

conference by reaffirming that no conclusive or lasting peaceful solution to Arab-Israeli conflict could be reached through separate talks.

Mr. Masri, addressing the third conference of Jordanian expatriates which opened Monday, said Jordan's stand remained that Palestinian participation in the proposed forum was imperative since the Palestinian question represented the core of the Middle East conflict. Any partial settlement to the problem that does not take into account the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people will be neither comprehensive nor durable, Mr. Mas-

ri said.

The minister reiterated Jordan's refusal to represent the Palestinian people in peace negotiations saying that since the Palestinians were a large part of the conflict they should take part in talks to settle the problem.

Mr. Masri said Jordan remained committed to bringing about a peaceful settlement based on U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 to be reached through a U.N.-sponsored inter-

ference as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people should compensate for the failure of Resolution 242 to see the Palestinian problem as more than a refugee question and the U.N. document's inherent granting of an advantage as an occupying power and leverage to Israel to decide where to start negotiations.

The PLO refuses to accept Resolutions 242 and 338 on their own as the basis for a settlement to the Palestinian problem.

Jordan's insistence on adopting Resolution 242 as the basis for the international conference is aimed at ensuring that the conference will be held and it will achieve what the resolution rep-

seizure of Arab lands — Mr. Masri told the expatriates attending the conference.

The minister, recalling the 1983 Feb. Arab summit's unanimous endorsement and call for a peaceful settlement with Israel as the only feasible solution to the Middle East conflict, said Jordan had been acting on the basis of this concept and "spearheaded efforts to bring about solidarity among Arab countries, since Arab unity is a prelude towards a settlement."

Outlining Jordan's efforts to secure international acceptance of an international peace conference on the Middle East conflict,

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Masri reaffirms Jordan's rejection of separate talks

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Mr. Masri said the Kingdom had been very successful in Europe and the Soviet Union. He cited the European Community's (EC) endorsement of the conference idea in February this year and the Franco-Soviet call, made during a July 1986 visit to Moscow by French President Francois Mitterrand, on the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to set up a preparatory committee to pave the way for convening of such a forum.

The main hurdles blocking the path towards the called-for conference, Mr. Masri said, were Israel's refusal to recognise the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and "the absence of a clear American policy towards the Middle East."

Mr. Masri also reviewed inter-Arab relations and the "painful truth" about the state of Arab solidarity. He outlined the various aspects and different factors involving inter-Arab differences which caused "this unhealthy state of affairs."

Leaving aside as "outside influences" the Iran-Iraq war and Israel's aggression on Arab terri-

threatening as political and war problems. Economic recession, accumulation of debts and a country's inability to deal with social problems are all different faces of a large economic problem which will cause the country in question to focus on immediately visible problems rather than concentrating on efforts to tackle the root cause or the concept of the issue at stake, he said.

Mr. Masri briefed the conference on Jordan's efforts to settle inter-Arab differences and called for an urgent Arab summit to "confront common hardships and difficulties facing the Arab World."

The state of Arab disunity was cited by Mr. Masri as one of the direct reasons of Iran's defiant attitude towards Iraq seeing it as a weak state without support, given the present state of Arab unity.

Mr. Masri reaffirmed Jordan's support for Iraq in the almost seven-year-old Gulf war. The conflict "is an aggressive war launched by Iran aimed at expansion and securing control of the Arab Gulf and spreading its Islamic revolution," Mr. Masri said. He warned that an Iranian victory in the war "will open the gates of the region and the Arab Middle East to Iran's greed."

Iraqi jets pound Iranian base

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The terminal itself sustained unspecified damage in the attack, staged in an apparent attempt to heat up the Gulf tanker war ahead of the reflagging operation, said the executives.

The first of 11 reflagged Kuwaiti tankers is now expected to sail into northern Gulf under heavy American air and naval escort early next week.

able launches.

So far, Revolutionary Guard crews have attacked ships with machineguns and rocket-propelled grenades, sometimes sparking fires but rarely causing severe damage to huge tankers.

Some salvage operators doubt whether even the most sophisticated U.S. military hardware could ward off a suicide attack by Iranian launches packed with

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