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Chairman: Mr. Mohamad (Sudan)

Contents

Agenda item 32: United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (*continued*)

Agenda item 33: Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 32: United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

(continued) (A/62/13 and Add.1, 64, 181, 282, 312 and 361)

1. **Mr. Alzayani** (Bahrain) said that the information provided in the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (A/62/13 and Add.1) shed light on, inter alia, the worsening conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories and the financial crisis affecting programmes designed to improve UNRWA services to Palestine refugees. The repressive measures imposed by Israel in those territories also affected the Agency's ability to fulfil its mandate and were incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and with the agreements concluded between UNRWA and Israel.

2. The humanitarian crisis had taken hold in 2000, since when poverty levels had increased by 30 per cent, unemployment, health, education had suffered enormously and growing numbers of Palestinians had been made homeless. Many were also increasingly confined to pockets of land that grew ever more disconnected owing to settlement construction, which had been condemned worldwide, and to the construction of the separation wall in the West Bank and around Jerusalem, which had been declared illegitimate and a violation of international law by the International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion of 2004. An added fear was that the various restrictions would impede the efforts of UNRWA to improve its services to Palestine refugees in the context of its organizational reforms aimed at enhancing programme effectiveness.

3. Israel's military operations in Lebanon during the summer of 2006 had also had serious implications for the situation of Palestine refugees and Lebanese civilians. More recently still, Israel had taken steps to cut water and electricity supplies to the Gaza Strip. With such difficulties in mind, he expressed his support for UNRWA, on which Palestine refugees were dependent for health care and education. Initially established as a temporary agency, UNRWA had continued to fulfil its humanitarian role, despite its limited resources. Responsibility for ensuring that it continued to deliver an acceptable level of services lay with the international community, and he was confident

that donors would be forthcoming with voluntary contributions that would help it to overcome its critical budget gap.

4. The Palestine refugee problem was essentially political; it was integral to the question of Palestine, which was at the heart of the whole Middle East problem. UNRWA would continue to play an indispensable role until such time as that problem was settled in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and the principle of land for peace.

5. **Mr. Aniokoye** (Nigeria) said that Nigeria identified with the struggle of the Palestinian people, long denied their right to a homeland and forced to continue living in refugee camps. His Government was very concerned about the deteriorating situation, especially in the West Bank and Gaza. It had become a very serious challenge for UNRWA to render services and development assistance to the refugees. Additional funding must be provided to sustain the Agency's work, which was central in meeting the basic needs and safeguarding the rights of the Palestinians and in highlighting current developments in the occupied Palestinian territories and other areas of conflict in the region.

6. Crossing-point closures had made it more difficult for the Agency to deliver services to the camps. It must be granted unrestricted access, and must receive increased financial and material contributions to allow it to upgrade its assistance, in essential fields to the Palestine refugees scattered over Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and Gaza. The Agency and its dedicated staff were administering their programmes very well, working in close collaboration with other United Nations agencies and planning for the future by embarking on the organizational reforms and other initiatives. The countries that had continued to host Palestine refugees despite their own problems and limited resources also deserved praise.

7. The Palestinian question remained the core of the problem in the Middle East and went beyond the refugee issue. It was imperative for the political leaders on both sides to show that they were ready to address the issue of lasting peace and begin negotiations on the agreed two-State solution. The aim must be full and unconditional independence for the Palestinian people and security for Israel.

Agenda item 33: Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/62/330-334 and 360)

8. **Mr. Kariyawasam** (Sri Lanka), speaking as Chairman of the Special Committee, introduced its report (A/62/360). As in the past, Israel's denial of access to the occupied territories had compelled the Special Committee to acquaint itself with the human-rights situation in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan by relying on a wide variety of written sources and contacts and travelling to neighbouring States to obtain first-hand information from witnesses.

9. After 40 years of occupation, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination appeared more elusive than ever and the human-rights situation in the occupied Syrian Golan had not improved either, because the occupying Power had persisted in violating a whole range of human rights and international legal norms. The discrepancy between its current rhetoric of dialogue and the deteriorating human-rights situation on the ground was glaring.

10. The occupied Palestinian territories, envisaged as a single territorial unit under the Oslo Accords, were now more divided than ever owing to the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip by land, sea and air. The situation in Gaza had become still more critical as a result of the economic sanctions Israel and others had imposed on it, the subsequent cessation of Israeli bank dealings and the recent curtailment of fuel and electricity supplies, forcing its population to survive on emergency humanitarian assistance. The dire straits of the civilian population had been compounded by repeated Israeli military ground incursions, shelling and air strikes. Israel's own Supreme Court had ordered the Government to justify its stranglehold on the Gaza Strip.

11. In the West Bank as well, the human-rights situation had continued to deteriorate. Freedom of movement, already severely restricted by an expanded system of checkpoints, roadblocks and permits, had been aggravated by the continuing illegal construction of the separation wall, 80 per cent of which encroached on the West Bank, robbing it of 13 per cent of its territory and most of its best agricultural land. At the same time, more land was being confiscated to accommodate road construction and the expansion of

the almost 150 Israeli settlements already there. There had been regular military incursions and targeted assassinations in West Bank towns, and increasingly frequent arrest and search operations. Some 11,000 Palestinians were currently in Israeli prisons, almost 400 of them children.

12. There had also been no improvement in the human-rights situation in the occupied Syrian Golan. Israeli settlements had expanded and the number of settlers had increased, subjecting the population to arbitrary denial of access to water resources and exposure to landmines. Syrian workers in the occupied Syrian Golan faced unemployment and job insecurity, and a shortage of health care plagued the occupied Arab villages in the Golan.

13. The international community needed to act urgently to remedy the situation in the occupied Arab territories, striving for a peaceful, just and lasting solution that would end the Israeli occupation and enable the Palestinian people to exercise its right to self-determination in a viable Palestinian State.

14. **Ms. Abdelhady-Nasser** (Observer for Palestine) said that a human-rights and humanitarian crisis prevailed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Forty years of human-rights abuses against the Palestinian people and Israel's illegal occupation constituted the longest military occupation in modern history. However, the Palestinian people's existence as an occupied and stateless people did not negate their entitlement to exercise their rights in accordance with international law.

15. It must be stressed that the Palestinian Territory occupied by Israel since 1967 comprised the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. Israel's declaration in September 2007 that the Gaza Strip was an "enemy entity" represented nothing more than a pretext for continuing the military occupation and justifying the illegal practices. The Special Committee had not been allowed to conduct a field mission to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, where the rights of the Palestinian people were being systematically violated by the occupying Power. The cumulative impact of four decades of such violations had been the fragmentation of Palestinian society, the devastation of families, the destruction of communities and the fragmentation of the unity and integrity of the Territory.

16. Israel's practices constituted serious violations of international humanitarian and human-rights law. It had used excessive and indiscriminate force and had killed and injured civilians, including women and children. In addition, it had used civilians as human shields during military incursions and had carried out extrajudicial killings and targeted assassinations. It had detained and imprisoned approximately 11,000 Palestinian civilians, including 400 children, 116 women and 40 elected officials. The Special Committee's report had confirmed that the continuous search-and-arrest operations in the West Bank maintained the number of prisoners at a very high level. The physical and mental ill-treatment of prisoners and detainees had been denounced by United Nations bodies and human-rights organizations. Prisoners had been denied family visits, adequate medical care and food, and due process of law.

17. Israel had also continued its practices of construction, confiscation and displacement. It had continued to construct and expand settlements and bypass roads in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to transfer Israeli settlers in an effort to change the demographic composition of the Territory. The construction of the separation wall contravened the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. Clearly, the wall was not being built for security reasons but to entrench and advance the settlements. In addition, the occupying forces had destroyed homes and infrastructures displaced civilians and confiscated and exploited the Palestinian people's natural resources.

18. The imposition of arbitrary and discriminatory restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinian civilians and the closure of all six of Gaza's crossings had effectively destroyed the economy and made thousands of families destitute. It was estimated that at least 90 per cent of the population in Gaza lived below the official poverty line. The closures, restrictions on movement and the construction of the separation wall had also caused a shortage of medical supplies and had obstructed access to medical treatment, humanitarian aid, education and places of worship. The imposition of arbitrary restrictions on residence in Occupied East Jerusalem was another practice aimed at altering the city's demographic composition, character and status.

19. The international community must hold Israel accountable for those human-rights violations and crimes. If Israel were allowed to continue acting with

impunity, it would only lead to more suffering, hardship and loss. Only by ensuring respect for international law and bringing an end to the grave human-rights violations would it be possible for the Palestinian people to enjoy their right to self-determination and to achieve the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine.

20. **Mr. Amil** (Pakistan) said that the Special Committee's report (A/62/360) once again presented a grave picture of Israel's denial of human rights across the spectrum in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan. Pakistan was deeply concerned at the continuing plight of the Palestinian population and their collective punishment under Israeli occupation. The cycle of violence and the continuing military aggression involving indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force, often deadly, was reprehensible. Pakistan denounced the loss of innocent civilian lives on both sides.

21. The continuing illegal construction of the separation wall, the expansion of settlements and bypass roads, and the restrictions on free access and movement of Palestinians and goods through closures, checkpoints, and roadblocks were human-rights violations in themselves, triggering other violations creating hardship, most devastatingly so for women and children, in all areas of daily life. The extrajudicial killings, the abductions and disappearances, the arbitrary detentions and the torture and inhumane treatment of detainees were further sources of concern.

22. The situation in the Gaza Strip was particularly disquieting. Israel's imposition of further restrictions, including the interruption of essential supplies of electricity, fuel and other goods to the civilian population made the humanitarian conditions more critical. The siege of Gaza must be brought to an immediate end, for it violated Israel's obligation under humanitarian and human-rights law.

23. The question of Palestine was the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict and there would be no peace and stability in the Middle East until it was settled justly. It was the responsibility of the United Nations to see that it was resolved satisfactorily in its entirety, including the differences between Israel and both Syria and Lebanon. The root cause of the conflict and of the human-rights violations was the Israeli occupation. An end to that occupation was therefore a *sine qua non* for peace, and the only way forward was through dialogue

and negotiations, rather than a futile resort to force or unilateral actions. Israel must end its stranglehold on the Palestinian people and stop isolating them socially and economically. Harmony among the Palestinians themselves was also essential, and the spirit of reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah should be revived, politically and on the ground, in the interest of lasting peace.

24. The international community as well must become seriously and constructively engaged in bringing about a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue based on legality, morality and justice. Pakistan welcomed the anticipated resumption of negotiations between the two sides, which must be substantive, address the key final-status issues and establish a clear time frame for attaining a permanent two-State solution.

25. Pakistan steadfastly supported the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle for self-determination and freedom and the realization of a viable Palestinian State. At the same time, parallel efforts must be made to negotiate lasting settlements of Israel's conflicts with Syria and Lebanon. It was high time to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict in order to usher in an era of peace, stability, and progress in the Middle East, which would undoubtedly further regional and international peace and security. The task was difficult but not beyond the reach of diplomatic ingenuity, political will and the universal craving for peace.

26. **Mr. Ja'afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the report of the Special Committee (A/62/360) highlighted the savagery of the Israeli war machine, which deliberately destroyed all things animate or inanimate and which, as a matter of practice, targeted women, children and the elderly. Israel's aggression against Lebanon in 2006, its rejection of United Nations resolutions, its continued refusal to allow the Special Committee to visit the occupied Arab territories and its disregard for international law proved once again that it did not want just and lasting peace for the Middle East.

27. Despite the fact that Israel's decision to impose its laws in the occupied Syrian Golan had been deemed null and void and without international legal effect by Security Council resolution 497 (1981), and despite the fact that Human Rights Council resolution 2/3 (2006) had called upon Israel to desist from imposing Israeli

citizenship and Israeli identity cards on the Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan, it nonetheless persisted in confiscating Arab lands and expanding its illegal settlements.

28. Israel also continued to plunder the natural resources of the people of the occupied Syrian Golan, in flagrant violation of its obligations as the occupying Power under the Fourth Geneva Convention. Such actions only served to inflame tensions, and Israel should expect his country to respond at the appropriate time. Syrian farmers in the Golan were also suffering because the occupation authorities had imposed exorbitant taxes on agricultural production. They also faced great difficulty in tending their crops because of scattered landmines.

29. Above all, Israel continued to collectively punish the Palestinians and other Arabs living in the occupied territories, in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The catalogue of such punishment was extensive and included the destruction of electricity and water supplies, the bombardment of public buildings and restrictions on the freedom of movement. Those practices had significantly affected the health, nutrition, family life and well-being of those living under Israeli occupation.

30. Its claims notwithstanding, Israel also continued to maintain a stranglehold on the Gaza Strip through its complete control of Gaza's airspace and land and sea borders. Israel was using that control to sadistically starve the Palestinian people in a manner reminiscent of the dark days of Nazism. The recent decision by Israel to declare the Gaza Strip a "hostile entity" confirmed again that it was an outlaw State.

31. However, in the long run, the greatest danger facing the people of the region was Israel's burial of its nuclear waste in a vast swathe of land along the Syrian border that was unmonitored by any external authority.

32. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Special Committee (A/62/360, para. 87), including the call for the Security Council to consider sanctions against Israel if it persisted in paying no attention to its international legal obligations, and to ensure the implementation of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, in which the Assembly had requested Israel to comply with its legal obligation to cease the construction of the separation wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around

East Jerusalem, and to dismantle the segments of the wall already built.

33. **Ms. Hernández Toledano** (Cuba) said it was regrettable that the Government of Israel had not allowed the Special Committee to visit the occupied territories and had not cooperated by providing information. It was also regrettable that the international community had not been able to establish the necessary mechanisms to prevent the Palestinian people from being killed on a massive scale. Her delegation reiterated its condemnation of the serious violations of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, committed by the Government of Israel. It condemned the destruction and confiscation of lands and property, the violations of the freedom of movement of the Palestinian people and the displacement of Palestinian civilians from their homes and lands.

34. Israel continued to build the wall in defiance of and disrespect for the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in violation of General Assembly resolutions, which reaffirmed the illegality of the construction of the separation wall in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The Non-Aligned Movement had reiterated its condemnation of the illegal construction of the wall. A two-State solution to the conflict would be impossible unless the construction of the wall was halted or reversed. Cuba welcomed the establishment by the General Assembly in resolution ES-10/17 of the office of the United Nations Register of Damage, and hoped that it would make an effective contribution to ensuring compliance with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and to ensuring that Israel provided compensation for the material losses suffered.

35. Her delegation firmly supported the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to establish a sovereign, independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital. Cuba called for the unconditional return of all the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and hoped to see the attainment of a just and lasting peace for all the peoples of the Middle East.

36. **Mr. Kedar** (Israel) said that the work of the Special Committee was superfluous and replete with duplication. There had been a proliferation of special committees, sessions and secretariat divisions and units, but whether they had had any effect on Israel's policies was questionable, and it was even possible that

those bodies had served to strengthen the belief that the United Nations was too one-sided to be allowed a significant role in the Middle East peace process.

37. He advised the Palestinian representative not to interpret passage of the resolution relating to the question as indicating real support or even empathy. Israel's legitimate security policies could not be changed by resolutions that created false hopes and encouraged unrealistic demands.

38. Israel was willing to cooperate with all legitimate human rights bodies and rapporteurs whose mandates did not pre-determine the results of their investigations. It had received and cooperated with rapporteurs on housing, arbitrary killings, displaced persons and health. It had also cooperated with the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, and with the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Special Committee, however, was a relic from a bygone era whose existence could not be justified morally, intellectually or politically. Its real agenda was not to help the Palestinians, but to harm Israel.

39. In principle and in practice, the Committee had flagrantly refrained from dealing with human rights violations by Palestinians. Moreover, the Hamas military takeover of Gaza had been dealt with in the report in a mere two sentences, and the Committee had failed to mention the numerous cruel and vindictive human rights violations occurring in intra-Palestinian fighting. Negative statements about Palestinians were beyond the pale for the Special Committee for the sole reason that Israel could honestly not be blamed for them. For example, although Israel had completely left Gaza in 2005 and was not involved in the intra-Palestinian fighting, the report blamed Israel and referred to the situation there as a direct consequence of the Israeli occupation. Such political and intellectual dishonesty should not be tolerated in the United Nations system.

40. Although the Special Committee claimed its report reflected the substance of the information that had been gathered, it patently ignored any information that did not fit its one-sided ideological agenda. Thus, while Israel's anti-terror measures were widely covered, the report never mentioned Palestinian terrorism against Israel. Despite the numerous inaccuracies in that and past reports of the Special

Committee, his country found consolation in the fact that, because the Special Committee was such a marginal body, it was unlikely that many people outside the meeting room had ever heard of it, much less read its reports.

41. Notwithstanding the Special Committee's malicious attempts to de-legitimize Israel, the United Nations potentially had much to offer both Israel and the Palestinians in their renewed efforts to resolve their differences. That potential was vitiated, however, by the continued existence of the Special Committee and other United Nations organs and mandates whose sole purpose was to perpetuate anti-Israeli propaganda. He called on Member States to reject the report of the Special Committee and end its ill-conceived and ill-managed mandate.

42. **Mr. Hamoudi** (United Arab Emirates) said that Israel continued to pursue a policy of obfuscation in an attempt to hide the crimes and humanitarian violations it had committed against the Palestinian and Arab populations in the occupied territories. That policy had forced the General Assembly to renew the mandate of the Special Committee every year ever since its establishment.

43. The Special Committee's report highlighted the inhumane treatment of the Palestinians and the Arab population of the Syrian Golan under Israeli occupation. It also presented a thorough listing of Israel's illegal practices aimed at legitimizing its occupation of Arab lands and its usurpation of their natural resources.

44. His country strongly condemned the illegal practices and humanitarian violations committed by Israel. It was also deeply worried by the silence of the international community in respect of a number of Israeli activities, namely the excavation work at the Al-Haram al-Sharif within the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the unabated expansion of existing settlements and the building of new ones, the construction of bypass roads and the continued construction of the separation wall.

45. He called on the international community to compel Israel to halt all illegal practices that affected the human rights of the Palestinian people and stressed the importance of strengthening the mandate of the office of the Register of Damage established by the General Assembly. Israel should also be forced to pay compensation to the Palestinians and the Syrians of the Golan for damage arising from its occupation.

46. Since the primary responsibility for protecting the Palestinian people and the people of the Syrian Golan rested with the United Nations, he called upon the General Assembly to strengthen the mandate of the Special Committee so that it could continue its invaluable work.

47. **Mr. Mohamed** (Iraq) said that his delegation strongly condemned Israel's continued violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people, including the use of arbitrary force, collective punishment, land seizure and settlement building and expansion. He also condemned Israel's utter lack of regard for United Nations resolutions and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the construction of the separation wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, its destruction of Palestinian property and infrastructure and all actions it had taken in an attempt to alter the legal status and the geographical and demographical character of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

48. The community of nations should, without delay, take appropriate measures to compel Israel to comply with all relevant international resolutions, particularly those of the Security Council. For its part, Iraq firmly supported the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and their struggle to establish an independent State with its capital in Jerusalem.

49. Responding to the concerns raised by some delegations about the situation of the Palestinians in Iraq, he said that both the Iraqi and the Palestinian people had been the victims of the terrorist acts being perpetrated by the terrorist gangs and armed militias operating in Iraq.

50. **Mr. Natalegawa** (Indonesia) regretted the fact that despite condemnation by the General Assembly of all Israeli settlement activities, its construction of the wall, and its excessive and indiscriminate use of force against the civilian population, Israel had continued to disregard its obligations under international law. The wall, and its associated restriction of movement, unemployment, closures and seizure of land, continued to destroy Palestinian culture and livelihoods, creating an unprecedented degree of human suffering and insecurity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

51. Without visible improvement in humanitarian conditions for the Palestinians, optimism for peace would turn into disillusionment, and fuel extremist hatred. Israel should honour its obligations under

United Nations resolutions, heed the advice of the International Court of Justice to dismantle the wall, and abide by the Fourth Geneva Convention. Israel should also withdraw its forces from all the Palestinian and Syrian territory it occupied and allow the Palestinian refugees to return to their land. Lastly, both sides should renounce violence, since continued violence only invited more of the same.

52. He welcomed the efforts of the parties and the Quartet to further the peace process. Regular meetings between Palestinians and Israelis were of utmost importance to building confidence in preparation for the upcoming summit in Annapolis, Maryland, which could even become a gateway to peace in the region. The response to the inevitable obstacles would determine how zealous both sides were for peace. It was therefore crucial for the Palestinians to close ranks and solve their internal problems. Both sides should accept their historic responsibilities and refuse to be discouraged about achieving a two-State solution. Nor should either side make utterances or take actions capable of endangering negotiations or expectations. In that regard, he urged Israel to comply fully and in good faith with the recommendations of the Special Committee.

53. **Mr. Al-Henzab** (Qatar), recalling that the report of the Special Committee had noted that occupation itself was a violation of human rights, said it was time to end the occupation and to reach a comprehensive and permanent settlement to the question of Palestine that would guarantee the Palestinian people their fundamental rights. The upcoming peace conference, to be held in Annapolis, Maryland, offered a ray of hope that the participants would muster the political will to ensure its success.

54. In Gaza, Israel had redoubled its military operations and its blockade had exacerbated the appalling humanitarian situation. Gaza was now on the verge of complete dependence on international assistance.

55. The Israeli authorities still detained more than 10,000 Palestinians, including hundreds of women and children, in abject conditions. They had also abducted numerous democratically elected Palestinian officials and continued to practise arbitrary detention and mass arrest.

56. Commending the efforts of the Department of Public Information to promote the work of the Special

Committee, he stressed that the Department should continue to give due importance to the work of both the Special Committee and the Fourth Committee in relation to Palestine, one of the most important issues on the agenda of the United Nations.

Right of reply

57. **Mr. Ja'afari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that he was shocked that the representative of Israel would accuse the very organization that had created the State he represented of being anti-Semitic. If that were true, then it would never have adopted General Assembly resolution 181 (II) creating the State of Israel.

58. In response to the Israeli representative's dismissal of the Special Committee's reports as being nothing more than ink on paper, he said that if that assertion were true, then General Assembly resolution 181 (II) creating the State of Israel would then also be merely ink on paper.

59. The fact that Israel had received many special rapporteurs charged with investigating events in the occupied Arab territories was confirmation of the international community's concern over Israeli practices in those territories. He wondered why Israel, if it was innocent of the accusations directed against it in the Special Committee's report, refused to cooperate with that Committee and why it continued to not allow it to visit the occupied Arab territories. The answer was clear: Israel did not want the Special Committee to investigate the practices of the occupation authorities.

60. The Israeli Prime Minister had announced that peace with the Palestinians was conditioned on their acceptance that Israel was a State for Jews only. Such a racist statement implied that Israel intended to expel the Palestinians who had remained within its 1948 borders. It also meant that Israel had no intention of implementing General Assembly resolution 194 (III), which called for all Palestinian refugees to be allowed to return to their homes, because it believed that that resolution was also merely ink on paper.

61. Concerning the occupied Syrian Golan, he said that Israel was not satisfied with simply occupying the Golan, but wanted to annex it, just as Nazi Germany had annexed territories adjoining it.

62. **Ms. Nasser** (Observer for Palestine) said that the representative of Israel had tried to distort the context of the discussion by ignoring Israel's crimes and

attacking the Special Committee. Indeed, she questioned whether Israel could ever cease its human rights violations and unlawful practices against the Palestine people, or indeed to make amends for them, if it could not even admit to having committed those crimes. It did not seem possible for Israel to pursue peace while simultaneously breaking the law.

63. The United Nations could reasonably ask its members to respect international laws upholding human rights. In turn, the Palestinian people could not abandon hopes that the United Nations would fulfil its responsibility towards Palestine, after having agreed to the partition 60 years previously.

64. The Israeli representative's assertion that his country's security policies could not be changed by United Nations resolutions was disturbing, as all Member States were required to uphold the agreements passed by the Organization. Israel was behaving like a rogue State in violating international laws and norms, and ignoring its role as an occupier. Surely it could not justify its systematic violation of human rights, including war crimes against children.

65. The Israeli representative's comments on the internal affairs of Palestine were attempts to exploit the Palestinian people's tragedies and problems, and only reflected Israel's ill-will. The people of Palestine would do their utmost to restore their unity and achieve their national aspirations. She rejected Israel's attempt to meddle in Palestine's internal affairs, and noted that Palestine did not meddle in Israel's affairs. The actions taken by Israel, as an occupying Power, towards civilians were of primary concern. In that regard, Israel should comply with international law and uphold its obligations as an occupying Power, while working towards a peaceful settlement.

66. **Mr. Gebreel** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said he was stunned by the harsh criticisms voiced by the representative of Israel and his lack of respect not only for the members of the Special Committee and the States which they represented, but for the entire international community.

67. The representative of Israel had accused the Special Committee of being marginal, biased and responsible for the deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In reality, the inability of the Special Committee to fulfil its mandate and to help the Palestinian people was primarily related to Israel's lack of cooperation, its disdain for the authority

of the Special Committee and its disregard for Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

68. The factional fighting among the Palestinians in Gaza and its tragic consequences were undeniably related to the occupation and were part of Israel's deliberate efforts to cause disunity among the Palestinians and to isolate them.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.