

the League of Arab States, in accordance with rule 39.⁸

During the debate, most speakers expressed the opinion that Israel's action was an annexation of Syrian territory, a violation of international law and a new, serious obstacle to a settlement of the Middle East conflict. Several States, including China, the German Democratic Republic, Indonesia, Uganda and Yugoslavia, condemned the Israeli action and supported the Syrian demand that Israel revoke its decision. A number of speakers, such as China, Cuba, India, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Tunisia, Uganda, the USSR, Viet Nam and Yugoslavia, called for consideration of sanctions or firm action in the case of Israel's non-compliance with the Council decision.

Several countries, for example the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Uganda and Viet Nam, said Israel's action had to be seen in the larger context of its expansion and annexation policy. The need for Israel's withdrawal, not only from the Golan Heights but from all the territories occupied since 1967, was underlined by a number of States, among them Mexico, Romania, Turkey and Zaire.

In the Syrian Arab Republic's view, Israel's action epitomized a process of colonization begun in 1967 with a twofold objective: first, to create a de facto settler-colonialist situation, and second, to prevent the displaced Syrian Arab citizens, numbering approximately 200,000, from returning to their homes and property in the Golan Heights. It saw Israel's act not only as a breach of the cease-fire but as an act of war, and declared that it would not spare any effort to defend its territory and its national interests. It expected the Council to demand that Israel rescind its annexation of Syrian territory and, in the case of non-compliance, to impose sanctions.

Israel said it had occupied the Golan Heights in self-defence, following frequent Syrian bombardment of Israeli towns. Since then, the Syrian Arab Republic had refused to respond to Israel's repeated appeals for peace. In 1981, the Syrian Arab Republic had stepped up its subversive activities to incite the local Druze population of the Golan Heights against Israel and had been tightening its links with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Israel's decision to apply its laws, jurisdiction and administration to the Golan Heights had been taken in order to regularize the situation, as all the authorities there, military and civilian, were Israelis. No responsible Government could agree to return to the totally insecure pre-1967 armistice demarcation lines. Israel again appealed to the Syrian Arab Republic to start negotiations on all outstanding issues, including the international boundary.

Egypt, stating that the Israeli action undermined the Middle East peace process, urged Israel to rescind that act and desist from similar measures and called on the United Nations to put an end to the Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories. Kuwait stated that the timing of the sudden Israeli decision and the attempts to convince the Syrian population of the Golan Heights to become Israeli citizens or, at least, carry Israeli identification cards indicated that Israel had planned to annex that territory a long time ago. Lebanon expressed unconditional support for the Syrian Arab Republic in the face of Israel's new aggression, adding that the world would become lawless if nations were allowed to get away with such actions. Tunisia believed that Israel's recent steps were not an isolated incident but were designed to strengthen a premeditated and systematic policy of transforming fact into law and occupation into outright annexation.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya stated that Israel would not have dared carry out its aggression against the Golan Heights had it not been for the support from and alliance with the United States. A similar view was held by several other speakers, such as the German Democratic Republic, the USSR and Viet Nam. The Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States hoped the United States would rejoin the international consensus on the current occasion, instead of allowing Israel to create new colonial and annexationist legitimacy.

The Niger considered that Israel's action confirmed its periodically revealed determination to maintain a state of successive crises in order to cement its policy of aggression, war and domination. Stating that any step towards confrontation must be discouraged, Senegal said the Council had the duty to render Israel's decision inoperative. Uganda said Israel could achieve security not by the annexation of occupied territories and aggression against neighbouring Arab States but only through a negotiated and comprehensive peace, beginning with a just settlement of the Palestine question.

China said the Council should reaffirm that Israel's action was illegal, null and void and should be revoked; it should call on Israel to withdraw from the territories occupied since 1967. Japan also urged Israel to withdraw and said Israel must realize that only by pursuing a solution to the Middle East problem through peaceful means could its own security be more effectively guaranteed. The Philippines viewed the action by the Israeli Parliament as complicating and obstructing the search for a just and lasting solution in the Middle East.

⁸ See footnote b on p. 277.