STATEMENT TO THE NATION
by
PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT
March 7, 1971

Fellow-citizens,
Honourable fighters on this undefiled land,

Men, Women, Youths and Children of Egypt,

I chose to address you today directly, because we have reached a stage when it is incumbent upon every Egyptian to discharge his duty.

Egypt; the Egypt you love and redeem with your lives, is now threatened by a danger, different from any other danger it ever faced in its history; for, a part of its sacred national soil is now exposed, for the first time, to the plight of being seized by the force of the armed Israeli aggression.

We have known in the history of our people's struggle, invaders who came and departed, looted or ruled, seized the reins of power
or collected taxes, but in spite of anything and everything the integrity of the Egyptian soil remained intact and untouched, continuous and unruptured.

But, now, we are facing a challenge of another kind — a challenge that aims at seizing the land and pouncing upon the integrity of the national soil. It does not conceal from us, nor from the whole world, its designs; but it records them upon itself — in arrogance and conceit — in an international document which it presented to the envoy of the U.N. Secretary General charged with the implementation of the Security Council Resolution issued on November 22, 1967. This is the Resolution which stipulates the illegality of the principle of acquiring land by armed force and which stipulates, consequently, the necessity of the withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied after June 4.

This Israeli challenge is not directed to us alone; it is directed to the whole international community and to all the human values which must prevail in our world.

But there is a basic difference between our attitude towards this challenge and the attitude of the Israeli political one; the Israeli attitude is material, materialistic. In confrontation with the Israeli challenge. In confronting the Israeli challenge, we may not only denounce it, we may also go beyond mere denunciation. But we cannot, and we do not accept the principle of international division and partition of the soil, and we do not accept the principle of internationally imposed or sanctioned occupation. We hold that the land is an indivisible piece, and we hold that the integrity of our national soil is our right and our duty.

Fellow-citizens,

I have an important message to convey to you. We have accepted the principle of disarmament, and in order to have the security and the peace in our land, we have accepted the principle of withdrawal from all lands occupied after June 4.

This Israeli challenge is not directed to us alone; it is directed to the whole international community and to all the human values which must prevail in our world.

But there is a basic difference between our attitude towards this challenge and the attitude of the Israeli political one; the Israeli attitude is material, materialistic.
The challenge directed to the world is a moral, ethical and political one; the challenge directed to us is a material, patriotic, national and fateful challenge. In confronting this challenge, the world may denounce and condemn, and being solicitous of international relations, the world may go beyond mere condemnation and denunciation. But we cannot be satisfied with condemnation and denunciation. We are asked to resist and fight; we are asked to give life in order to have life; we are required to sacrifice the soul in order to preserve the national integrity of our soil, untouched forever.

Fellow-citizens,

I have endeavoured, with all that is in my power, to search for peace based on justice.

We have exerted, throughout the last thirty days in which we had decided to withhold fire, a continuous and broad political effort, which was begun a few years ago, when we accepted the Security Council Resolution. This we consolidated with our fight in the battlefield so that the others may understand that we are ready to accept danger and dif-
ficulty. We returned to diplomatic action by our acceptance of the U.S. Secretary of State's proposals, which were known as the « Rogers' initiative. » We helped the U.N. Secretary General's envoy, entrusted with the implementation of the Security Council Resolution, to achieve success in his mission in the light of the ceasefire. We accepted the ceasefire for three months more. In spite of all this, neither the Secretary General's envoy nor we, could reach a solution to the crisis due to the aggressive nature of racist Zionism.

We had called attention to this nature, but others considered this warning as some kind of fanaticism. If we recall the events of last month only, we will find enough proof of this for us and for the others.

First: At the beginning of the month, on February 4, 1971, I declared that we will withhold fire for another 30 days to give the international community, the United Nations, the Big Four Powers, the Security Council, the United Nations Secretary General and his envoy, Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, an additional chance to exert and concentrate their efforts. I also seized the opportunity, given me by this declaration, to present an Egyptian
Second: The representative of the U.N. Secretary General deemed it appropriate, in order to define and concentrate his efforts, to ask us and Israel to give him, each, its undertakings according to the Security Council Resolution and in conformity with its provisions. He asked us for an undertaking concerning the guarantees of peace in accordance with the Security Council Resolution. We gave him the undertaking which he asked for after clarifications which we sought from him; and we considered his replies about them satisfactory. Israel, on the other hand, procrastinated and chose — with arrogance and conceit — not to answer him. Then, it sent him a memorandum replying to our own memorandum to him. More serious still, it said in that memorandum — with all vainglory and im-
seriousness — that it will not go back to the pre-June 4, 1967 lines.

Third: Israel's reply, as we can all depict from following the events, has given the whole world — governments and international institutions alike — a violent shock. All the big powers, with their different attitudes towards us and Israel, regard Israel's reply to Jarring as being negative, against the peace and doesn't serve it. The United Nations considers Israel's reply as an attempt to destroy its efforts; indeed its very existence. World public opinion at large — as expressed in different languages and tones in its press — is angry and vexed; it finds no excuse for Israel, nor can it find an acceptable justification for its attitude.

Fourth: Consequently, the United Nations Secretary General addressed an appeal to Israel on March 5, calling upon it to respond to Ambassador Jarring's previous demand that it should undertake to withdraw from Egyptian territories. Israel ignored the Secretary General's appeal, because it insists upon annexing the Egyptian lands and expanding in them at Egypt's expense — as part of

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the Israeli plan to expand at the expense of the Arab countries.

The hours go by and our enemy refuses to listen or to respond. The vainglory of strength has taken him in its grip, and the desire to expand has dominated him; so he no longer cares for principle, law or order.

Brethren,

Despite all efforts exerted by us and by other parties, the crisis has not been solved. However, I deem it right, indeed, it is my duty to say that the effort we have exerted, throughout the last month, has not been wasted, for the results we obtained are of great import, the most prominent of which is Israel's complete isolation from the international community and world public opinion. This was neither easy nor unimportant.

Fellow-citizens,

While confronting these crucial hours of our struggle I wish to briefly dwell upon the attitude of the friend who helped us without reservation, stood by our side unconditionally, and exerted all possible and generous efforts to strengthen our struggle for liberation. I
do not need to tell you more about the attitude of the Soviet Union, since the beginning of the crisis until today, whether from the political, military or economic points of view.

All of you know the details of this attitude and even see it with your own eyes and appreciate it and give it its due right.

The people and leaders of the Soviet Union have stood by us as honest men and militant revolutionaries supporting our right and consolidating our line, with honour and determination. Neither our history nor our future generations will forget its honourable stand towards our just cause. They were with us in the most critical days of our history, supporting our struggle for our right to peace based on justice. The only new thing which I can add to what you know is to tell you that I found it appropriate, last week, to meet the leaders of the great Soviet Union. These leaders had sent to me saying that they considered circumstances necessitated consultations between us. I decided to travel to Moscow, myself, without announcement. I left Cairo on Monday, March 1st, at dawn and returned in the evening of Tuesday, March 2nd.
During the two days of my stay in Moscow, I had the chance to meet the friendly leaders of the Soviet Union, Brezhnev, Podgorny and Kosygin. We discussed all questions and studied all possibilities frankly, clearly and honestly. I returned to Cairo fully satisfied with what was achieved, confident that the Soviet Union, thoroughly and positively, supports our just right.

Brethren,

We study, fully, every step we take; no provocation, whatever it may be, shall divert us from our political and military plans. We shall have the initiative in every action, and closely observe the developments and act according to what is dictated to us by our principles and objectives, foremost amongst which are the principles of liberation, the security of the Arab soil and the rights of the people of Palestine.

Though we highly appreciate the United Nations Secretary General’s appeal to exert self-control and withhold fire, yet we wish to state, clearly and honestly, to the whole world that we are unable to extend the ceasefire any more than we did. We are also unable to ex-
tend withholding fire — we have already withheld fire for thirty days.

For this reason, I announce to you and to the world our decision that we do not consider ourselves committed to a ceasefire or a withholding of fire. However, this does not mean that political action will cease, and that guns alone will fire. It means that we will observe, follow up and decide for ourselves what we think is our duty at the right time and in the right place.

Fellow-citizens,

I want you to know that performing our duty is not a luxury nor a matter of words. There are others who prefer to talk about struggle while keeping away from the battlefield. They are satisfied with launching slogans instead of firing. But we are not of those. We know, and it is our right to know, the significance of our decision to stand by our duty, and also to be aware of how much this decision will cost us. Its cost is valued in terms of sweat and blood, and there is no other estimate of cost. At the same time, we ask the Big Four Powers to continue following up a crisis which, in our belief, and due
to its time and place, stands at the core of the problem of peace and war. We must add that we have faith in the U.N., and we trust its Secretary General and his special envoy entrusted with the implementation of the Security Council Resolution. We truly believe that the principles of the U.N. Charter are the only guide to safety in a world which cannot face the catastrophe of a third world war.

As we address all these parties, we hope that they will all realise that there are certain limits beyond which we cannot go.

We only made two conditions to the solution of the crisis, namely, the withdrawal from all territories occupied after June 4, and the preservation of the legitimate rights of the people of Palestine. We have reached a point where Israel declared that there will be no return to the June 4, 1967 lines. We must deduce from this that which it is imperative for us to deduce. We should also understand that those who refuse to return to the June 4, 1967 lines have given no thought to the legitimate rights of the Palestine people. But, after all this, and on its basis, we are required to stand by our duty and to perform it.
We are further inspired with greater self-confidence and assurance as to the soundness of our action by the fact that we are undertaking our struggle, vis-à-vis what we are facing today, in a more convenient context, and upon a firmer basis.

We shall do our duty in full; though, at the same time, we shall ask the others to do their duty any way they wish. But we believe that no party — whether on the level of the international community, or of its institutions — has the right to evade or shirk. In particular, we ask the United States of America to do its duty. We do not charge it with a burden the specifications of which are defined by us; but we ask it to fulfil the obligations which it has taken upon itself. The United States has pledged itself to us directly — especially in the last month — that it opposes, and will continue to oppose, the principle of seizing land by force.

The United States cannot evade or extricate itself from this pledge. By our demand, we do not ask it for more than it can bear; we merely ask it to fulfil what it pledged itself before us to fulfil, which — in our view — is not beyond its capacity vis-à-vis Israel.
which lives as a parasite on the U.S.A., and challenges and kills while it actually lives at America's expense — both for funds and weapons.

I wish also to state before you that I had contacts with the U.S.A., and that the U.S. officials are fully aware of our position which we made clear, and defined with every serious sincerity and with due appreciation of the responsibility.

Brethren,

The enemy will not withdraw his hand unless we are in a position where we could cut this hand off wherever it is extended. No matter how strong or prepared we may be, we must realise beforehand that the enemy will succeed in some of the blows that he directs against us and will not hesitate to hit us. I tell you from now, that everything on our land shall be exposed to danger; this is our destiny which we must accept with the honour and dignity of the struggle.

Fellow-citizens,

From here, let me return to what I first told you. We are facing today the most crucial and dangerous moments. My address to each
one of you in every responsible position, and in every house, whether big or small, is a fulfilment of what we have pledged: that we shall share our burdens together, and suffer this, our day, for our morrow together. We have no time to waste, no time for words. All our time shall be strenuously spent and all our efforts exerted in work; all work shall be directed to accomplish one aim, and there is no aim but victory, with God’s help.

It shall be a ferocious battle, though one of the noblest battles of life. It shall be a long and bitter battle, but this is the destiny of free men. We thank God that we have the upper hand; for we are driven to struggle by our confidence, hope and the sacredness of every grain of sand on our soil. On the other hand, our enemy is driven to the madness of aggression by his fear of defeat and despair.

Fellow-citizens,

Once more, I tell you that we know — and it is only right that we should know — the meaning of our decision to perform our duty, and the cost of this decision.

Today, as we stand on one line,
ing the same danger, I want all your feelings, all your hearts and all your arms — I want them all to form a fence around your men and sons from among the soldiers and officers of our Armed Forces. Our blessings, our appeal, our hope and aspirations, our greetings and glorification — all go to them. They are Egypt’s protectors and hope; the guardians of its honour and the custodians of the dignity of its flag.

God! let victory be their ally, and inspire us, God, with the brave wisdom to perform our duty towards Thee, in dignity for our land, victory of our right; Thou art the God of dignity, the God of right. Thou art Almighty over Thy people.

May God’s peace and mercy be upon you.