

In the name of God,

Mr. Speaker,

Brother Citizens, Members of the National Assembly,

I deemed it my duty towards our people in Egypt whom you represent, and towards our Arab nation in whose struggle our people here in Egypt represent the vanguard, to come to your august Assembly to talk to you about what I know, and you know, as being the question of our sacred struggle and the action undertaken by us in this connection, as well as our responsibility towards it from now on. This is because I believe that the whole truth equates with full responsibility, and since the responsibility is being borne by the whole nation, it has therefore the indisputable right to the whole truth.

It is for this reason that I ask your permission to summarize before you all the facts related to our position today. I do not do this just to recall what has taken place, but I do it so that we may all remember, reassure ourselves and feel confident in the accuracy of our calculations and the decisions which we base upon these calculations.

Brothers,

In my statement to you now I shall divide my speech into three parts so as to draw before you a complete and clear picture. The first part will deal with our basic commitments in a cause which represents to us the most honourable cause because it is the most just one. The second part will deal with our continual action, by all means, in order to protect our basic commitments since we have borne the responsibility for them until now. The third part will deal with our conception of the forth-coming steps as imposed upon us by the values which we represent and the principles in which we believe.

First : Our basic commitment : Brethren, we will not deny before ourselves nor before others, that our nation faced a serious setback on June 5, 1967.

We lost a battle and had the honour and courage to face the setback and also face the others with the reality. We did not deceive or delude, we refused to bury our heads in the sand like ostriches, or pretend that the arrow directed against us did not wound or cause pain.

We admitted that we lost a battle, but at the same time we have shown, out of conviction, that we did not lose the war. This was not

pretence on our part, it was the reality concerning the will, the potentialities, the powers and the preparedness of our nation.

The fait accompli, at a certain moment, cannot change the face of the great truth if we can spotlight this truth and if we possess, in the moment of danger, the strong nerves that can bear the chock and distinguish between what is shallow and casual and what is natural and deep that has the powers of perseverance and continuity.

We have lost a battle in the war between us and Israel, this is possible but we did not lose the whole war because this is contrary to nature, history and progress. The living evidence to this was the stand of the masses of our Arab nation behind our immortal leader Gamal Abdel Nasser on the 9th and 10th of June 1967. This stand was not a passionate outburst, it was a genuine expression of the nature of things. The precise interpretation of this was that the Arab masses told Gamal Abdel Nasser -- never mind a stumble on the road. Let us stand up, start anew and proceed together believing in God, in ourselves and in the possibility of achieving victory, ready to bear all its costs and responsibilities.

Since that day Gamal Abdel Nasser defined our conception or our basic commitments in two points which were accepted by all. The people gave all that they had of money, work and blood in their upholding of these two points, which are as follows :

One — The necessity of restoring all territories occupied since the 1967 aggression and the inevitability of withdrawing all occupation troops from them. These territories as Gamal Abdel Nasser enumerated them before the masses of our nation are, Arab Jerusalem, the West Bank of the Jordan, the Gaza Strip, the Syrian Heights and Sinai. We shall never accept any bargaining concerning our land, for the land of any people represents their national honour, as Gamal Abdel Nasser told you in this very place.

Two — The necessity of protecting the Palestinian people's rights not only because we cannot and it is not in our power to speak on their behalf but also because we cannot concede or give anything up in their name.

We shall not be the generation that gave up the Palestinian people's rights. If we are not able to restore more of them, then we shall not, at least, bear, from the national, historical or conscience point of view, the responsibility of giving up any of these rights.

These were, and still are, our basic commitments ; they will, with

God's will, remain as such. Nobody and no circumstances will ever change these commitments since faith in them is stronger than all circumstances. For these are not merely the rights of a nation but also the exigencies of destiny.

Second : Our endeavour to secure the abiding by our basic commitment has not ceased during the past years neither on the battlefield against the enemy nor in spelling out the realities of these commitment before the entire public opinion nor in the attempts to cooperate with the world community in order to find an outlet that could maintain peace on justice and inspired by the principles of international law.

Our Armed Forces will not spare a chance of engagement with the enemy even in the worst circumstances. The battle of Ras El Esh took place only a few weeks in the wake of June, 1967 and our naval units were in combat with the enemy's units and sunk « Eilat », one of the major pieces of its fleet, during the very same year.

Artillery engagements with enemy positions started in 1968 and the following year, that is 1969, witnessed the Canal-crossing operations to attack the enemy fortifications and to combat, face to face, the Israeli troops.

In 1970, our air defence units were engaged with the enemy in a battle that was meant to be fierce and furious and during which the enemy's friends in the United States of America meant to secure for him superiority and air domination. Nevertheless, the enemy sustained considerable casualties in July of that year.

The sacrifices of the civilian masses of our people were great. The enemy held the three main cities : Suez, Ismailia and Port Said, hostage at the mercy of its artillery. The people of the Canal Zone paid the greatest and the noblest price ever paid by patriots for their country.

All the forces of the nation were massed behind the front with their labour, production, unanimity, consciousness, faith and patience attaining records which could never be reached except by deep-rooted, great nations well-aware of the values of freedom, and human civilisation.

We were fully aware of the fact that the great conflicts in this modern age and their means can never be restricted to the field of battle or limited by the boundaries of nations. This is why we came out to the world at large explaining our viewpoint, and presenting the face of right and the truth.

The crisis also proved that the socialist peoples front, the group of non-aligned countries and the solidarity of the three continents, Asia, Africa and Latin America is a strong front along which extends a solid and strong national liberation line.

The crisis has shown that right has its advocates whatever the consequences. The remarkable change in Western Europe's attitude is evidence of that ; an attitude undoubtedly influenced by France's policy since the beginning of the crisis until now.

During this time, and with all our good intentions, we exerted every effort possible for true co-operation with the world community represented in the United Nations in order to find a solution to the crisis before it reaches, with its effects, a stage when it would be difficult to offset its dangers to world peace.

In this respect we had specific steps ; we accepted the U.N. Security Council Resolution issued on November 22, 1967. We provided — sincerely and honestly — every assistance to Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, the U.N. Secretary General's special envoy who was assigned the mission of following-up the implementation of the Security Council Resolution. We were in constant contact with him especially during the first year and a half of his mission during which he found himself making interminable tours in the capitals of the Middle East without achieving any results. He was obliged after all these efforts, to freeze his mission temporarily.

In every international gathering and at every world conference our call was a call for peace, that carried only one condition — a just peace — without which peace cannot exist or last.

In contrast with this action on our part, the enemy, on its part, did the following : It used to procrastinate and evade answering any question put to it about its true intentions. It was clear all along that it insisted upon refusing to implement the Security Council Resolution, and it was trying constantly to find a lee-way to absolve itself from the provisions of the Resolution. It continued its aggressive policy which took the form of launching rabid and bitter raids against factories and schools in Egypt, camps in Jordan and airports and villages in Lebanon, as well as killing, imprisoning and torturing the patient strugglers in the occupied land, as if it was let loose in the world without any deterrent or fear from punishment.

In spite of all that we have seen and suffered, and in order to affirm to the world the truth of our keenness to preserve peace, we accepted in July 1970 an initiative which had been put forward by the U.S. Secretary of State, William Rogers.

Our motive in this connection had been spelled out, by the late leader, Nasser, personally, to you, to the people and to the nation.

Ceasefire was then proclaimed — for three months — along our front which had borne the responsibility of constant confrontation with the enemy, during which it was expected that some progress towards a peaceful solution of the crisis would be achieved.

But this has not materialised because the enemy, resorting to the pretext of the Egyptian missile network along our front, has discontinued its contacts with the U.N. Secretary General's special envoy.

The three-month term has expired and the crisis, in its totality, was brought before the U.N. General Assembly which decided on November 4, last year, to extend the ceasefire period for another three months. It has also asserted its determination to implement the Security Council Resolution and has paved the way for the resumption of the task of the U.N. envoy in the Middle East.

Israel had spent in vain the first ceasefire period, until it obtained shipments of arms and equipment under the pretext of restoring the balance tipped, as it claimed, by the Egyptian missiles.

Israel has, once again, resorted to the same process of defamation and blackmailing and did not resume contact with the U.N. peace envoy except after the conclusion of a 500 million dollar deal of arms, equipment and economic aid with the U.S.A.

Its pretext, this time, was to ensure its psychological security before resuming contact with Ambassador Gunnar Jarring as if the United States — contrary to what it maintains and claims — was encouraging the aggressor and enabling him to pursue his aggression.

Eventually, Israel resumed contact with Dr. Jarring. But, in our opinion, it was back to its old machinations.

The cards it showed to Jarring were a repetition of its previous stances which reflect its rejection of every chance of peace which it overtly claims to adhere to, but implicitly refuses.

In fact, Israel has no other alternative for expansion, which it denies in words, but practises in deed.

Perhaps, we have not as yet, brethren, forgotten Israel's official proclamation whereby it annexed Sinai to its territory in October 1956 when it thought that the tripartite aggression would help achieve its goals.

Then, it began to dwell on extending the ceasefire claiming that the period was insufficient.

As a result, we maintained contact with all in order to spell out to them our viewpoint.

As you remember Soviet President Nicolai Podgorny arrived in Cairo accompanied by a distinguished delegation. We studied together the situation with all its developments and potentialities.

I am stating before you that with a desire to set matters moving, and in appreciation of the historic responsibilities during the interval we live in, I sent a message to President Richard Nixon, and have received the reply to it. I regret to mention that America's position remains as it was — complete bias for Israel.

In my message I asked for a reply to one definite question... What does the United States of America want? I did not receive a reply to this question. Nor is it likely that I should get one.

In the meantime, when the U.S. Secretary of State wrote to his Egyptian colleague, I encouraged continuation of the correspondence between them with the purpose of reaching the greatest possible amount of understanding and clarity. We were greatly persistent in inviting the Big Four to their task and responsibility for the preservation of peace as permanent members of the Security Council, in consideration of their international position, and also due to their being directly interested in the parties involved in the crisis.

Our co-operation was unlimited and unconditional with the U.N. Secretary General and with his special envoy entrusted with the task of following up the implementation of the Security Council Resolution. Then this week, we reached a crossroad :

First — The enemy continues its occupation of our land and tries to stabilise this occupation by changing the nature of the land especially in Jerusalem and the West Bank, and by establishing colonies in the Syrian Heights and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula ;

Second — We cannot stand silent before what is taking place and our sacred duty, that cannot be denied us by anybody, is to liberate the land and renew the fighting with the enemy ;

Third — The contacts in the United Nations have not until now a satisfactory result because the enemy continues his intransigence and defiance not only to us, but also to the whole world community and the principles of international law from the first to the last letter ; and,

Fourth — There are different parties who are trying by all means to convince us to extend the ceasefire period even for a few weeks.
Brothers,

We come now to our conception of our forthcoming steps as imposed upon us by the values which we maintain, the principles which we uphold and our commitments towards world peace and the international community.

I have examined all aspects of the situation with the political and military leaderships and with all the institutions of contemplation and decision-making of our regime. Extensive discussions took place in the cabinet, the National Defence Council and the Central Committee of the Arab Socialist Union. The considerations which were laid before us were — briefly — as follows :

First — We cannot, nor was it right for us to let the ceasefire be renewed automatically as long as no progress was made in Ambassador Gunnar Jarring's efforts. For, if we did so it would have meant the ceasefire lines might have become a fait-accompli, or might have even become political lines, as happened in connection with the Armistice lines of 1949, and that, we could not allow to happen under any conditions.

Second — We were aware of the extensive, and unfortunately clever endeavours which are being made to delude world public opinion by projecting the problem to it incorrectly, presenting it in such light, as to make it seem as if it has shrunk down to a question of firing or ceasing the fire, with the consequent illusion resulting from this faulty simplification that the party which would begin firing would be considered as being intransigent.

Aggression is the basis of the whole problem. Aggression is represented by imposing the occupation of the force of fire, whereas firing for the purpose of removing the occupation is the natural, legitimate and legal

right — indeed, it is the sacred duty — of all those who respect and believe in freedom on any land for every people.

Third — We must be frank with ourselves and admit that so far we failed to find in all Israel's statements or behaviour, whether at the U.N. in New York or on the territory of the crisis area in the Middle East, one single indication of its readiness to implement the Security Council Resolution. Indeed, all indications point to its relentless endeavours to impede and annul its effectiveness as well as to obstruct all the international efforts that are being exerted to solve the crisis.

The simplest proof of this fact is that talking about peace is incompatible with the continued occupation of the land, nor is it compatible with the continuation of the arrogance and foolishness based on force.

In spite of this, the United Nations Secretary-General had a different viewpoint which he has put forward in the report submitted to the Security Council which contained his appeal to the parties to the dispute. He said, in this report, that though he admitted that there was need for further clarification, he nevertheless found room for cautious optimism. He based his « cautious optimism » — as he said — upon the fact that the parties have resumed their contacts with Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, that some progress has been achieved in defining the position of the parties and that the parties, who have expressed their desire to implement the Security Council Resolution, were now defining in more detail their viewpoints about their commitments resulting from this Resolution. The U.N. Secretary-General concluded his report by appealing to the parties to continue playing their roles in the discussion in a constructive manner and to cooperate with Ambassador Jarring with a view to implementing the Security Council Resolution.

At the end, there was the appeal made by the U.N. Secretary-General in this situation to exercise self-control and renew the ceasefire in Feb. 5 when the current ceasefire period comes to an end.

Fourth — In this atmosphere, there was quite a number of the Security Council member-states, in which we had confidence regarding their understanding of our stance and their sympathy with our struggle, and which approached us in another urgent attempt to resort to self-restraint.

When the U.N. Secretary General launched his appeal, they told us what they thought about it. Commenting on it, they stated that the U.N.

Secretary General's decision to proclaim his appeal at this serious juncture during which the Middle East was passing, implies that the U.N. Secretary General, by virtue of his position and responsibility, is of the opinion that he had reasons to believe that there are possibilities of achieving real progress towards implementing the Security Council Resolution. They were of the view that it might be advisable to provide, on our part, for the U.N. Secretary General the atmosphere that would help him implement the Security Council Resolution, which is the very task entrusted to him by the Council in the text of the Resolution dated November 22, 1967.

Brothers,

Our profound, sincere and responsible discussions have led us to define our position as follows :

First. — The United Arab Republic considers itself as being committed to the one and only responsibility of liberating the territories occupied during the 1967 aggression.

This is its major commitment, and all our political, military, economic and diplomatic actions should be geared towards this end, and all sacrifices should be made however dearly they may cost.

The first commitment of any nation is that which it has towards its freedom within the framework of the principles of international law. No one can ever ask it for, or impose upon it, a commitment contrary to the foregoing one, on the basis of which it has to reserve to itself the right to freedom of action concerning the prospects facing it.

Second. — While adhering to this first and most important commitment, we accept the United Nations Secretary General's appeal and have decided to withhold fire for a period that we cannot extend beyond thirty days, ending March 7. The Secretary General and the entire international community must, during this period, be sure that there is real progress as regards the core of the problem and not only its external aspects.

We deem it necessary for the Security Council to be informed before the end of this period of a report by the Secretary General on the progress made, though we know now, and have always known, that Israel, with the United States' « carte blanche » support and assistance, shall not progress beyond its present attitude. However, we pray to God that practical experience will prove that our doubts were unfounded.

Third. — We add to all the efforts aimed at solving the crisis a new Egyptian initiative as a basis according to which any work will be considered the true yardstick of the desire to implement the Security Council Resolution.

We demand that during this period of withholding fire a partial withdrawal of the Israeli troops on the eastern bank of the Suez Canal will be realised as a first step in a timetable to be laid down with a view to implementing the rest of the provisions of the Security Council Resolution.

If this is realised during this period, we are ready to start at once in clearing the course of the Suez Canal in order to reopen it for international navigation and to serve world economy.

We believe that by this initiative we transfer the efforts of Ambassador Gunnar Jarring from ambiguous words to defined measures for the implementation of the Security Council Resolution.

We do this in a manner to serve the interests of all the states whose economies were affected by the closure of the Suez Canal as a result of the Israeli aggression and terrorism.

Brethren,

I asked the Foreign Ministry to submit a detailed report of all the contacts carried out during the recent years to the office of the Speaker of the National Assembly. I also requested that the text of the resolution of the National Defence Council — as certain items in it are of a secret nature — as well as the minutes of yesterday's discussions of the Central Committee, dated February 3rd, 1971, be placed at your disposal, so that you are acquainted with all the details of the picture and be fully informed with all the positions we need to adopt.

Finally, I wish to repeat before you, for emphasis, that the entire position is summarised in two facts :

First. — Ceasefire or resumption of fighting is not the problem. The problem is the liberation of the various Arab territories and restoration of the legitimate right of the Palestinian people. This is the cause for the sake of which we give everything without reserve or hesitation, to the end of the road.

Second. — With every chance we offer the world community appreciation and respect we should bear in mind that at the end, the decisive

factor is our force alone.

We know our enemy better than others do, no matter what the extent of their interest in the crisis, because it is we who faced and continue to face his plans and conspiracies which we had learned through bitter experiences. Due to our knowledge of the enemy, we are fully convinced that he can only be checked by force, and will only retreat under pressure.

Brethren,

After addressing our people and our nation, we will address a word across our frontiers. We have accomplished our duty towards the world and towards peace to the best of our ability. It is time that some one else should perform his duty towards the world and towards peace.

Duty is not a tax imposed on certain people while others are exempted from it. Duty — especially on the world level — is an obligatory responsibility.

I say it clearly that we have a clear conscience with regard to what we have been asked to safeguard. We desire that all should know that there is nothing we care to safeguard above our country and our nation. Human beings are not capable of protecting others more than they protect themselves.

Therefore, we declare that the time has come for others to perform their share of the duty decisively and emphatically.

The entire international community is required to adopt a clear attitude, devoid of ambiguity and mystery.

The United Nations is given the option to be or not to be. The major powers are committed to the responsibility of preserving the international **status quo** and cannot disengage themselves from it.

The entire world public opinion is required to rend the fog of deceptive Israeli propaganda published everywhere by the most up-to-date media of influence, fabricated and manufactured. We want the world to know that we possess a right we maintain. At the same time we want the world to know that we have the power by which we can acquire this right, not by begging, but with honour and dignity; not by aspiration, but by fighting and sacrifice.

Brethren,

You are strong — strong with right ; strong with principle ; strong with faith ; strong with freedom ; strong with what we possess in our hands of the means of fighting ; strong with our men on the fire-line from our Armed Forces who are waiting with all bravery, all confidence and nobility the signal to proceed.

They are our soldiers. At the same time, with truth and faith, they are the soldiers of God. They will achieve His victory by His will, in honour of their immortal nation, to maintain its dignity and to raise its prestige among nations.

« Our Lord ! do not punish us if we forget or err ; Our Lord ! do not lay on us a burden as Thou didst lay on those before us ; Our Lord ! do not impose upon us that which we have not the strength to bear ; and forgive us, and pardon us, and have mercy on us, Thou art our Protector ; so help us against the unbelieving people ».

May God's peace and mercy be upon you.