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Chairman: Mr. Mongi SLIM (Tunisia).

Statement by the Chairman

1. The CHAIRMAN, declaring open the meeting concerned with the needs of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), said that, although the situation which had led to the establishment of the Agency was the subject of some controversy, it would nevertheless be realized that the Agency itself was performing a task of the greatest value in caring for a very large number of refugees. Its work would be appreciated, not only from a humanitarian point of view, but also because it was a stabilizing factor in the area concerned. Its efforts to provide education and vocational training for young refugees were particularly useful. He felt confident that Governments would continue to support the Agency as they had in the past and enable it to expand its work. He hoped, in particular, that the Members of the General Assembly would support the essential projects which had been planned for a three-year period ending 30 June 1963.

Statement by the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

2. Mr. DAVIS (Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) said that UNRWA had just completed a short film illustrating the current conditions and life of the Palestine refugees. He proposed to show that film for the information of the Committee.

The film "Tomorrow begins today" was shown.

3. Mr. DAVIS (Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) said that the Agency was anxious to learn what pledges would be made by Governments, not only for the year 1962, but also for 1963, because its programmes had been planned and developed on the basis of the full period of its mandate. He had informed the

General Assembly at the previous session^{1/} that the Agency's expanded budget would entail a total expenditure in three years of \$16.2 million over and above the amount that would be required if expenditure was stabilized at the 1960 level and that it was hoped to raise at least \$4 million of that amount from extra-budgetary sources. He was pleased to report that, with the generous assistance of countries active in the World Refugee Year, \$4.5 million had been obtained in that manner. He had now undertaken to raise \$2 million in the form of scholarships for students attending the training centres which were under construction.

4. For the year 1961, total contributions from pledges were estimated at \$34.2 million, whereas expenditure and commitments under the budget, including heavy outlay on vocational training and teacher-training facilities, were estimated at \$39.5 million. A serious shortfall in funds, therefore, had to be met. That was being done by drawing on supplementary income—the sum of \$4.5 million to which he had referred—and on the Agency's working reserve. However, those sources of funds could not be relied upon to meet the Agency's needs during 1962 and 1963. Even if \$2 million could be raised from extra-budgetary sources, there would still remain a shortfall of \$9.7 million for the two-year period, which would have to be made good by Government contributions. If that amount was not forthcoming, the Agency would be compelled to cut back, if not halt, its expanded educational and youth assistance activities.

5. The Agency was considering all possible means of reducing costs and of obtaining additional funds outside its budget. In order to maximize assistance to young refugees, all relief activities were already being held to the low per caput level of 1960. The amount of \$9.7 million over and above the total of 1961 Government contributions was therefore a minimum requirement if the Agency's projected programme was to be fully implemented by the end of the present mandate and if the facilities already built or in process of construction were to continue to operate at capacity.

6. He pointed out that any shortfall would not affect all aspects of the Agency's programme equally, but would primarily affect the vocational training projects, as first priority had to be given to the food, shelter and health requirements of the refugees. There was little opportunity for any further reduction in the scale of those services.

7. He was convinced of the need to complete all aspects of the three-year programme, as required by General Assembly resolution 1456 (XIV), and would make every possible effort to that end. He urged that

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole Assembly, 1st meeting, para. 7.

the three-year extended programme should be treated as an integral whole.

Mr. Bitsios (Greece), Vice-President of the General Assembly, took the Chair.

Announcement of pledges of contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East by States Members of the United Nations and non-member States

8. The CHAIRMAN announced that, according to a communication received from the Permanent Observer of the Republic of Viet-Nam to the United Nations, the Government of that country had decided to make a contribution of \$2,500 to the Agency.

9. Mr. SCHURMANN (Netherlands) said that, subject to parliamentary approval, his Government would contribute the sum of 400,000 guilders or \$111,100 to the Agency's 1962 budget, an increase of 60 per cent over its contribution for 1961.

10. Mr. KNAPPSTEIN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his Government had learned with interest of the Agency's intention to devote more effort to the training of young refugees. It had decided to make a substantially larger amount available to the Agency than in previous years. Its contribution to the 1962 budget would amount to 2.5 million fully convertible German marks, which was equivalent to \$625,000.

11. Dato' G. SHELLEY (Federation of Malaya) expressed the hope that the appeal made by the Director of the Agency would not fall on deaf ears. It was a source of satisfaction to contributing countries to see the practical use which was made of their financial aid. Although able to make only a token contribution to UNRWA, his Government was nevertheless glad to play a part in its work. It pledged the sum of \$1,500 toward the Agency's 1962 budget.

12. Mr. EDWARD (Ceylon) said that the training and educational efforts of UNRWA merited the support of all countries. He hoped that the larger nations in particular would be able to make substantial contributions. He regretted that his country could again do no more than make a token contribution which would consist of tea to the value of \$1,000.

13. Mr. MATSUI (Japan) recalled that, even before its admission to the United Nations, his country had contributed towards the work of the Agency. Subject to approval by the National Diet, his Government pledged a contribution of \$10,000 to the Agency's budget for 1962.

14. Mr. ASIROGLU (Turkey) commended UNRWA for its valuable humanitarian work, which would continue to have the support of his country. Subject to the approval of the legislative authorities, his Government would make a contribution of \$5,000 to the Agency for 1962.

15. Mr. CAIMEROM MEASKETH (Cambodia) said that his country, which itself had a refugee problem, had a special sympathy for the refugees cared for by the Agency. It would again contribute 20,000 riels towards the Agency's budget.

16. Mr. MILLET (France) said that, through its contributions, his country had shown its interest in UNRWA since the creation of the Agency. His Government's contribution for 1962 would be the same as in 1961, namely, 600,000 new French francs for the

Agency's operations and 117,500 new French francs for training scholarships for the refugees.

17. Mr. HAMDANI (Pakistan) said that because of his country's experience with its own refugees, it sympathized with refugees elsewhere, and it had made a regular yearly contribution to UNRWA for many years. He had not received any instructions authorizing him to announce his country's contribution for 1962, but he was confident that it would not be less than that for 1961, namely, \$21,000.

18. Mr. MARSCHIK (Austria) said that Austria had given concrete evidence of its deep concern with the refugee problem. It had taken practical measures to deal with refugees in its own country and had the same sympathetic attitude to the Palestine refugees. His Government would make the same token financial contribution to UNRWA for 1962 as it had for 1961, namely, \$2,000.

19. Mrs. CASSELMAN (Canada) said that the Director of UNRWA and his staff were to be congratulated on the programmes to provide more educational opportunities and vocational training for the children of the Palestine refugees. Those programmes, which would enable the children to earn their own living and make a contribution to the welfare of others, were eminently worthy of support. However, all refugee problems were basically humanitarian problems, which merited not only sympathy and understanding but practical assistance. Bearing those factors in mind, the Canadian Government had decided, subject to parliamentary approval, to contribute \$500,000 in money and a further \$500,000 in the form of wheat flour to UNRWA for 1962.

20. Bishop GRIFFITHS (Holy See) said that the Pope had directed that the balance of the money realized by the sale of stamps during World Refugee Year should be allocated in various ways. *Inter alia*, \$50,000 was to be contributed to UNRWA and a further \$50,000 was to be used for both the refugees under the mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees and the Palestine refugees. The Pope had already discussed the amount to be made available to UNRWA with the Director of the Agency.

21. Mr. WILLEN (Sweden) said that, subject to parliamentary approval, Sweden would maintain its contribution to UNRWA in 1962 at the same level as in 1961, namely, 300,000 Swedish crowns, or \$58,000.

22. Mr. THALMANN (Switzerland) said that Switzerland also had decided to make the same contribution to UNRWA in 1962 as it had in 1961, that was to say, 150,000 Swiss francs. His Government had accepted UNRWA's invitation to visit the refugee camps and vocational training centres in the Middle East with a view to increasing its co-operation with the Agency.

23. Mr. Hyuck KIM (Republic of Korea) said that because of its own refugee problem, which was still far from solution, Korea had a keen interest in the refugee problem everywhere. It sympathized deeply with the refugees in their tragic plight and trusted that a permanent settlement of the problem would one day be reached. In the meantime, it was important for UNRWA to continue its work. For that reason, his Government had decided to make a token contribution of \$1,000 for 1962.

24. Mr. CHRISTIANSEN (Norway) paid a tribute to the work done by UNRWA and welcomed the progress that had been made with the three-year programme.

Norway had decided to increase its contribution from 300,000 Norwegian crowns in 1961 to 350,000 in 1962; it hoped that the extra money would be used for the expansion of the education and vocational training programmes.

25. Mr. ROBERTS (New Zealand) recalled that New Zealand's annual contribution to UNRWA had in the past been \$140,000. Owing to the parliamentary procedure of his country, he was not able to make a pledge for 1962 at the present time.

26. Lady TWEEDSMUIR (United Kingdom) said that the importance of UNRWA's work in maintaining the health of the refugees and providing them with the necessities of life was undeniable. She welcomed the emphasis on education in the three-year programme. The United Kingdom was deeply concerned with the problem of refugees and had been proud to play a leading role in World Refugee Year. Subject to parliamentary approval, it would contribute \$5,400,000 to UNRWA for 1962. She hoped that other Governments would see their way to making a similar contribution towards the easing of world tension.

27. Mr. PUTZ (Luxembourg) announced that, subject to the approval of Parliament, his country would contribute \$2,000 to UNRWA for 1962, as it had for 1961.

28. Mr. RETALIS (Greece) said that activities for the relief of the Arab refugees from Palestine must continue. His country had, therefore, decided to maintain its 1962 contribution at the 1961 level of \$15,000. He expressed the hope that the problem of the Palestine refugees would soon be solved equitably and in accordance with the refugees' own wishes.

29. Mr. KIRWAN (Ireland) said that, subject to parliamentary sanction, his Government would contribute \$20,000 to UNRWA for 1962, an increase of 43 per cent over its contribution for the preceding year. Although the contribution itself was small, the increase reflected his Government's concern over the gravity of the problem and its appreciation of the Agency's work.

30. Mr. GREEN (Denmark) said that, subject to parliamentary approval, Denmark would contribute 300,000 Danish crowns in 1962.

31. Mr. SULEIMAN (Sudan) paid a tribute to the work of UNRWA and announced a contribution of 1,000 Sudanese pounds for 1962.

32. Mr. EL RASHID (Kuwait) pledged a contribution of \$120,000 in Kuwaiti dinars for the fiscal year starting in April 1962.

33. Mr. HOOD (Australia) said that Australia's contribution for the next financial year would be £A90,000, or \$201,000. As the Australian financial year ran from 1 July to 30 June, half of that amount was the balance of its pledged contribution for 1961 and half was for 1962. In spite of increasing calls on available funds, particularly for the development programmes of Papua and New Guinea, the Australian Government had decided, for humanitarian reasons, to maintain its contribution to UNRWA at the previous level. It was also contributing £A50,000 to the programme of the High Commissioner for Refugees.

34. Mr. MORRIS (Liberia) pledged a contribution of \$5,000 for 1962.

35. Mr. BHADKAMKAR (India) said that for the last fourteen years, India had had to provide for 10 million of its own refugees, and, during the last two years,

for a further 30,000 refugees who had crossed its northern frontier. Thus, although India's desire to help other refugees was great, its power to do so was limited. However, it had decided to maintain its contribution to UNRWA in 1962 at the 1961 level of 100,000 rupees, in the form of goods and supplies, the nature of which would be determined in consultation with the Director of the Agency. In conclusion, he paid a warm tribute to the staff of the Agency for their valuable humanitarian work.

36. Mr. IVELLA (Italy) said that the Italian Government and people were deeply interested in the problem of the Palestine refugees. The Italian Government had doubled its contribution to UNRWA in 1961 and had decided to maintain it at that level for 1962.

37. Mr. KARAPANDZA (Yugoslavia) said that his Government would contribute \$40,000 in kind for 1962.

38. Mr. WHARTON (United States of America) recalled that the report of the Director of UNRWA (A/4861) was now being discussed by the Special Political Committee. The United States delegation was supporting the practical proposals for a solution of the Palestine refugee problem, and it hoped that other delegations would do nothing to frustrate those efforts. To his mind, the attitude of those Governments that refused to give any assistance to the refugees was quite incomprehensible. UNRWA had done a most praiseworthy job in providing the refugees with food, medical help and education in ways which had improved over the years. The Director and his international and local staff deserved every commendation for their work.

39. He welcomed the efforts that had been made by the Agency to improve the distribution of relief supplies and rectify abuses. He hoped that the Governments of the countries where the refugees were living would co-operate more closely with the Agency to ensure that the refugees who needed help received it and that fraudulent practices were eliminated.

40. He welcomed the vocational training programme for young refugees, to which the United States had contributed an extra \$500,000 during the last financial year. Its contribution to UNRWA for the current fiscal year ending 30 June 1962 would amount to \$24,700,000, part of which would again be in the form of foodstuffs. His Government would make its contribution available to the Agency to the extent that it did not exceed 70 per cent of the total governmental contribution to UNRWA. That very considerable pledge in recent years was a mark of his Government's real concern for the refugees, but it should not be assumed that his Government would in any eventuality continue to contribute in such a high ratio. He stated that if the governments directly concerned indicated little or no disposition to move forward realistically on that problem of grave humanitarian and social consequence, perhaps alternate means of helping the refugees should be explored. He therefore wished to stress that that pledge in no way prejudiced the stand of his Government on the question of extending UNRWA's mandate and that the position on that question would depend to a large degree on the nature and outcome of that Assembly's consideration of the problem. Just as important as the provision of material support for the refugees was that the General Assembly's consideration of the problem be marked

by enlightened and far-sighted concern for the future of the refugees themselves.

41. Mr. DAOUDY (Syria) emphasized the heavy burden which the presence of over a million refugees had laid on the host countries for the last fourteen years. They were given not only practical assistance but they enjoyed rights, such as access to public office, on the same terms as the citizens of the host countries. As was stated in paragraph 27 of the annual report of the Director of UNRWA (A/4861), the host Governments had provided land, water, and security protection for the refugees and had rendered assistance in health education and welfare, as well as in the implementation of the Agency's three-year programme. As was shown in table 21 of the report, the financial burden on the host Governments amounted to more than \$5 million. In the case of Syria, it had amounted to \$1,576,113 for the period 1 July 1960 to 30 June 1961, an increase of several thousand dollars over the previous year. Jordan, Lebanon and the United Arab Republic were bearing a similar burden. It could be seen that the host Governments were supplying assistance on an increasing scale because of their deep understanding of the refugees and sympathy for their needs. They were supported in their efforts by the thought that the problem would one day be solved and that the refugees would not always be with them.

42. Mr. Mohammad RIAD (United Arab Republic) endorsed the remarks made by the previous speaker regarding the magnitude of the assistance extended to the refugees by the host Governments. As was clear from paragraph 27 and table 21 of the annual report of the Director of UNRWA (A/4861), that assistance was given in a large number of different fields and involved a very heavy financial burden. For the two years from 1 July 1959 to 30 June 1961, the United Arab Republic had contributed \$5,644,849, of which \$2,583,967 had been for the Egyptian Region, over and above other direct help extended to the refugees, the local population and the Bedouin in the Gaza strip. His Government also provided scholarships to

universities and schools for the refugees, for whose benefit many donations in money and in kind had been made. The plight of those refugees, who had been reduced from affluence to poverty by the intransigence of certain authorities, was heart-rending. His country was grateful to UNRWA for its efforts on behalf of the refugees and sincerely hoped that the necessary funds would be found to enable it to continue its work.

43. Mr. CHAKCHOUK (Tunisia) said that Tunisia was in only too good a position to understand the problem of the Palestine refugees, for it had 171,000 refugees on its own soil. In announcing a contribution of \$2,000 to the 1962 budget of UNRWA, he expressed the hope that an equitable solution would shortly be found for the problem which had driven the refugees from their homes.

44. Mr. MASSOUD-ANSARI (Iran) paid a tribute to the work done by UNRWA. Because of its sympathy with the refugees, his country had always supported the Agency and he was happy to be able to pledge a further contribution of \$6,000 for 1962.

45. Mr. DAVIS (Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) said that he was grateful for the support UNRWA had received in the past and for the pledges that had been announced for 1962.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.^{2/}

^{2/} In a note dated 15 December 1961 addressed to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Mission of Morocco announced contributions of 50,000 and 100,000 dirhams, or approximately \$9,900 and \$19,800 towards the programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNRWA respectively.

In a note dated 19 December 1961 addressed to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Mission of Italy announced a token contribution of \$3,000 for 1962, towards the United Nations High Commissioner's programmes for refugees.

In a note dated 12 January 1962, the Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia announced a contribution in 1962 equivalent to \$165,000 in kind for the benefit of Algerian refugees in Tunisia and Morocco.