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from the UN was vetoed by Britain, France and the United States. The question then reverted to the Assembly, which ruled to accept the report of the Credentials Committee. As a consequence, the Assembly President ruled to deny South Africa the right to participate in all proceedings of the 29th Assembly. Canada unsuccessfully opposed this ruling on the grounds of our belief in the principle of universal participation in the world organization, and in the belief also that this measure would lead to the setting of a dangerous precedent for similar action against other nations in future. Canada also felt that any step to isolate South Africa from participation in world forums and from direct exposure to the opinions of other countries would reduce the chances of success in modifying South Africa's racist policies.

## The Middle East

Concern about the continuing tension in the Middle East in 1974 was highlighted by the question of Palestine. The Palestinian debate was climaxed by the dramatic appearance of Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat, who addressed the General Assembly in November.

This, combined with resolutions calling for the self-determination of the Palestine people (without mention of Israel's right to exist) and the granting of observer status to the PLO at the UN, were visible gains for Arab diplomacy. Support from other non-aligned countries enabled the Arab resolutions to pass, though with slimmer majorities than were expected. The result did, however, illustrate the extent of co-operation among non-aligned countries; co-operation previously demonstrated in the exclusion of South Africa from the 29th Assembly.

Canada abstained from the resolution on the right of self-determination by the Palestinian people on grounds that it did not

affirm the rights of all parties concerned, including Israel and the Palestinian people, to live in peace and security and have a voice in determining their destiny. Further, Canada did not wish to presume to decide who spoke for the Palestinian people. The Canadian delegation voted against the resolution granting the PLO permanent observer status because, in effect, it granted the PLO a status in the UN which had hitherto been accorded only to sovereign states or associations of sovereign states.

## Economic and social questions

Elected in 1973, for one year only, to an enlarged Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Canada in 1974 was re-elected to a full three-year term on the Council.

Traditionally ECOSOC schedules its spring session in New York and its summer session in Geneva, with any additional resumed sessions taking place, if needed, in New York.

In 1974 the 56th (spring) and the 57th (summer) sessions of ECOSOC dealt with a wide variety of economic and social issues. These included items ranging from preparations for, and consideration of, the results of the World Population Conference to relief measures for the Sahelian region of Africa. One of the most positive achievements was the creation of a "fertilizer pool", designed to help developing nations cope with the world fertilizer shortage. Canada, in view of its unique experience as both home and host country for many trans-national corporations, was active in discussions in ECOSOC regarding the role and responsibilities of such enterprises.

ECOSOC was also concerned with follow-up action regarding the Program of Action for a New International Economic Order. This program had been adopted, though with substantial reservations by a number of countries including Canada, by the sixth special session of the UN General Assembly. Among the concerns expressed