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## Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

### Summary record of the 26th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 9 November 2023, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Joyini..... (South Africa)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Agenda item 49: United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East**

*(continued)* (A/C.4/78/L.10, A/C.4/78/L.11 and A/C.4/78/L.12)

1. **Mr. Nasir** (Indonesia), introducing draft resolutions A/C.4/78/L.11 and A/C.4/78/L.12, said that the resolutions of the previous session had been updated, as necessary, and that they reaffirmed the rights of Palestine refugees and the international community's longstanding support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

2. In draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.11, the General Assembly would call for generous contributions to UNRWA in view of increased expenditures in all five fields of operation of the Agency. In draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.12, the Secretary-General was requested to take all appropriate steps for the protection of Arab property, assets and property rights.

3. **Mr. Van Schalkwyk** (South Africa), introducing draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.10, said that, in the draft resolution, the General Assembly would reaffirm that the effective functioning of UNRWA remained essential; endorse the efforts of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA to continue to provide assistance to persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities; and reaffirm their right to return to their homes in the territories occupied by Israel.

4. **Mr. Kedar** (Israel) said that the anti-Israeli majority in the United Nations would ensure that all the draft resolutions would be adopted, regardless of their contents or the situation on the ground. His delegation nevertheless called on all decent, democratic, fair and peace-loving Member States to vote against them, not only because of their fabrications, lies, demonizing language and one-sided narrative, but because of what was not mentioned in them, despite the Hamas terrorist attack on southern Israel on 7 October 2023. There was no mention of the many war crimes committed by Hamas, including the murder of 1,400 civilians; no mention of any call for the immediate, unconditional release of the 240 hostages in Gaza; no mention of the exploitation by Hamas of aid for its terrorist activities, including United Nations facilities; no mention of Hamas infrastructure built near to, in and under hospitals, mosques and schools; no mention of Hamas' use of human shields; no mention of theft of fuel from UNRWA and hospitals by Hamas; no mention of the moral failure of the Palestinian Authority to condemn terror; and no mention of the destructive role of Iran,

which had bankrolled, armed and trained Hamas and unleashed its proxies in Lebanon, Syria and Yemen to commit terrorism against Israel and other regional States. Moreover, the draft resolution was being promoted by such human rights violators as North Korea, Syria, Iran, Cuba and Venezuela.

5. **Mr. Croker** (United Kingdom) said that his delegation would maintain its voting position on the three draft resolutions, in line with its approach to and support for the two-State solution, which remained the only viable long-term solution. It welcomed the approach taken by the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine, namely that the draft resolutions were technical rollovers of previous resolutions. It recognized that the wording of the draft resolutions did not reflect the context at that moment in Israel and Gaza.

6. His delegation's vote on the draft resolutions did not affect its enduring solidarity with Israel in the wake of the heinous attacks perpetrated by Hamas on 7 October. While supporting the right of Israel to self-defence against terrorism, his delegation stated clearly that Israel must act in line with human rights and humanitarian law and avoid harming civilians. Hamas, whose deliberate murder and kidnapping of innocent people in Israel had put civilians in Gaza at risk, did not speak or act in the interest of Palestinian people. His delegation was pained at the loss of so many innocent lives on and since 7 October and reiterated its support for the Palestinian Authority as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Palestinian civilians were experiencing a devastating humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and violence was rising in the West Bank. His delegation strongly condemned settler violence in the West Bank and maintained its long-standing position that settlements were illegal under international law and contrary to the cause of peace. The United Kingdom would continue to work with its partners towards a two-State solution based on the borders of 1967, with Jerusalem as a shared capital, something that would provide justice and security for both Israelis and Palestinians.

7. **Mr. Kelley** (United States of America), speaking in relation to agenda items 49 and 50, said that one-sided resolutions would not advance peace, as they ignored facts on the ground and perpetuated long-standing divisions at a time when the international community needed to work together. There was no shortcut to a two-State solution, and the draft resolutions would not create the conditions for negotiations. Moreover, no resolution should hold Israel to a standard not expected of other countries.

8. His delegation would abstain on draft resolution [A/C.4/78/L.11](#). It would vote against draft resolution [A/C.4/78/L.10](#), because it reflected a prejudgment of final status issues that should be negotiated by the parties, not the General Assembly. Those votes should not be interpreted as reflecting a lack of confidence in or support for UNRWA, which played a stabilizing role across the region and whose staff put their lives on the line to help the people of Gaza. The United States conveyed its condolences to those who had lost loved ones and colleagues. It had the utmost admiration for the courage of UNRWA staff.

9. The United States was proud to be the largest single donor to Palestinian refugees. It had contributed more than \$1 billion to UNRWA since 2020, and had recently announced an additional \$100 million in humanitarian assistance for Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. All Member States were encouraged to increase their support for both emergency appeals and the core budget of UNRWA – rhetorical support should be matched with concrete financial support.

10. His delegation supported the reform efforts that strengthened UNRWA accountability and transparency. It underscored the need for the Agency to continue to respect the principles of neutrality, independence, humanity and impartiality.

11. In the two weeks since the United States had helped conclude an agreement among Israel, Egypt and the United Nations for the delivery of humanitarian aid, life-saving deliveries had been made. The volume of aid was still insufficient, and his Government was pressing for it to be increased and for measures to be put in place to prevent its diversion by terrorist groups. Mechanisms to enable fuel to reach hospitals had to be operationalized. His Government had supported humanitarian pauses in the fighting in Gaza to permit hostages to leave, aid to enter, and civilians to have safe passage.

12. **Mr. Romero Puentes** (Cuba) said that it was not fair to question the content of the draft resolutions because of their shortcomings; the points that had been omitted were precisely what had prevented the Security Council from acting. For that matter, the resolutions in question made no mention of the 10,328 Palestinians and United Nations staff members who had been murdered over the previous month, and no mention of the more than 18,000 tons of explosives dropped on Gaza.

13. The Cuban revolution had denounced the persecution and genocide of the Jewish people by the Nazis; but the Zionist displacement, persecution and

genocide of the Palestinian people were the most similar thing to them in modern history.

*Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.10: Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East*

14. **Ms. Ukabiala** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Bahrain, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Comoros, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Gambia, Greece, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye and Viet Nam.

15. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia,

South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Canada, Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Cameroon, Guatemala, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

16. *Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.10 was adopted by 160 votes to 4, with 7 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.11: Assistance to Palestine refugees*

17. **Ms. Ukabiala** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Bahrain, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Comoros, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Gambia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, United Arab Emirates and Viet Nam.

18. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan,

Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Israel.

*Abstaining:*

Cameroon, Guatemala, Kiribati, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

19. *Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.11 was adopted by 161 votes to 1, with 11 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.12: Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues*

20. **Ms. Ukabiala** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Bahrain, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Comoros, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Gambia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and Viet Nam.

21. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Cameroon, Guatemala, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, South Sudan, Togo, Vanuatu.

22. Draft resolution [A/C.4/78/L.12](#) was adopted by 156 votes to 6, with 8 abstentions.

23. **Mr. Arbeiter** (Canada) said that his delegation's vote in favour of draft resolution [A/C.4/78/L.11](#) reflected a long-standing commitment to ensuring that Palestinian refugees were provided with basic health care, education, welfare and social services, in addition to emergency aid. It was important to recognize the vital role played by UNRWA in providing aid to civilians and to support the Agency. Canada condemned Hamas' brutal terrorist attacks, recognized the right of Israel to self-defence and called for the release of the hostages. The Agency was currently playing a vital role in helping to protect civilian lives. His delegation conveyed his condolences to the families of the victims, including the UNRWA staff members. Deliveries of aid were welcome, but more was needed and a humanitarian pause was necessary to allow fuel, water and other aid into Gaza.

24. Canada had announced \$60 million in aid for civilians and for UNRWA, in addition to its multi-year contribution of \$100 million to the Agency. It was critically important that funds should reach those in need. The funding provided by Canada strengthened the ability of UNRWA staff to monitor violations of neutrality and improve transparency and accountability.

25. Too many draft resolutions related to the Arab-Israeli conflict came before the General Assembly each year. His delegation would continue to vote against draft resolutions that did not address complexities or the responsibilities of all parties, including terrorist organizations. Canada remained committed to the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, including the establishment of a Palestinian State living side by side with Israel.

**Agenda item 50: Israeli practices and settlement activities affecting the rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the occupied territories**  
(continued) ([A/C.4/78/L.13](#), [A/C.4/78/L.14](#) and [A/C.4/78/L.15](#))

26. **Mr. Romero Puentes** (Cuba), introducing draft resolution [A/C.4/78/L.13](#), said that all of the grave and systematic violations of international law by Israel, the occupying Power, which were fully documented by the United Nations and international organizations, had intensified and that the human rights crisis that particularly affected the Palestinian civilian population under Israeli occupation had worsened.

27. Introducing draft resolution [A/C.4/78/L.14](#), which was a technical update to the resolution adopted at the previous session, he said that the General Assembly was deeply concerned by the continued Israeli military occupation of the Syrian Golan.

28. **Mr. Gertze** (Namibia), introducing draft resolution [A/C.4/78/L.15](#), said that it reflected the severity of the situation at that time and the imperative for accountability to halt the violations, protect Palestinian civilians and enable the attainment of justice and peace.

29. **Ms. Angarón** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union condemned in the strongest possible terms Hamas and its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks in Israel. There was no justification for terror, and the use of human shields by Hamas was an atrocity. Israel had the right under international law to self-defence, and the European Union called on Hamas to release the hostages, many of whom were citizens of the European Union.

30. The deterioration in the humanitarian situation in Gaza was of the utmost concern, and there must be rapid, safe and unhindered access to allow aid to reach those in need, including through humanitarian corridors and pauses. The European Union would work with its partners in the region to protect civilians, provide assistance and facilitate access to food, water, health care, fuel and shelter, while ensuring that terrorist organizations did not divert such assistance. It was essential to avoid a regional escalation and, for that purpose, to cooperate with partners, including the Palestinian Authority. The European Union was prepared to help relaunch a political process based on a two-State solution, including through the Peace Day Effort. It welcomed diplomatic initiatives with regard to peace and security, and supported the prompt convening of an international peace conference.

31. It was important to counter the spread of disinformation, and media platforms must be held legally responsible in that regard.

32. Given that the draft resolutions were a technical rollover that did not reflect or address the events on the ground since the attacks of 7 October, States members of the European Union had adopted the same pattern of voting as at the previous session in respect of the draft resolutions under agenda items 49 and 50.

33. With regard to draft resolution [A/C.4/78/L.10](#), the European Union believed that UNRWA was a vital provider of essential services to Palestine refugees in its areas of operation, and therefore a force for stability in the region. The European Union and its States members were collectively the largest donors to UNRWA. They would continue to provide it with firm and predictable political and financial support. It was, however, regrettable that there had been no opportunity for negotiations on the draft resolution, which did not

reflect the situation on the ground in Gaza or the challenges facing UNRWA.

34. The use of the term “Palestine” in the draft resolutions could not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and was without prejudice to the individual positions of member States of the European Union on the issue. Furthermore, the European Union as a whole had not expressed a legal view with regard to the term “forced displacement”.

35. **Mr. Kris** (United States of America) said that there must be no return to the unacceptable status quo that had prevailed prior to the crisis that had started on 7 October, a period when Hamas had terrorized Israel and used Palestinian civilians as human shields and violent extremist settlers in the West Bank had terrorized Palestinians. Israelis and Palestinians equally deserved to live safely in freedom, dignity, justice and prosperity. What would come after the crisis must be centred around a two-State solution, and the United States was committed to providing support through constructive measures.

36. It was regrettable that the draft resolutions did not contribute to that vision. Although the draft resolutions were deeply flawed and did not meet the moment, the United States would continue to work with all parties toward a future in which Palestinians could fully realize their legitimate right to self-determination.

37. **Mr. Szczerki** (Poland) said that, through its humanitarian and development aid projects, Poland had proved its political commitment to the stabilization of the Middle East and was a consistent supporter of UNRWA, whose work it appreciated. The Agency played an indispensable role in providing assistance to Palestinians through protection and basic services.

38. His delegation had decided to maintain the voting pattern of the previous session with regard to the draft resolutions under agenda items 49 and 50. Poland was following the crisis with great concern, as it knew the lasting consequences of war, invasion and terror. Civilians on both sides must be protected and those in Gaza should be provided with humanitarian assistance, for which access should be allowed. In addition, third-country nationals, including Polish citizens and their families, should be allowed to leave the Gaza Strip safe and sound, as was their fundamental humanitarian right. Terrorism against civilian populations could not be tolerated or ever justified. Israel had the right to self-defence in compliance with international law and international humanitarian law, and all hostages in Gaza must be immediately released.

39. **Mr. Croker** (United Kingdom) said that his delegation would maintain its voting positions and reiterated the points made with regard to agenda item 49.

*Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.13: Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian people and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories*

40. **Ms. Ukabiala** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Bahrain, Belize, Brunei Darussalam, Gambia, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Somalia and Sudan.

41. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Algeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Australia, Austria, Canada, Czechia, Guatemala, Hungary, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Papua New Guinea, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, India, Ireland,

Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Ukraine, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

42. *Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.13 was adopted by 85 votes to 13, with 72 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.14: The occupied Syrian Golan*

43. **Ms. Ukabiala** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Algeria, Bahrain, Belize, Brunei Darussalam, Comoros, Gambia, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Malaysia, Mauritania, Somalia, South Africa and Sudan.

44. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the

Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Israel, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Australia, Cameroon, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Georgia, Guatemala, Kiribati, Madagascar, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Nepal, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Togo, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

45. *Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.14 was adopted by 146 votes to 2, with 23 abstentions.*

*Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.15: Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan*

46. **Ms. Ukabiala** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the following delegations had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Bahrain, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Comoros, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Gambia, Greece, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Sweden and Switzerland.

47. *A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland,

France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

*Against:*

Canada, Hungary, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, United States of America.

*Abstaining:*

Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Georgia, Guatemala, Kiribati, Malawi, Nepal, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Togo, Uruguay, Vanuatu.

48. *Draft resolution A/C.4/78/L.15 was adopted by 145 votes to 7, with 18 abstentions.*

49. **Mr. Baghdadi** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation was grateful to all the sponsors and the delegations that had voted in favour of the draft resolutions under agenda items 49 and 50. By doing so, they had sent a message that Israel must end its occupation of Arab territory. Refraining from supporting the occupation or recognizing its effects was an important step towards dismantling the settler-colonial system, which depended on forced demographic change and grave human rights violations.

50. The work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied

Territories was commendable. The Syrian Arab Republic underscored its right to regain the Syrian Golan, which had been occupied since 1967. As was stated in the relevant resolutions, particularly Security Council resolution 497 (1981), all measures taken by Israel, the occupying Power, to change the demographic character of the Golan or to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration were null, void and without international legal effect. The Golan was and would remain Arab and Syrian and would inevitably return to his country.

51. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that his delegation was grateful to all delegations that had supported the draft resolutions under agenda items 49 and 50, reiterating the principles that they contained. However, the purpose of the United Nations and of multilateralism, subsequent to argument and discussion based on international law, was to come to conclusions and to ensure the implementation of the resolutions, in line with the collective duty to find solutions to protracted problems.

52. He appreciated the understanding expressed in regard to the technical rollover, as it had not been possible to ensure that the resolutions reflected the current situation. Because the Security Council had been paralyzed for more than a month, the issue had come before the General Assembly, which had adopted resolution ES-10/21 to address the horrific situation in the Gaza Strip and called for an immediate ceasefire. That resolution ought already to have been implemented, and should be implemented as soon as possible.

53. **Ms. Oehri** (Liechtenstein) said that her delegation had decided to maintain its voting position on the draft resolutions, appreciating that the texts were a technical rollover proposed in the spirit of diplomatic cooperation and for the sake of efficiency. As a result, they did not reflect or address the developments that had taken place in Israel and Palestine since 7 October. In that regard, she referred to her delegation's previous statements on the topic, notably in the resumed emergency special session of the General Assembly and in the open debate held by the Security Council on 24 October. In particular, her delegation condemned in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attack carried out by Hamas on 7 October. It affirmed the right of Israel to self-defence in accordance with international law and international humanitarian law, in particular the principles of proportionality and distinction. Liechtenstein again joined the call for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages.

54. **Mr. Ghelich** (Islamic Republic of Iran) welcomed the adoption of all the draft resolutions submitted under agenda items 49 and 50. Strong support for the Palestinian cause had been expressed, particularly regarding the realization of inalienable rights and the accountability of the occupying regime for crimes committed against Palestinians.

55. Despite the initiatives taken by numerous countries and the United Nations and other international and regional organizations to alleviate Palestinian suffering, and the condemnation expressed in resolutions, as well as peace plans and fact-finding missions, the occupying regime refused to adhere to international laws and prevented the international community from reaching a just settlement.

56. The most effective path to peace in Palestine was a referendum among all residents of Palestine – Jews, Christians and Muslims – and displaced Palestinians and refugees. In the light of the history of conflict and instability in the Middle East, peace could be achieved only by ending the occupation, restoring the Palestinians' inalienable right to self-determination, returning refugees to their homeland and establishing a Palestinian State with Al-Quds al-Sharif (Jerusalem) as its capital.

57. The shameful history of the Israeli regime could be summed up as occupation, brutality, massacre and flagrant violations of human rights and humanitarian law. Considering the voting pattern and their false allegations, nobody had any reason to believe the Israeli authorities. The Israeli regime was alone in the world in openly practising racism. Its use of advanced technology, provided by other States, did not mean it was progressive.

58. **Mr. Carpenter** (Switzerland) said that his delegation noted that the resolutions under agenda items 49 and 50 did not reflect the situation on the ground in Israel and in the occupied Palestinian territory. Since 7 October, Switzerland had condemned the terrorist attacks by Hamas against civilians in Israel and it called for the release of the hostages held in Gaza. It recognized the right of Israel to self-defence while recalling that international humanitarian law must be respected by both parties, including the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution. His delegation deplored the deaths of the victims of Hamas' terrorist acts and the deaths of thousands of civilians, including thousands of children, in Israel and throughout the occupied Palestinian territory.

59. The humanitarian situation in Gaza was catastrophic, and allowing and facilitating the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief to civilians in

need was an obligation under international humanitarian law. There must be access to water, food and medical care. The fuel needed for humanitarian aid must also be allowed into the Gaza Strip. Humanitarian personnel, including medical staff, and civilian structures, such as residential buildings and hospitals, both in Israel and Gaza, must be respected and protected. Humanitarian pauses or truces were necessary to guarantee access to aid and meet the needs of the population.

60. Peace and stability could rest only on the two-State solution: two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side, in peace, within secure and recognized borders.

61. **Mr. Kim In Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation categorically rejected the allegations made by the representative of Israel, which were a political provocation to demonize and tarnish the international image of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and a sinister disinformation and propaganda campaign to distract the attention of the international community from Israel's heinous war crimes and crimes against humanity.

62. In defiance of the strong protests and condemnation of the international community, Israel continued to perpetrate the most barbaric atrocities against innocent Palestinian civilians. As a result, the Gaza Strip was increasingly becoming a living hell and the Middle East situation was spiralling out of control. The international community should take urgent measures to hold Israel accountable for its war crimes and crimes against humanity. If Israel continued to perpetrate barbaric atrocities against the innocent Palestinian people and other Arab peoples, it would face stronger condemnation.

63. His delegation reiterated its steadfast support for the Palestinian people and its solidarity with their just struggle to exercise all their inalienable rights, including the establishment of an independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital.

#### **Agenda item 120: Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/C.4/78/L.16)**

*Draft decision A/C.4/78/L.16: Proposed programme of work and timetable of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) for the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly*

64. **The Chair** said that the proposed programme of work had been prepared taking into account the experience of the current and previous sessions of the Committee, regarding in particular the number of

meetings required to conduct and conclude the work of the Committee in an efficient and timely manner. The draft decision would be annexed to the report on the item to the General Assembly for its consideration. The Bureau of the seventy-ninth session of the Committee would be able to review the programme of work and make adjustments, as it deemed necessary.

65. Regarding the Committee's working methods, she recalled that the Committee would continue to hold interactive dialogues under the items on which it had traditionally held those dialogues, namely questions relating to information, outer space, peacekeeping, special political missions, effects of atomic radiation, as well as UNRWA and Israeli practices and settlement activities. Time limits for various categories of statements had served the Committee well throughout the session and would be maintained. During the intersessional period, an informal meeting of the Fourth Committee devoted to working methods would be convened to enable an exploration of lessons learned and best practices for the future.

66. *Draft decision A/C.4/78/L.16 was adopted.*

#### **Completion of the Committee's work**

67. **The Chair**, after presenting an overview of the activities of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), said that the Committee had completed its work for the main part of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly.

*The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.*