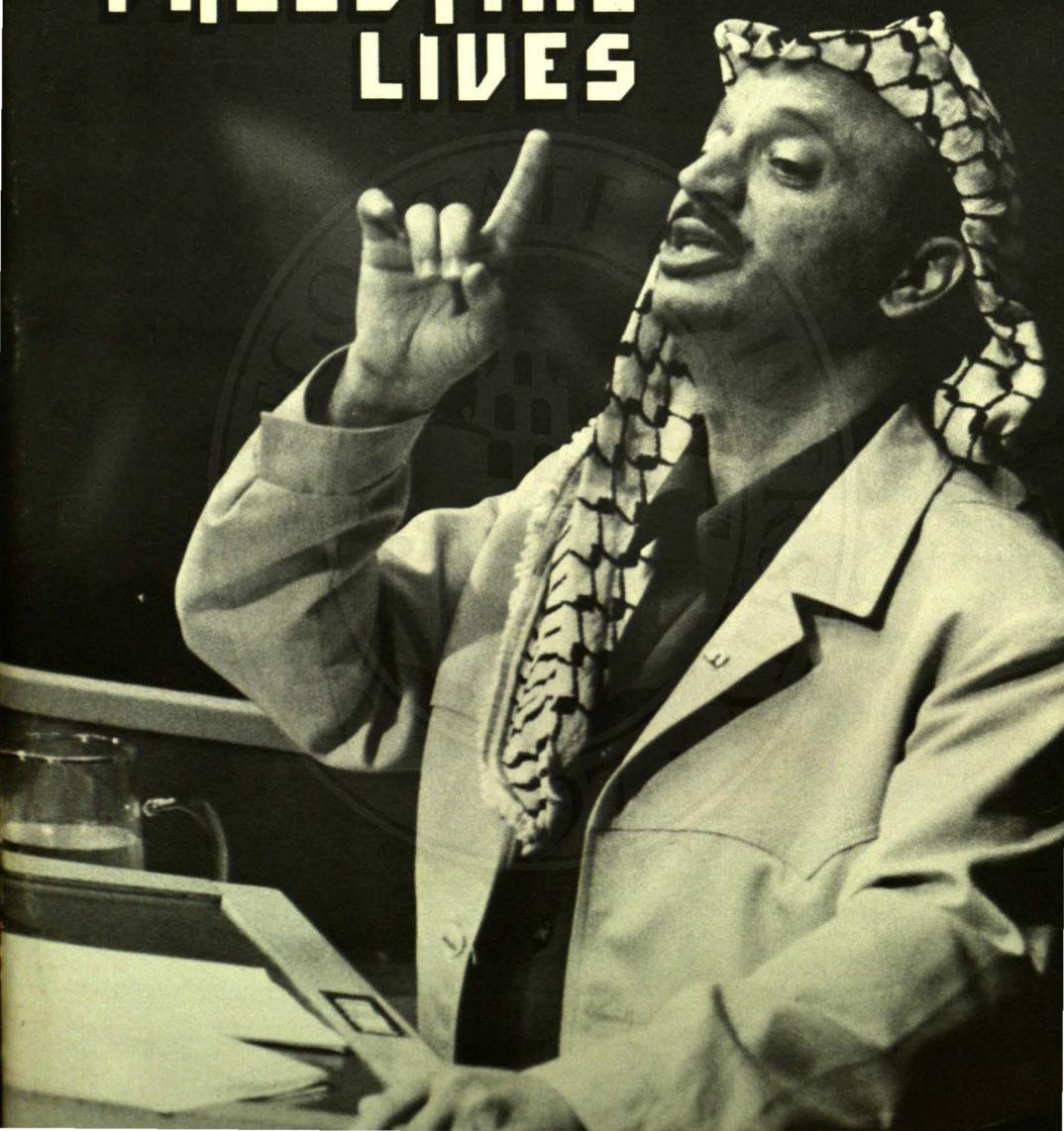


PALESTINE LIVES



ADDRESS BY
MR. YASSER ARAFAT
CHAIRMAN OF
THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION
29TH SESSION
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Mr. President:

I thank you for having invited the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in this plenary session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am grateful to all those distinguished representatives of states who contributed to the decision to introduce the Question of Palestine as a separate item on your agenda; this decision has made possible your resolution inviting us to address you on the Question of Palestine. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for all his assistance in facilitating our presence here amongst you.

For this return by the United Nations Organization to the Question of Palestine is an important occasion. We consider the step to be a victory for the world organization, as much also as a victory for our people. It indicates anew that the United Nations of today is not the United Nations of the past, just as today's world is not yesterday's world. Today's United Nations represents 138 nations, a number that more clearly reflects the will of the international community. Thus today's United Nations is more nearly capable of implementing the principles embodied in its charter and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well

as being more truly empowered to support causes of peace and justice.

Our peoples are now beginning to feel this change. Along with them the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America also feel the change. As a result the United Nations acquires greater esteem both in our people's view and in the view of other peoples. Our hope is thereby strengthened that the United Nations can contribute actively to the pursuit and the triumph of peace, justice, freedom and independence. Our resolve to build a new world is fortified, a world free of colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism and racism in each of its instances including Zionism.

Our world aspires to peace, justice, equality and freedom. It wishes that oppressed nations, presently bent under the weight of imperialism, might gain their freedom and their right to self-determination. It hopes to place the relations between the nations on a basis of equality, peaceful co-existence, mutual respect for each other's internal affairs, a secure national sovereignty, independence, and territorial unity. This world resolves that the economic ties binding it together should be grounded in justice, parity and mutual interest. It aspires finally to direct its human resources against the scourges of poverty, famine, disease and natural calamity, toward the development of productive scientific and technical capabilities for enhancing human wealth, all this in the hope of reducing the disparity between developing and

developed countries. But all such aspirations cannot be realized in a world presently ruled over by tension, oppression, racial discrimination and exploitation, a world threatened also with unending economic disaster, war and crisis.

Great numbers of peoples, which include those of Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, Palestine among many others, are still victims of oppression and violence. Their areas of the world are gripped by armed struggles provoked by imperialism and racial discrimination, both of them merely forms of aggression and terror. These are instances of oppressed peoples compelled by intolerable circumstances into a confrontation with such oppression; but wherever this confrontation occurs it is legitimate and just.

It is imperative, Mr. President, that the international community should support these people in their struggles, in the furtherance of their rightful causes, in the attainment of their right to self-determination.

In Indo-China, the people are still exposed to aggression. They remain subjected to conspiracies preventing them from peace and the realization of their goals. Although people everywhere have welcomed agreements on peace reached in Laos and South Vietnam, no one can say that genuine peace has been achieved, nor that those forces responsible for aggression in the first place have now

desisted from their attacks on Vietnam. The same can be said of present military aggression against the people of Cambodia. It is therefore incumbent on the international community to support these oppressed people, and also to condemn the oppressors for their designs upon peace. Moreover, despite the positive stand on a peaceful, just solution to the Korean Question taken by the Democratic Republic of Korea, there is as yet no settlement of that question.

A few months ago the problem of Cyprus erupted violently before us. All peoples everywhere shared in the suffering of Cypriots. We ask that the United Nations continue its efforts to reach a just solution in Cyprus, thereby sparing Cypriots further war, and ensuring instead their peace and independence. Doubtless, however, the Question of Cyprus belongs within consideration of Middle Eastern as well as Mediterranean problems.

In their efforts to replace an outmoded but still prevalent world economic system with a new, more logically rational one, the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America must nevertheless face implacable attacks on these efforts. These countries have expressed their views at the Conference on Raw Materials and Development. Thus the plunder, the exploitation, the siphoning off of the wealth of impoverished peoples must be terminated forthwith. There must be no deterring of these peoples' efforts to develop and control their wealth. Furthermore, there is a grave

necessity in arriving at fair prices for raw materials from these countries.

In addition, the states of Asia, Africa and Latin America continue to be hampered in the attainment of those primary objectives of theirs formulated at the Conference on the Law of the Sea in Caracas, and at the Population Conference and at the Rome Food Conference. The United Nations should therefore bend every effort at radically altering the world economic system making it feasible for developing countries to develop. The United Nations must shoulder the responsibility for fighting inflation, now borne most heavily by developing countries (especially the oil producing states). The United Nations must firmly condemn any threats made against these countries simply because they demand their just rights.

Mr. President, the world-wide armament race shows no sign of abating. As a consequence the entire world is threatened with the dispersion of its wealth and the utter waste of its energies. Armed violence is made more likely everywhere. We expect that the United Nations should devote itself singlemindedly to curbing the unlimited acquisition of arms, to preventing even the possibility of nuclear destruction, to reducing the vast sums spent on military technology, to converting expenditures on war into projects for development, the increase of production, and

the benefits of common humanity. And still, the highest tension is in our part of the world. There Zionism clings tenaciously to occupied Arab territory; Zionism persists in its aggressions upon us and our territory. New military preparations are being made feverishly. These anticipate another, fifth war of aggression launched against us. Such signs bear the closest possible watch, since there is a grave likelihood that this war forebodes nuclear destruction and cataclysmic annihilation.

The world is in need of tremendous efforts if its aspirations for peace, freedom, justice, equality and development are to be realized, if its struggle is to be victorious over colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, and racism in all of its forms, amongst which is Zionism. Only in making such efforts can actual form be given to the aspirations of all peoples, including even the aspirations of peoples whose states oppose these efforts. It is this road that leads to fulfillment of those principles emphasized by the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Were the status quo simply to be continued, however, the world would instead be exposed to prolonged armed conflict, in addition to economic, human and natural calamity.

Mr. President,

Despite abiding world crises, despite even the gloomy powers of backwardness and disastrous wrong, we live in a time of glorious

change. An old world order is crumbling before our eyes, as imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and racism, whose chief form is Zionism ineluctably perish. We are privileged to be able to witness a great wave of history bearing people forward into a new world they have created. In that world just causes shall triumph. Of that we are confident.

The Question of Palestine belongs to this perspective of emergence and struggle. Palestine is crucial amongst those just causes fought for unstintingly by masses laboring under imperialism and aggression. It cannot be, and is not lost on me today as I stand here before you, that if I have been given the opportunity to address you, so too must the opportunity be given to all liberation movements fighting against racism and imperialism. In their names, in the name of every human being struggling for freedom and self-determination, I call upon you urgently to give their causes the same full attention you have so rightly given ours. Such recognitions once made, there will be a secure foundation thereafter for the preservation of universal peace. For only with such peace will a new world order endure in which peoples can live free of oppression, fear, terror and the suppression of their rights. As I said earlier, this is the true perspective in which to set the Question of Palestine. I shall now do so for you, keeping firmly in mind both the perspective and the goal of

a coming world order.

Even as today we address you from what is before all else an international rostrum we are also expressing our faith in political and diplomatic struggle as complements, as enhancements of armed struggle. Furthermore we express our appreciation of the role the United Nations is capable of playing in settling problems of international scope. But this capability, I said a moment ago, has become real only once the United Nations accommodated itself to the living actuality of aspiring peoples, towards which an organization of so truly international a dimension owes unique obligations.

In addressing you today our people proclaims its faith in the future, unencumbered either by past tragedies or present limitations. If as we discuss the present we enlist the past in our service, we do so only to light up our journey into the future alongside other movements of national liberation. If we return now to the historical roots of our cause we do so because present at this very moment in our midst are those, who, while they occupy our homes, as their cattle graze in our pastures, and as their hands pluck the fruit of our trees, claim at the same time that we are disembodied spirits, fictions without presence, without traditions or future. We speak of our roots also because until recently some people have regarded -- and continued to regard--

ours as merely a problem of refugees. They have portrayed the Middle East Question as little more than a border dispute between the Arab states and the Zionist enclave. They have imagined that our people claims rights not rightfully its own and fights neither with logic nor valid motive, with a simple wish only to disturb the peace and to terrorize wantonly. For there are amongst you -- and here I intend the United States of America and others like it-- those who supply our enemy freely with planes and bombs and with every variety of murderous weapon. They take hostile positions against us, deliberately distorting the true essence of things. All this is done not only at our expense, but at the expense of the American people, and of the friendship we continue to hope can be cemented between us and this great people, whose history of struggle for the sake of freedom we honor and salute.

I cannot now forego the opportunity, Mr. President, to appeal from this rostrum directly to the American people, asking it to give its support to our heroic and fighting people. I ask it wholeheartedly to endorse right and justice, to recall George Washington back to mind, heroic Washington whose purpose was his nation's freedom and independence, and also Abraham Lincoln, champion of the destitute and the wretched, and also Woodrow Wilson whose doctrine of fourteen points remains subscribed to and venerated by our people. I ask the American people whether the

demonstrations of hostility and enmity taking place outside this great hall reflect the true intent of American will? What, I ask you plainly, is the crime the people of Palestine have committed against you? Why do you fight us so? Does such unwarranted belligerence really serve your interests? Does it serve your interests as people? No, definitely not, I can only hope that Americans will remember that their friendship with the whole Arab nation is too high, too abiding, too rewarding for all such demonstrations to harm.

In any event, as our discussion of the Question of Palestine focuses upon historical roots, we do so because we believe that any question presently exercising the world's concern must be viewed radically, in the true root sense of that word, if a real solution is ever to be grasped. We propose this radical approach as an antidote to an approach to international issues that obscure historical origins behind ignorance, denial, and a slavish obeisance to the present.

Mr. President, the roots of the Palestinian Question reach back into the closing years of the 19th century, to that period we call the era of colonialism as we know it today. This is precisely the period during which Zionism as a scheme was born; its aim was the conquest of Palestinian land by European immigrants,

just as settlers colonized and indeed raided, most of Africa. This is the period during which, pouring forth out of the West, colonialism spread into the furthest reaches of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, building colonies, everywhere cruelly exploiting, oppressing, plundering the peoples of these three continents. This period persists into the present. Marked evidence of its totally reprehensible presence can be readily perceived in the racism practised both in South Africa and in Palestine.

And just as colonialism and its demagogues dignified their conquests, their plunder and limitless attacks upon the natives of Africa with appeals to a "civilizing and modernizing" mission, so too did waves of Zionist immigrants disguise their purposes as they conquered Palestine. Just as colonialism as a system and colonialists as its instrument used religion, color, race and language to justify the African's exploitation and his cruel subjugation by terror and discrimination, so too were these methods employed as Palestine was usurped and its people hounded from their natal homeland.

And just as British, French, and Portuguese colonialism heedlessly used the wretched, the poor, the exploited as mere inert matter with which to build and to carry out settler colonialism, so too were destitute, oppressed European Jews employed on behalf of world imperialism and of the Zionist leadership. European Jews

were transformed into the instruments of aggression; they became the elements of settler colonialism intimately allied to racial discrimination.

Zionist theology was utilized against our Palestine people: the purpose was not only the establishment of western style settler colonialism but also the severing of Jews from their various homelands and subsequently their estrangement from the nations. Zionism is an ideology that is imperialist, colonialist, racist; it is profoundly reactionary and discriminatory; it is united with anti-Semitism in its retrograde tenets and is, when all is said and done, another side of the same base coin. For when what is proposed is that adherents of the Jewish faith, regardless of their national residence, should neither owe allegiance to their national residence nor live on equal footing with its other, non-Jewish citizens -- when that is proposed we hear anti-Semitism being proposed. When it is proposed that the only solution for the Jewish problem is that Jews must alienate themselves from communities or nations of which they have been a historical part, when it is proposed that Jews solve the Jewish problem by immigrating to and forcibly settling the land of another people -- when this occurs exactly the same position is being advocated as the one urged by anti-Semites against Jews.

Thus we can understand the connection between Cecil Rhodes,

who promoted settler colonialism in South East Africa, and Theodor Herzl, who had settler colonialist designs upon Palestine. Having received a certificate of good settler colonialist conduct from Rhodes, Herzl then turned around and presented his certificate to the British government, hoping thus to secure a formal resolution supporting Zionist policy. In exchange, the Zionists promised Britain an imperialist base on Palestinian soil so that imperial interests could be safe-guarded at one of their chief strategic points.

And so the Zionist movement allied itself directly with world colonialism in a common raid on our land. Allow me now to present a selection of historical truths about this alliance:

- The Jewish invasion of Palestine began in 1881. Before the first large wave of immigrants started arriving, Palestine had a population of half a million; most of the population was either Moslem or Christian, and only 20,000 were Jewish. Every segment of the population enjoyed the religious tolerance characteristic of our culture.

- Palestine was then a verdant area, inhabited mainly by an Arab people in the course of building its life and dynamically enriching its indigenous culture.

- Between 1882 and 1917 the Zionist Movement settled approximately

50,000 European Jews in our homeland. To do that it resorted to trickery and deceit in order to implant them in our midst. Its success in getting Britain to issue the Balfour Declaration once again demonstrated the alliance between Zionism and imperialism. Furthermore, by promising to the Zionist Movement what was not hers to give, Britain showed how oppressive was the rule of imperialism. As it was constituted then, the League of Nations abandoned our Arab people, and Wilson's pledges and promises came to nought. In the guise of a mandate, British imperialism was cruelly and directly imposed upon us. The mandate document issued by the League of Nations was to enable the Zionist invaders to consolidate their gains in our homeland.

- In the wake of the Balfour Declaration and over a period of thirty years, the Zionist Movement succeeded, in collaboration with its imperialist ally, in settling more European Jews on the land, thus usurping the properties of Palestinian Arabs.
- By 1947 the number of Jews had reached 600,000; they owned about six per cent of Palestinian arable land. The figures should be compared with the population of Palestine, which at that time was 1,250,000.
- As a result of the collusion between the mandatory power and the Zionist movement, and with the support of the United States,

this General Assembly early in its history approved a recommendation to partition our Palestinian homeland. This took place in an atmosphere poisoned with questionable action and strong pressure. The General Assembly partitioned what it had no right to divide -- an indivisible homeland. When we rejected that decision, our position corresponded to that of the natural mother who refused to permit King Solomon to cut her son in two when the unnatural mother claimed the child for herself and agreed to his dismemberment. Furthermore, even though the partition resolution granted the colonialist settlers 54 percent of the land of Palestine, their dissatisfaction with the decision prompted them to wage a war of terror against the civilian Arab population. They occupied 81 percent of the total area of Palestine, uprooting a million Arabs. Thus, they occupied 524 Arab towns and villages of which they destroyed 385, completely obliterating them in the process. Having achieved that end, they built their own settlements and colonies on the ruins of our farms and our groves. The roots of the Palestine Question lie here. Its causes do not stem from any conflict between two religions or two nationalisms. Neither is it a border conflict between neighboring states, it is the cause of a people deprived of its homeland, dispersed and uprooted, and living mostly in exile and in refugee camps.

With support from imperialist and colonialist powers, chief

amongst them the United States, it managed to get itself accepted as a U.N. member. It further succeeded in getting the Palestine Question deleted from the agenda of the U.N. and in deceiving world public opinion by presenting our cause as a problem of refugees in need either of charity from do-gooders, or settlement in a land not theirs.

Not satisfied with all this, the racist entity, founded on the imperialist-colonialist concept, turned itself into a base for imperialism and into an arsenal of weapons. This enabled it to assume its role of subjugating the Arab people and of committing aggression against them, in order to satisfy its ambition for further expansion on Palestinian and other Arab lands. In addition to the many instances of aggression committed by this entity against the Arab states, it has launched two large-scale wars in 1956 and 1967, thus endangering world peace and security.

As a result of Zionist aggression in June, 1967, the enemy occupied Egyptian Sinai as far as the Suez Canal. The enemy occupied Syria's Golan Heights, in addition to all Palestinian land west of the Jordan. All these developments have led to the creation in our area of what has come to be known as the Middle East Problem. The situation has been rendered more serious by

the enemy's persistence in maintaining unlawful occupation and in further consolidating it, thus establishing a beachhead for world imperialism's thrust against our Arab nation. All Security Council decisions and appeals to world public opinion for withdrawal from the lands occupied in June, 1967 have been ignored. All peaceful efforts on the international level have not deterred the enemy from its expansionist policy. The only alternative open before our Arab nations, chiefly Egypt and Syria, was to expend exhaustive efforts in preparing forcefully to resist this barbarous armed invasion, and this in order to liberate Arab lands and to restore the rights of the Palestinian people, after all other peaceful means had failed. Under these circumstances, the fourth war broke out in October, 1973, bringing home to the Zionist enemy the bankruptcy of its policy of occupation, expansion and its reliance on the concept of military might. Despite all this the leaders of the Zionist entity are far from having learned any lesson from their experience. They are making preparations for the fifth war, resorting once more to the language of military superiority, aggression, terrorism, subjugation and, finally, always to war in their dealings with the Arabs.

Mr. President,

It pains our people greatly to witness the propagation of the

myth that its homeland was a desert until it was made to bloom by the toil of foreign settlers, that it was a land without a people, and that the colonialist entity caused no harm to any human being. No, Mr. President.. Such lies must be exposed from this rostrum, for the world must know that Palestine was the cradle of the most ancient cultures and civilizations. Her Arab people were engaged in farming and building, spreading culture throughout the land for thousands of years, setting an example in the practice of freedom of worship, acting as faithful guardians of the holy places of all religions. As a son of Jerusalem, I treasure for myself and my people, beautiful memories and vivid images of the religious brotherhood that was the hallmark of our Holy City before it succumbed to catastrophe. Our people continued to pursue this enlightened policy until the establishment of the state of Israel and their dispersion. This did not deter our people from pursuing their humanitarian role on Palestinian soil. Nor will they permit their land to become a launching pad for aggression nor a racist camp predicated on the destruction of civilization, cultures, progress and peace. Our people cannot but maintain the heritage of their ancestors in resisting the invaders, in assuming the privileged task of defending their native land, their Arab nationhood, their culture and civilization, and in safeguarding the cradle of monotheistic religion.

By contrast, we need only mention briefly some Israeli stands: its support of the Secret Army Organization in Algeria, its bolstering of the settler-colonialists in Africa -- whether in the Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Azania or South Africa -- and its backing of South Vietnam against the Vietnamese revolution. In addition, one can mention Israel's continuing support of imperialists and racists everywhere, its obstructionist stand in the Committee of Twenty Four, its refusal to cast its vote in support of independence for the African states, and its opposition to the demands of many Asian, African, Latin American nations, and several other states in the conferences on Raw Materials, Population, The Law of the Sea, and Food. All these facts offer further proof of the character of the enemy which has usurped our land. They justify the honorable struggle which we are waging against it. As we defend a vision of the future, our enemy upholds the myths of the past.

Mr. President,

The enemy we face has a long record of hostility even towards the Jews themselves, for there is within the Zionist entity a built-in racism against Oriental Jews. While we were vociferously condemning the massacres of Jews under Nazi rule, Zionist leadership appeared more interested, at that time, in exploiting them

as best it could in order to realize its goal of immigration to Palestine.

Mr. President,

If the immigration of Jews to Palestine had had as its objective the goal of enabling them to live side by side with us, enjoying the same rights and assuming the same duties, we would have opened our doors to them, as far as our homeland's capacity for absorption permitted. Such was the case with the thousands of Armenians and Circassians who still live among us in equality as brethren and citizens. But, that the goal of this immigration should be to usurp our homeland, disperse our people, and turn us into second-class citizens -- this is what no one can conceivably demand that we acquiesce in or submit to. Therefore, since its inception, our revolution was not motivated by racial or religious factors. Its target was never the Jew, as a person, but racist Zionism and undisguised aggression. In this sense, ours is also a revolution for the Jew, as a human being, as well. We are struggling so that Jews, Christians and Muslims may live in equality, enjoying the same rights and assuming the same duties, free from racial or religious discrimination.

Mr. President, we do distinguish between Judaism and Zionism. While we maintain our opposition to the colonialist Zionist movement, we respect the Jewish faith. Today, almost one century

after the rise of the Zionist movement, we wish to warn of its increasing danger to the Jews of the world, to our Arab people and to world peace and security. For Zionism encourages the Jew to emigrate out of his homeland and grants him an artificially-created nationality. The Zionists proceed with their terrorist activities even though these have proved ineffective. The phenomenon of constant emigration from Israel, which is bound to grow as the bastions of colonialism and racism in the world fall, is an example of the inevitability of the failure of such activities.

- We urge the people and governments of the world to stand firm against Zionist attempts at encouraging world Jewry to emigrate from their countries and to usurp our land. We urge them as well firmly to oppose any discrimination against any human being, as to religion, race, or color.

- Why should our Arab Palestinian people pay the price of such discrimination in the world, Mr. President? Why should our people be responsible for the problems of Jewish immigration, if such problems exist in the minds of some people? Why don't the supporters of these problems open their own countries, which can absorb and help these immigrants?

Mr. President,

Those who call us terrorists wish to prevent world public opinion from discovering the truth about us and from seeing the justice on our faces. They seek to hide the terrorism and tyranny of their acts, and our own posture of self-defense.

The difference between the revolutionary and the terrorist lies in the reason for which each fights. For whoever stands by a just cause and fights for the freedom and liberation of his land from the invaders, the settlers and the colonialists cannot possibly be called terrorist otherwise the American people in their struggle for liberation from the British colonialists would have been terrorists; the European resistance against the Nazis would be terrorism, the struggle of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples would also be terrorism. This, Mr. President, is actually a just and right struggle consecrated by the U.N. Charter and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As to those who fight against the just causes, those who wage war to occupy, colonize and oppress other people, those are the terrorists. Those are the people whose actions should be condemned, who should be called war criminals: for the justice of the cause determines the right to struggle.

Mr. President,

Zionist terrorism which was waged against the Palestinian

people to evict it from its country and usurp its land is registered in your official documents. Thousands of our people were assassinated in their villages and towns; tens of thousands of others were forced at gun point to leave their homes and the lands of their fathers. Time and time again our children, women and aged were evicted and had to wander in the deserts and climb mountains without any food or water. No one who in 1948 witnessed the catastrophe that struck the inhabitants of hundreds of villages and towns: in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Lydda, Ramle and Galilee, no one who has been a witness to that catastrophe will ever forget the experience, even though the mass black out has succeeded in hiding these horrors as it has hidden the traces of 385 Palestinian villages and towns destroyed at the time and erased from the map. The destruction of 19 thousand houses during the seven last years, which is equivalent to the complete destruction of two hundred more Palestinian villages, and the great number of maimed as a result of the treatment they were subjected to in Israeli prisons, these cannot be hidden by any black out. Zionist terrorism fed on hatred and this hatred was even directed against the olive tree in my country, which had been a proud symbol and which reminded them of the indigenous inhabitants of the land, a living reminder that the land is Palestinian. Thus they sought to destroy it. How can one describe the statement by Golda Meir which expressed her disquiet "about the Palestinian children born

every day. They see in the Palestinian child, in the Palestinian tree an enemy that should be exterminated. Mr. President, for tens of years Zionists have been harrassing our people's cultural, political, social and artistic leaders, terrorizing them and assassinating them. They have stolen our cultural heritage, our popular folklore and have claimed it as theirs. Their terrorism even reached our sacred places in our beloved and peaceful Jerusalem. They endeavoured to de-Arabize it and made it lose its Moslem and Christian character by evicting its inhabitants and annexing it.

Mr. President,

The small number of Palestinian Arabs who were not uprooted by the Zionists in 1948 are presently refugees in their own homeland. Israeli law treats them as second class citizens and subjects them to all forms of racial discrimination after confiscating their land and property. They have been victims of bloody massacres such as that of Kfar Kassim; they have been expelled from their villages and denied the right of return as in the case of the inhabitants of Ikrit and Kfar-Birim. For eighteen years, martial law was enforced and our people denied any freedom of movement without prior permission from the Israeli military governor. This, Mr. President, at a time when an Israeli law was promulgated granting citizenship to any Jew anywhere who wanted to immigrate

to our homeland. Moreover, another Israeli law stipulated that Palestinians who were not present in their villages or towns at the time of the occupation were not entitled to Israeli citizenship.

Mr. President,

The record of Israeli rulers is replete with acts of terror perpetrated on those of our people who remained under occupation in Sinai and the Golan Heights. The criminal bombardment of Bahr-al-Bakar School and Abou Zaabal factory are but two such unforgettable acts of terrorism. The total destruction of the Syrian city of Kuneitra is yet another tangible instance of systematic terrorism. If a record of Zionist terrorism in South Lebanon were to be compiled the enormity of its acts would shock even the most hardened: piracy, bombardments, scorched earth policy, destruction of hundreds of homes, eviction of civilians and the kidnapping of Lebanese citizens. This clearly constitutes a violation of Lebanese sovereignty and is in preparation for the diversion of the Litani River waters.

Need one remind this Assembly of the numerous resolutions adopted by it condemning Israeli aggressions committed against Arab countries, Israeli violations of human rights and the articles of the Geneva Conventions as well as the resolutions pertaining to the annexation of the city of Jerusalem and its restoration to its former status?

Mr. President,

The only description for these actions is that they are acts of barbarism and terrorism. And yet, the Zionist racists and colonialists have the temerity to describe the just struggle of our people as terror. Could there be a more flagrant distortion of truth than this? We ask those who usurped our land, who are committing murderous acts of terrorism against our people and are practicing racial discrimination more extensively than the racists of South Africa, we ask them to keep in mind the U.N. General Assembly resolution that called for the one-year suspension of the membership of the government of South Africa from the U.N. Such is the inevitable fate of every racist country that adopts the law of the jungle, usurps the homeland of others and persists in oppression.

Mr. President,

For the past thirty years, our people have had to struggle against British occupation and Zionist invasion both of which had one intention, the usurpation of our land. Six major revolts and tens of popular uprisings were staged to foil these attempts, so that our homeland might remain ours. Over thirty thousand martyrs (the equivalent in comparative terms of six million Americans) died in the process.

When the majority of the Palestinian people was uprooted from its homeland in 1948, the Palestinian struggle for self-determination continued under the most difficult conditions. We tried every possible means to continue our political struggle to attain our national rights, but to no avail. Meanwhile we had to struggle for sheer existence. Even in exile we educated our children. This was all a part of trying to survive.

The Palestinian people produced thousands of physicians, lawyers, teachers and scientists who actively participated in the development of the Arab countries bordering on their usurped homeland. They utilized their income to assist the young and aged amongst their people who remained in the refugee camps. They educated their younger sisters and brothers, supported their parents and cared for their children. All along the Palestinian dreamt of return. Neither the Palestinian's allegiance to Palestine, nor his determination to return waned; nothing could persuade him to relinquish his Palestinian identity or to forsake his homeland. The passage of time did not make him forget, as some hoped he would. When our people lost faith in the international community which persisted in ignoring their rights and when it became obvious that the Palestinians would not recuperate one inch of Palestine through exclusively political means our people had no choice but to resort to armed struggle. Into it they poured their

material and human resources. We bravely faced the most vicious acts of Israeli terrorism which were aimed at diverting our struggle and arresting it.

In the past ten years of our struggle, thousands of martyrs and twice as many wounded, maimed and imprisoned were offered in sacrifice, all in an effort to resist the imminent threat of liquidation, to regain our right to self-determination, and our undisputed right to return to our homeland. With the utmost dignity and the most admirable revolutionary spirit, our Palestinian people have not lost their spirit in Israeli prisons and concentration camps, or when faced with all forms of harassment and intimidation. They struggle for sheer existence and they continue to strive to preserve the Arab character of their land. Thus they resist oppression, tyranny and terrorism in their ugliest forms.

It is through our popular armed struggle that our political leadership and our national institutions finally crystallized and a National Liberation Movement, comprising all the Palestinian factions, organizations, and capabilities, materialized in the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Through our militant Palestine National Liberation Movement, our people's struggle matured and grew enough to accommodate political and social struggle in addition to armed struggle. The

Palestine Liberation Organization was a major factor in creating a new Palestinian individual qualified to shape the future of our Palestine, not merely content with mobilizing the Palestinians for the challenges of the present.

The Palestine Liberation Organization can be proud of having a large number of cultural and educational activities, even while engaged in armed struggle, and at a time when it faced the increasing vicious blows of Zionist terrorism. We established institutes for scientific research, agricultural development, and social welfare, as well as centers for the revival of our cultural heritage and the preservation of our folklore. Many Palestinian poets, artists and writers have enriched Arab culture in particular and world culture generally. Their profoundly humane works have won the admiration of all those familiar with them. In contrast to that, our enemy has been systematically destroying our culture and disseminating racist imperialist ideologies, in short everything that impedes progress, justice, democracy and peace.

Mr. President,

The Palestine Liberation Organization has earned its legitimacy because of the sacrifice inherent in its pioneering role, and also because of its dedicated leadership of the struggle. It

has also been granted this legitimacy by the Palestinian masses, which in harmony with it have chosen it to lead the struggle according to its directives. The Palestine Liberation Organization has also gained its legitimacy by representing every faction, union, or group as well as every Palestinian talent either in the National Council or in people's institutions. This legitimacy was further strengthened by the support of the entire Arab nation, and it was consecrated during the last Arab Summit Conference, which reiterated the right of the Palestine Liberation Organization, in its capacity as sole representative of the Palestinian people, to establish an independent national state on all liberated Palestinian territory.

Moreover the Palestine Liberation Organization's legitimacy was intensified as a result of fraternal support given by other liberation movements and by friendly, likeminded nations that stood by our side, encouraging and aiding us in our struggle to secure our national rights.

Here I must also warmly convey the gratitude of our revolutionary fighters and that of all our people to the non-aligned countries, the socialist countries, the Islamic countries, the African countries, friendly European countries, as well as all our other friends in Asia, Africa and Latin America. We thank them all for the stands they took so honourably on our behalf.

Mr. President,

The Palestine Liberation Organization represents the Palestinian people, legitimately and uniquely. Because of this, the Palestine Liberation Organization expresses the wishes and hopes of its people. Because of this too, it brings these very wishes and hopes before you, urging you not to shirk momentous historic responsibility towards our just cause.

For many years now our people has been exposed to the ravages of war, destruction, and dispersion. It has paid in the blood of its sons that which cannot even be compensated. It has borne the burdens of occupation, dispersion, eviction, and terror more uninterruptedly than any other people. And yet all this has made our people neither vindictive nor vengeful. Nor has it cause us to resort to the racism of our enemies. And nor have we lost the true method by which friend and foe are distinguished.

For we deplore all those crimes committed against the Jews; we also deplore all the real discrimination suffered by them because of their faith.

Mr. President,

I am a rebel and freedom is my cause. I know well that many of you present here today once stood in exactly the same adversary

position I now occupy, and from which I must fight. You were once obligated by your struggle to convert dreams into reality. Therefore you must now share my dream. I think this is exactly why I can ask you now to help, as together we bring out our dream into a bright reality, our common dream for a peaceful future in Palestine's sacred land.

As he stood in an Israeli military court, the Jewish revolutionary, Ahud Adif said: "I am no terrorist; I believe that a democratic state should exist on this land." Adif now languishes in a Zionist prison amongst his co-believers.

And before those same courts there stands today a brave prince of the church, Bishop Capucci. Lifting his fingers to form the same victory sign used by our freedom-fighters, he says: "What I have done, I have done that all men may live on this land of peace in peace." This princely priest will doubtless share Adif's grim fate.

Why therefore should I not dream and hope? For is not revolution the making real of dreams and hopes? So let us work together that my dream may be fulfilled, that I should return with my people out of exile, there in Palestine to live with this Jewish freedom-fighter and his partners, with this Arab priest and his brothers, in one democratic state where Christian, Jew and

Moslem live in justice, equality and fraternity.

Is not this noble dream worthy of my struggle alongside all lovers of freedom everywhere? For the most admirable dimension of this dream is that it is Palestinian, a dream from out of the land of peace, the land of martyrdom and heroism.

Let us remember, Mr. President, that the Jews of Europe and the United States have been known to lead the struggles for secularism and the separation of church and state; they have also been known to fight against discrimination on religious grounds. How do they then refuse this humane paradigm for the holy land? How then do they continue to support the most fanatic, discriminatory and closed of nations in its policy?

In my formal capacity as Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and as leader of the Palestinian revolution, I proclaim before you that when we speak of our common hopes for the Palestine of tomorrow we include in our perspective all Jews now living in Palestine who choose to live with us there in peace and without discrimination.

In my formal capacity as Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and leader of the Palestinian revolution I call upon Jews one by one to turn away from the illusory promises made to

them by Zionist ideology and Israeli leadership. Those offer Jews perpetual bloodshed, endless war, and continuous thralldom.

We invite them to emerge from their moral isolation into a more open realm of free choice, far from their present leadership's effort to implant in them a Masada complex.

We offer them the most generous solution that we might live together in a framework of just peace, in our democratic Palestine.

In my formal capacity as Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization I announce here that we do not wish the shedding of one drop of either Arab or Jewish blood; neither do we delight in the continuation of killing, which would end once a just peace, based on our people's rights, hopes, and aspirations is finally established.

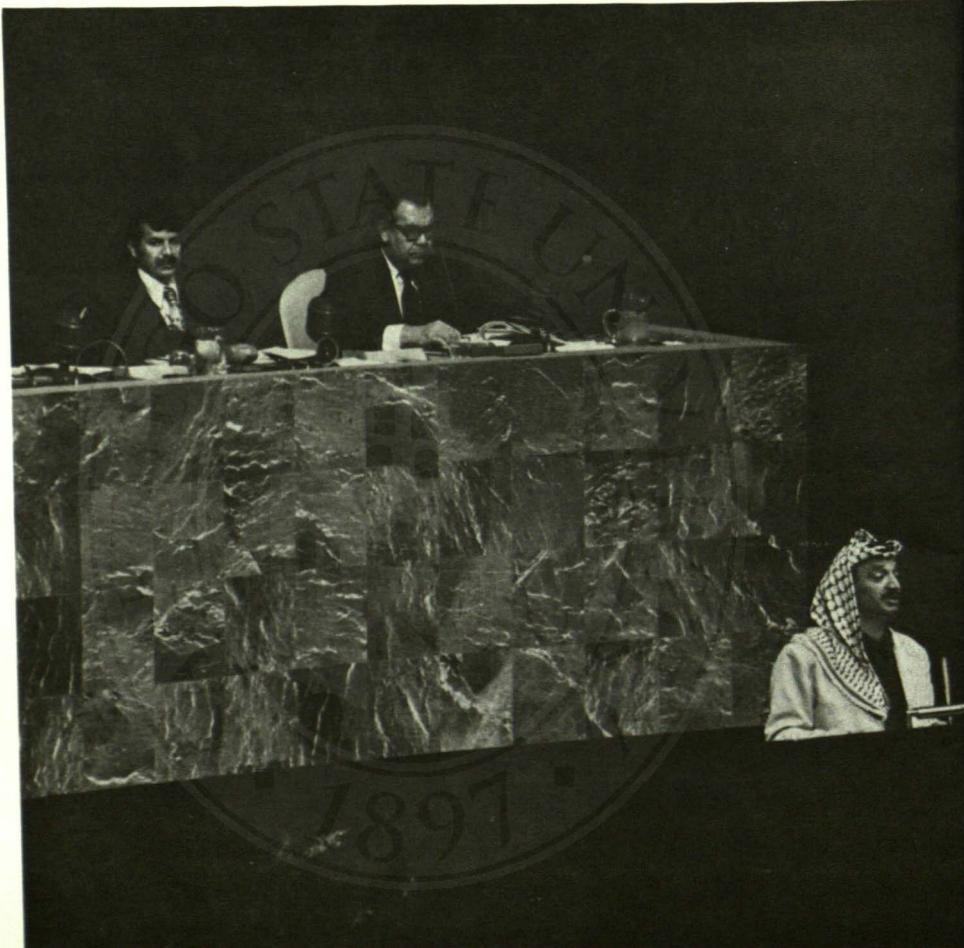
In my formal capacity as Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization and leader of the Palestinian revolution, I appeal to you to accompany our people in its struggle to attain its right to self-determination. This right is consecrated in the United Nations Charter, and resolved upon repeatedly thereafter by this august body. I appeal to you further to aid our people's return to its homeland from an involuntary exile imposed upon it by force of arms, by tyranny, by oppression, so that we might regain

our property, our land, thereafter to live in our national homeland, free and sovereign, enjoying all the privileges of nationhood. Only then can we pour all our resources into the mainstream of human civilization. Only then can Palestinian creativity be concentrated on the service of humanity. Only then will our Jerusalem resume its historic role as a peaceful shrine for all religions.

I appeal to you to enable our people to establish national independent sovereignty over its own land.

Today, Mr. President, I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand.

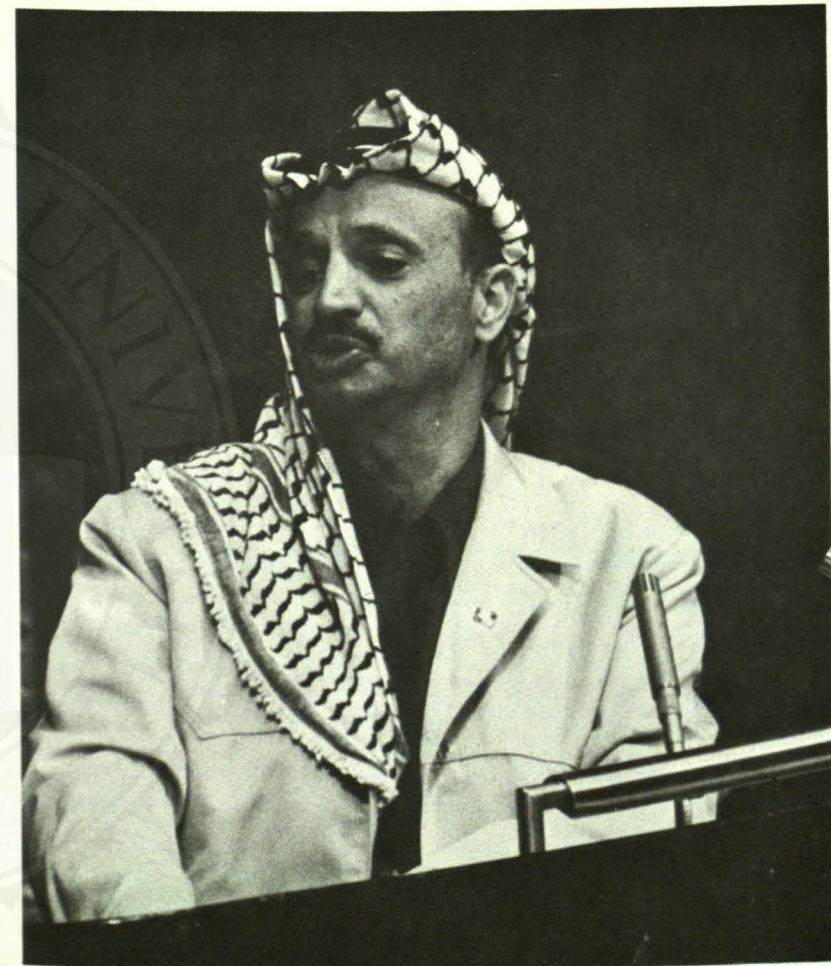
War flares up in Palestine, and yet, Mr. President, it is in Palestine that peace will be borne.



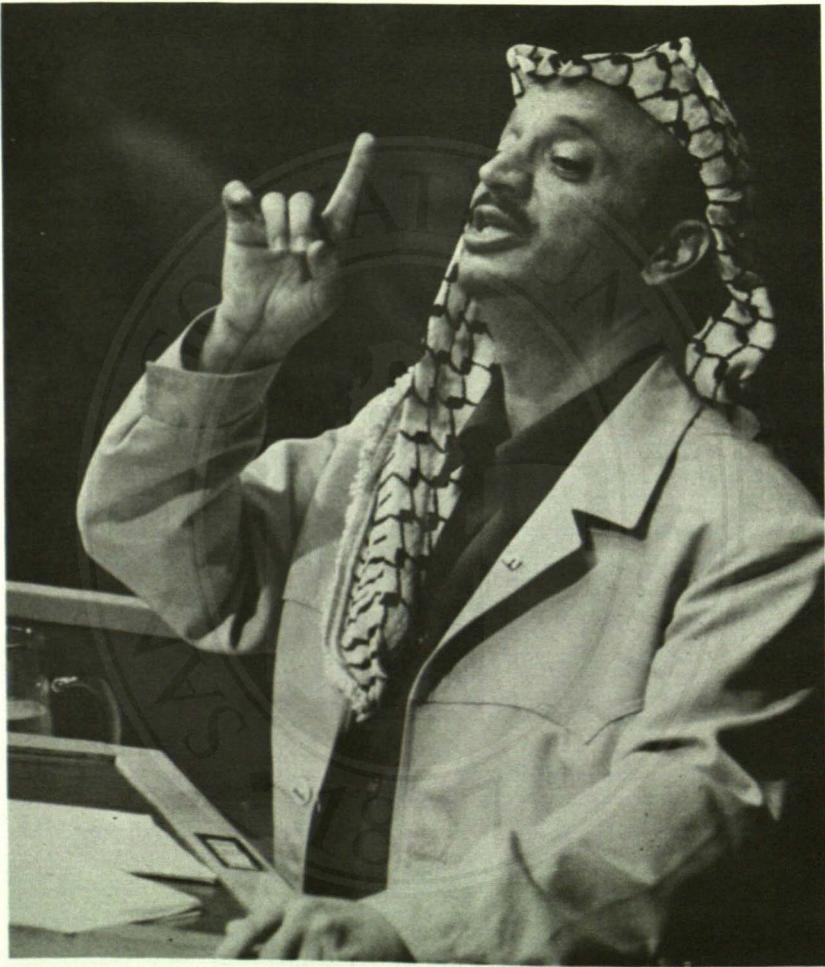
"I cannot now forego the opportunity to appeal from this rostrum directly to the American people, asking it to give its support to our heroic and fighting people."



"All along the Palestinian dreamt of return. Neither the Palestinian's allegiance to Palestine, nor his determination to return waned; nothing could persuade him to relinquish his Palestinian identity or to forsake his homeland. The passage of time did not make him forget, as some hoped he would."



"We do distinguish between Judaism and Zionism. While we maintain our opposition to the colonialist Zionist movement, we respect the Jewish faith."



"Today, I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand."