

UN Resolution 338 (1973) Calling for Cease-Fire and Negotiations

By Pierre Tristam

A Call for "A Just and Durable Peace in the Middle East"

By Oct. 22, 1973, the third Arab-Israeli War (known in Israel as the Yom Kippur War and in the Arab world as the Ramadan War) had been raging for 16 days, its heaviest fighting on the Egyptian-Israeli front in the Sinai desert. United Nations Security Council Resolution 338 sought to put an end to the conflict and set up a framework for negotiated peace settlements.

The resolution became more significant after the end of the war for what it implied regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as it called for "a just and durable peace in the Middle East" based on the principles established in the 1967 Security Council Resolution 242. The two resolutions formed the guiding principle of American mediation of any Palestinian-Israeli peace process.

"Nowhere," then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said in a Sept. 22, 1975 address to the United Nations General Assembly, "has the United Nations Security Council established a clearer framework of principles than in its Resolutions 242 and 338."

Different American administrations interpreted the resolutions, and Palestinian actions, differently, however. While Kissinger asked Israel, in December 1975, to end its boycott of the United Nations and debate the Palestine Liberation Organization directly at the UN, the first Bush administration, in 1988, was quick to dismiss the Palestine National Council's endorsement of both resolutions and its implicit recognition of Israel as a ploy rather than a step toward peace.

The following is the full text of Resolution 338. It was adopted unanimously, 14-0, with China not participating.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 338 October 22, 1973

The Security Council,

Calls upon all parties to present fighting to cease all firing and terminate all military activity immediately, no later than 12 hours after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions

they now occupy; Calls upon all parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts;

Decides that, immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East.