

headquarters in New York, thus running counter to international law.

The UN General Assembly approved its legal committee's recommendation against closing the mission, by a vote of 145 to one. Israel was the lone dissenting vote, with the United States not participating. Subsequently, the UN held a special session to challenge the anticipated order to close the PLO office. The session voted 143 to one in favour of the need for binding arbitration, and 143 to zero on asking for a world court advisory opinion on whether the US was obliged to enter into arbitration. Despite this, as well as US State Department efforts to prevent implementation of the Congressional action, on 11 March 1988 the US Justice Department gave the PLO until 21 March to close its mission. On 29 June a US Federal judge ruled that the Government could not force the PLO to close its office. The Justice Department was studying the ruling and stated that it would make a decision about further proceedings as soon as possible.

Terrorist incidents of note in 1987-88 included the continuation of hostage-takings in Lebanon, the victims being mainly American, French and British nationals.

In other major incidents related to the Middle East, on 5 April 1988 a Kuwait Airways jumbo jet was hijacked on a flight from Bangkok to Kuwait. The hijackers demanded the release of 17 Shiite Moslems imprisoned in Kuwait, but this was not accepted. Two passengers were killed in the ordeal. The siege ended 15 days later, while the airplane was located in Algeria.

On 16 April 1988 Abu Jihad, the PLO's military commander and Yasser Arafat's top aide, was assassinated in Tunis. The assassination was widely reported to have been undertaken by Israeli agents.