the Palestinian cause.
6. We resolutely reaffirm the international consensus that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We affirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference, to return and to the creation of an independent Palestinian State on its own national territory under the Palestine Liberation Organization, in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions. We call especially upon the United States of America to recognize the right of the

Palestinian people to self-determination, because the right to self-determination is a sacred right of all peoples. We condemn Israeli rejection of all peace initiatives adopted by the international community to put an end to the Middle East conflict. This militaristic policy of Israel increases tension in the world and is leading the Middle East to a cycle of perpetual war.

7. We strongly approve and support the convening of the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Peace in the Middle East as specified in the United Nations resolution 38/58 C. The Palestine Liberation Organization strongly supported this resolution. We condemn the unjustified opposition to this initiative by Israel and the United States of America, which constitutes a serious obstacle to world peace. We urge that more pressure be exerted on both States to join in the global consensus on the issue. We urge those undecided States, especially members of the Security Council, to lend their support to this resolution. In this manner, we also uniformly support the declaration on this issue adopted by the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine held in August 1984 in Geneva.

8. We express our grave concern over the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict. We recognize that the basic cause of that conflict is the denial by Israel and its allies of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and their refusal to recognize the PLO as the sole and authentic representative of that people. In particular, we regret the record of successive Administrations of the United States of America which have encouraged and supported Israeli State terrorism.

9. The convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, as endorsed by General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, offers the only realistic and practical way towards a solution to the problem of Palestine and the establishment of a Palestinian State and of a global, just and lasting solution for all the parties to the conflict.

10. We further reaffirm our belief that only a full and comprehensive solution involving the Palestine Liberation Organization and all concerned countries, in particular the United States of America and the USSR, can create the basis for a just and lasting peace. We reject partial and piecemeal agreements as such agreements have proved to be counterproductive and not conducive to a comprehensive peaceful solution and have totally ignored the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

11. This Symposium further asserts the close connection between the struggle of the Palestinian people and every struggle in each part of the world of peoples fighting for their independence, defending their freedom and building their life on the basis of their sovereignty. The cause of the Palestinian people is interconnected with the struggle of all peoples for world peace and against colonialism, in particular, the struggle of the peoples of southern Africa. In this connection, we condemn with all the force at our command all the injustices and violations of human rights perpetrated in South Africa, Namibia and the front-line countries by the illegal colonial and racist apartheid régime.

12. We affirm the close solidarity in their struggle of the African and Arab peoples in the face of the military and political collusion and nuclear collaboration between the Zionist State of Israel and the racist State of South Africa. We strongly condemn the imposition of the state of emergency in South Africa, and demand the immediate and unconditional release of all political detainees.

13. This Symposium of the NGOs of Africa positively points to the growing support in the United Nations for Palestinians and the Palestine Liberation Organization. It stresses the very significant role played by the Organization of African Unity and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries representing over two thirds of the world's Governments in awakening global public opinion to the urgent need to resolve this issue and in exposing the parts played by the Governments of the United States of America and Israel.
14. We call on African Governments to implement all the resolutions of the Organization of African Unity on the question of Palestine, particularly that relating to the diplomatic isolation of Israel. We note with satisfaction that the majority of African States have broken off diplomatic relations with the Zionist State, and urge them to remain faithful to that position.
15. We further endorse the global signature campaign to increase popular support for the international peace conference on the Middle East and will endeavour to co-ordinate our efforts with the Interim Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs throughout Africa, culminating in the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November 1985.
16. We concur that influencing world public opinion is a key factor in the just and lasting resolution of the question of Palestine. As NGOs, we have access to local populations, the grass roots, in our societies and are determined to work to increase their understanding of the question of Palestine and to effectively mobilize their potential political, social and spiritual power.
17. Beyond these principles, we firmly believe that non-governmental organizations are a unique asset in securing the rights of the Palestinian people, for we can present the issue in its vital human dimension to all people and to non-governmental organizations.
18. We are aware of the forces opposed to our efforts. But the inherent justice of our cause and the sound construction of a genuine regional and global NGO network will be mutually reinforcing and demonstrably advance our endeavours.
19. We have reviewed and considered the initial activities of the Interim Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs (ICC) established at the International Meeting on the Question of Palestine convened in Geneva in August 1984 and regard it as a suitable transitional mechanism for the initial co-ordination of the world-wide NGO effort on the question of Palestine. We look favourably upon its transformation from an interim to an international co-ordinating committee after the scheduled consideration of its future structure and composition at the International Meeting on the Question of Palestine to be convened from 9-12 September 1985 in Geneva.
20. We strongly urge the United Nations, through the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to assist the ICC in every possible way in its worthwhile efforts to build a viable, global network of NGOs active on the question of Palestine. The central co-ordination of all common NGO activities on this issue is a necessary condition for influencing domestic and global public opinion.
21. We, African NGOs present here for this Symposium see ourselves as a nucleus of a broader, regional effort. We must reach out, identify and involve many other NGO committees in the search for a just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine. To accomplish these worthy goals, we are requesting United Nations

assistance, including financial help, to establish a regional interim co-ordinating committee of NGOs to serve as an initial focus for our regional efforts. We visualize such an African co-ordinating committee establishing close links with the work of ICC and its successor.

22. The African region is an area of increasing political importance. As a result, forces opposed to the Palestinian cause are attempting to neutralize the traditional commitment of the peoples of this region to the Palestinian cause. Such attempts, notably by the State of Israel, the United States of America and the world Zionist movement, as well as by imperialism, must be resisted as they constitute impediments to achieving a just, comprehensive and enduring resolution of the question of Palestine. We distinguish between Judaism as a religion and political zionism as manifested by Israel, an unjust, undemocratic, racist and dangerous ideology. In combating the forces opposed to the Palestinian cause, African NGOs must play a key role as moulders of public opinion in the region.

23. To ensure proper representation of this region at the forthcoming International Meeting on the Question of Palestine, we strongly urge the United Nations, through the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to fund the participation of a representative number of NGO delegates from the region. To be effective, such aid should include transportation to Geneva and accommodation during the conference.

24. In co-operation with the stated objectives of the ICC, we African NGOs call for the compilation of a regional data base of information on NGOs in the region active on the issue as a potent addition to global networking efforts.

25. We are determined to cultivate an expanding regional NGO constituency linked to a world-wide NGO network that will emerge as a significant complementary force in the campaign for the just resolution of the question of Palestine. We firmly believe that we can most effectively express our solidarity with the Palestinian people in this way. We call upon the United Nations, through the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to offer all necessary assistance, including financial support, to achieve these ends.

26. We note with satisfaction the results of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held at Nairobi (Kenya) from 15 to 26 July 1985. The Conference particularly emphasized the situation of the Palestinian people, and increased awareness of the question of Palestine on the part of the international community.

27. We note with interest the activities in solidarity with the Palestinian people conducted in the context of the International Youth Year, particularly on the occasion of the Twelfth World Youth and Students Festival held at Moscow from 27 July to 4 August 1985, and earnestly invite the young people of the world in general, and of Africa in particular, to increase their support for the Palestinian cause.

28. We express the wish that the Arab Summit which opens on 7 August 1985 at Casablanca, Morocco, will contribute to the strengthening of Arab unity and solidarity with the cause of the Palestinian people. We also hope that the Arab Summit will adopt appropriate means of putting into effect the principles of Fez and of the International Conference on Peace in the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions.

29. We decide to establish the Interim Co-ordinating Committee for Africa, composed of representatives of organizations which participated in this Symposium, in order to expand and strengthen the activities of solidarity with the Palestinian cause undertaken by African NGOs.

30. We applaud the convening of this Regional Symposium and strongly request the United Nations, through the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to plan at least two follow-up symposiums in the region as soon as possible, but hopefully within the coming year.

ANNEX X

International Meeting of Non-Governmental Organizations
on the Question of Palestine

(Geneva, 9-12 September 1985)

Declaration

1. We, the non-governmental organizations participating in the second United Nations International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine, wish to thank the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for convening this meeting. We are indeed honoured by the presence of the members and Observers of the distinguished United Nations body.
2. We also wish to thank the Chief of the Division for Palestinian Rights, the NGO liaison officers, the staff of the Division, the Department of Conference Services, including the services of the interpreters, for their valuable assistance in the preparation and execution of this meeting. We believe this meeting strengthens the constructive interaction between the United Nations and the international NGO community concerned with the absence of a just and durable solution to the question of Palestine and we look forward to increasing levels of understanding, appreciation and co-operation.
3. We also wish to voice our appreciation to the distinguished experts and resource persons who spoke here and offered valuable historical, political, as well as practical insights into the question of Palestine as well as a perspective on the important role to be played by NGOs. The practical suggestions emanating from the workshops assisted us in formulating future plans for effective collaboration in linking our efforts to a broader, global network. The workshop reports are available separately.
4. In particular, we want to draw attention to the important presentations made here. We consider the panel "Ways and Means to Implement United Nations Resolution 38/58 C. The International Peace Conference on the Middle East is the means for a just, durable and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine and the Middle East conflict", to be of great significance and urge the United Nations to reproduce those statements and widely circulate them. We also urge the United Nations to convene this same panel in other locations (USA/Europe) so that its perspective can be communicated to wider audiences.
5. We resolutely reaffirm the international consensus that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We affirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference, to return, and to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State on its own national territory under the leadership of the PLO, in conformity with all relevant United Nations resolutions.
6. We further strongly support the convening of the International Conference on Peace in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations as specified in United Nations resolution 38/58 C. We note that the PLO and other Arab parties and the Government of the USSR have supported the resolution and that the Government of Israel and the United States of America have opposed the convening of such a

conference. We consider that the stand taken by these two Governments on the issue militates against the search for peace in the Middle East. We therefore urge that all Governments and all groups that can, should exert all possible pressure on these two Governments to reconsider their position and join the rest of the world, Governments and peoples in the movement for peace.

7. In this manner, we uniformly support the declaration on this issue adopted by the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine held in August 1984 in Geneva.

8. The convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, as endorsed by General Assembly resolution 38/58 C offers a realistic and practical way towards a solution to the problem of Palestine and the establishment of a Palestinian State. We further reaffirm our belief that only a full and comprehensive solution involving, in particular, the United States of America and the USSR, as permanent members of the Security Council and co-chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference, can create the basis for a just and lasting peace.

9. We concur that influencing world public opinion is a key factor in the just and durable resolution of the question of Palestine. As NGOs we have access to local populations, the grass roots in our societies, and are determined to work to increase their understanding of the question of Palestine and the just cause of the Arab people of Palestine, and to effectively mobilize their potential political, social and spiritual power. Beyond these principles, we firmly believe that NGOs are a unique asset in securing the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, for we can present the issue also from a vital, human perspective.

10. We confirm our support for the global signature campaign to increase popular and organizational support for the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and will redouble and co-ordinate our efforts with the International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs throughout the world, culminating in the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November 1987. Our emphasis will be to attract the support of popular organizations with large memberships, parliamentarians, peace forces in Israel, North America and Europe, and others.

11. We NGOs present here for this international meeting see ourselves as a nucleus of a broader, world-wide effort. We undertake to reach out, identify and involve many other NGOs in the just resolution of the question of Palestine.

12. We express our grave concern over the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict. We recognize that the basic cause of that conflict is the denial by Israel and its supporters of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. We deplore the vigorous assaults upon Palestinian human rights by Israel and urge all NGOs to activate their networks to protest this repression in every effective way. In particular, we condemn the record of successive administrations of the United States of America which have encouraged and supported Israel's expansionist policies.

13. We urge all NGOs to inform their Governments of the deteriorating economic, social, cultural and health situation of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and abroad. We reject the campaign for a so-called "Improvement of the quality of life" under Israeli control as a ruse devised to pre-empt independent Palestinian development in the occupied territories.

14. Recognizing that more attention needs to be paid to the specific situation of Palestinian Arabs within Israel, we intend to continue to address this subject at future international NGO meetings and urge all NGOs to create heightened awareness of this subject. We call upon the Government of Israel to establish and guarantee full equal rights to the Palestinian Arabs inside Israel, who are an integral part of the Palestinian people.

15. We express our strongest opposition to the Israeli Government policy of "Iron Fist" rule in the occupied territories: the closure of An-Najah University and other institutions of higher education and the closure of the Arab Hospital in the Austrian Hospice in Jerusalem which have deprived the people of their vital services; the arbitrary administrative detention and expulsion of leaders of student organizations, trade unions, voluntary organizations and youth movements. These actions and attitudes are flagrant violations of human rights and basic human decency. In particular, we demand the abolition of the expulsion orders against the following persons:

Amin Darwish Maqbul of Nablus

Walid Ahmad Nazzal of Qabatiyya

Bahjat Mustafa Jayyusi of Jayyus,

as well as the abolition of the orders of administrative detention against Zalu Jaradat and Ghazi Shashtari, who are both Law in the Service of Man field workers, all of which contravene international law. All NGOs must take immediate action to draw attention to these glaring abuses of power and violations of human rights. All of our networks should be mobilized to protest to the detaining authorities, and to the United States Government, and to the United Nations, and to demand an end to the Israeli occupation.

16. We are deeply concerned over the persistent policy of Israel to confiscate Arab land in the occupied Palestinian territory and to establish Jewish colonial settlements thereon. This constitutes a flagrant violation of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. We call upon the Security Council to apply means and measures to ensure respect and implementation of its relevant resolutions, particularly 465 (1978).

17. We consider that the proposed law by the Israeli Knesset prohibiting contacts between Israelis and members of the PLO constitutes a further obstacle in the search for peace. In the light of this proposed law, it is of the utmost importance that NGOs take the initiative to convene meetings between Israeli citizens and Palestinians representing the PLO with the aim to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular, United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/58 C.

18. We voice grave concern over the fate of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, and recall the historical responsibility of the United Nations for the fate of the Palestinian people. We call upon the United Nations to shoulder this responsibility.

19. We note the fundamental importance of the forthcoming summit meeting between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and call on them to have the question of Palestine and peace in the Middle East included in the agenda and to consider, during the summit, the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

20. We are aware that 1986 will be globally designated as the Year of Peace, and that there will be no peace without peace in the Middle East. We must take all action to make it a year of peace with justice for the Palestinian people by selflessly collaborating with one another in order to influence public opinion and governmental policy. We strongly condemn the military and political collusion and nuclear collaboration between the Government of Israel and the Government of South Africa.
21. We have reviewed and considered the initial activities of the Interim Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs (ICC) established at the International Meeting on the Question of Palestine convened at Geneva in August 1984. We hereby establish a successor organization, the NGO International Co-ordinating Committee on the Question of Palestine in order to expand and strengthen the NGO global network. The ICC will work diligently to develop even closer links with the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights. The names of the member organizations on the 1985/1986 ICC are given in footnote a/.
22. We sincerely thank the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for inviting a representative of the ICC to speak as a panelist at each of the regional NGO symposia convened since May 1985. We believe that these symposia increased NGO contact and created circumstances for the establishment of regional NGO co-ordinating committees in Asia, North America and Africa.
23. We urge the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights to continue such regional and other NGO symposia in the coming year in order to involve under-represented regions and to reinforce the networking already under way in other areas. Upcoming regional NGO symposia should include Latin America, East Asia and Pacific, and Europe. Follow-up symposia in other regions are needed to maintain continuity and expansion of the global NGO network on Palestine. We further urge the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights to facilitate the convening of meetings of the ICC in the coming year so that the ICC can co-ordinate its efforts on behalf of the NGO community it represents.
24. Based on our experience over this past year the NGOs participating in this meeting propose that the new ICC consider the establishment of an administrative secretariat and also consider ways and means of funding the activities of the ICC and proposed secretariat.
25. We are determined to cultivate an expanding global NGO constituency linked to a world-wide NGO network that will emerge as a significant force in the campaign for the just resolution of the question of Palestine. The establishment of the NGO International Co-ordinating Committee symbolizes this commitment and the growth of the global movement. We firmly believe that we can most effectively express our solidarity with the Palestinian people and work for peace in this way. We call upon the United Nations, through the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to offer every assistance, including financial support, to achieve these ends.
26. We call upon the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to convey this report of the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine held in Geneva, 9-12 September 1985, to the General Assembly at its fortieth session as part of the Committee's report.

Notes

a/ All-India Indo-Arab Friendship Association; American Friends Service Committee; Arab Lawyers Union; Association des Juristes Démocrates du Sénégal; Council for the Advancement of Arab/British Understanding; Democratic Front for Peace and Equality; French NGOs Committee; International Jewish Peace Union; Israel Council for Israeli/Palestinian Peace; Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada; Palestinian Committee for NGOs; Palestine Human Rights Campaign of Australia; Palestinian Human Rights Campaign; Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Co-operation; Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee; Union Inter-Africaine des Avocats; Women's International Democratic Federation; World Council of Churches/Middle East Council of Churches; World Peace Council; World Young Women's Christian Association.

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