



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 13th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MATHIAS (Portugal)

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AGENDA ITEM 53: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES
IN THE NEAR EAST (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 53: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued) (A/35/13, A/35/438 and Corr. 1, A/35/472, A/35/474 and A/35/526; A/SPC/35/L.3, L.4/Rev.1, L.5 to L.8)

1. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that the general debate on agenda item 53 had been concluded the previous day and announced that Madagascar had become a co-sponsor of draft resolutions A/SPC/35/L.7 and L.8.
2. Mr. RYDEBECK (Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) expressed his appreciation for the confidence shown in the Agency and for the praise given his staff for their devotion to their work.
3. Delegations had stressed the importance of UNRWA as a factor for stability and peace in the Middle East and many had drawn attention to the complicated political framework within which the Agency had been working since its inception. Obviously, the decisions to be taken by Governments regarding continuation of UNRWA programmes were essentially political decisions. The continuation or completion of activities, the level of programmes, the geographical distribution of UNRWA's activities and those who were to benefit were determined by Governments and expressed by the total amount of their contributions. The elimination of services in a given programme or field of activity would have significant consequences, primarily for the refugees themselves, but also for the Governments of the countries in the Agency's area of operations and actually, for international relations far beyond the Middle East. Nevertheless, the decision was not up to the Commissioner-General; it was up to the Governments making additional contributions, increasing their regular contributions or deciding not to contribute for one reason or another.
4. Should the Committee, and subsequently the General Assembly, adopt draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.3, the mandate of the Agency would be extended another three years until the end of June 1981. However, the extension would be ineffective unless Member States at the same time provided the funds required to keep the Agency operating. It had been pointed out that the financing of UNRWA was the responsibility of the whole international community acting through the United Nations; that was an incontrovertible principle which regrettably was not being honoured in practice. He therefore urged those Governments which supported the Agency with statements and votes but did not contribute to its budget to do so, thus acknowledging the principle of the responsibility of the international community for assisting the Palestine refugees pending a political solution. He also thanked those Governments which had supported the Agency financially and expressed the hope that they would manage to increase their contributions at the General Assembly Pledging Conference to be held on 17 November, which would decide the Agency's fate.
5. In view of the projected deficit for 1981, unless UNRWA could rely on a much higher level of contributions than that of the current year, it would have to dismantle part of its structure as early as January 1981.

(Mr. Rydbeck, UNRWA)

6. Several delegations had suggested a departure from the system of voluntary contributions and inclusion of the Agency's costs in the regular United Nations budget or in the form of a separate budget maintained by Member States on the basis of an agreed quota system. It would be for the General Assembly to decide that question. What was important to the Agency was to be able to rely on a guaranteed income every year in order to maintain its programmes at the present level or whatever level was decided by the General Assembly.

7. He shared the opinion of the Chairman of the Advisory Commission expressed in his letter of 2 September 1980 regarding the possibility of consolidating UNRWA headquarters in Beirut or some other place within its area of operations, and wished to point out that the 16,500 members of the Agency's staff who were carrying out the refugee programmes in the five areas of operations were all in the region and there was close contact and continuous communication both between individuals and electronically between the headquarters in Vienna and the five local offices.

8. With regard to violations by Governments in the area of operations of the legal status of the Agency staff and premises, he assured the Committee that in every case the Agency was raising the question with the competent authorities with a view to ensuring that their legal status was respected in conformity with the agreements governing United Nations activities.

9. As pointed out in previous years, UNRWA did not "administer" the camps; it provided services in education, health and well-being to the Palestine refugees whether or not they were in camps. Responsibility for administration in general, including the maintenance of law and order, rested with Governments. Consequently, the Agency was in no way responsible for what happened in the camps except in so far as it concerned the provision of services to the people in those camps.

10. He had concluded from the general debate that there was a very widespread understanding of the role of the Agency and of the need to ensure that it continued to operate until other means were found through an over-all settlement and the establishment of a just peace in the Middle East.

11. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the Special Political Committee, expressed appreciation to the Commissioner-General for his assistance in the debate and to his entire staff for their dedication and patience.

12. He noted that the Committee had before it the following draft resolutions: A/SPC/35/L.3, "Assistance to Palestine refugees"; L.4/Rev.1, "Offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for the Palestine refugees"; L.5, "Assistance to persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 hostilities"; L.6, "Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East"; L.7, "Population and refugees displaced since 1967"; and L.8, "Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip".

(The Chairman)

13. He pointed out that the only one of the six draft resolutions with financial implications was draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.6, and those implications were explained in document A/SPC/35/L.9.

14. It had been noted that the study requested of the Secretary-General in paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1, which concerned grants and scholarships for higher education, would be prepared with the funds now available to him and would not involve any additional cost for the time being.

15. Mr. KAZI (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the delegations of Bangladesh, Yugoslavia and his own delegation, introduced draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7 and expressed the hope that the Committee would adopt it unanimously.

16. Mr. RANIN (Israel) said that draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1 on grants and scholarships for the Arab refugees of Palestine constituted an example of a claim of a rather strange kind, in that it demanded special rights and privileges for that group of refugees. It stated that less than one per thousand of the Palestinian refugee students had the chance to continue higher education, when it was known that the Palestinian Arabs, including the refugees, were among the most advanced in the Middle East in terms of education.

17. In many developing countries the opportunities to enter higher educational establishments were few. Although it would be gratifying to be able to give young people from all areas access to higher education and vocational training, there was no justification for giving preference to the children of one group of refugees over other young persons, whether or not refugees, from other parts of the world.

18. Paragraphs 5 and 6 of the draft resolution requested the Secretary-General to study ways and means of establishing in Jerusalem, under the aegis of the United Nations, a university to cater to the needs of Palestine refugees. That proposal, made by Jordan for propaganda purposes, bore no relationship to actual educational needs, since in the area there was already the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, while in Judea and Samaria there were 13 institutions of higher education, which had more places than they could fill and to which all young people wishing to study could go if they were qualified. One of those Arab universities was in Bethlehem, only 5 miles from Jerusalem. His delegation rejected the draft resolution in document A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1.

19. Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7 was completely unrealistic. In his statement of 17 October he had outlined in full the security and other considerations regarding the question of the return of persons displaced during the 1967 hostilities.

20. In that connexion, he read out the fourth and fifth paragraphs of the note verbale, dated 2 September 1980, which appeared on page 2 of document A/35/472 of 3 October 1980. Since 1967 more than 50,000 of the persons displaced during the 1967 hostilities had been allowed to return to their homes. The destructive intent of draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7 was obvious from operative paragraph 2, which directly opposed the Middle East peace process. His delegation therefore rejected that draft resolution.

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(Mr. Ramin, Israel)

21. As to draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.8, he observed that it rightly omitted the absurd appeal to Israel to allow refugees who had obtained decent housing to return to their miserable shelters in the camps. The cynical attitude towards the refugees living in the Gaza Strip persisted, however, in that Israel was requested to desist from providing them with housing, even though, according to the report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, the accommodation it provided was superior to the shelters they had formerly occupied.
22. It would be observed that the legal status of the refugees underwent no change when they transferred from the camps to the new housing and that all the privileges accompanying that status were maintained. The present draft was merely another example of the stratagems used by some Arab countries in order to promote their campaign of propaganda against Israel in the United Nations.
23. Mr. NUSEIBEH (Jordan) said he was not in the least surprised that the representative of Israel was opposed to the promotion of educational institutions in the occupied territories. After all, the intention of the Zionist entity was to usurp and colonize the small amount of territory that remained of occupied Arab Palestine. The most recent figures showed that confiscation of property and settlement in the occupied territories extended to 33.5 per cent of the total area of those territories. In addition, hundreds of thousands of citizens from that region had been driven from their ancestral soil and their homelands. The representative of Israel had stated that hundreds of Palestinian students were studying at a Hebrew university in Jerusalem; while there were 14,000 Hebrew students at that university, there were other Hebrew universities. One such university was on Mount Scopus, while another, in the old Arab village of Ein Karem, which had been taken by force in 1948, had thousands of enrolled students. There were many other educational establishments, but the difference was that at those universities, which the representative of Israel considered it reasonable to have in Jerusalem, the hundreds of Palestinian students had been reduced to a very small number and presumably came not from the refugee population but from the 600,000 Palestinian citizens of Israel.
24. He could not understand how anyone belonging to a civilized world could oppose the establishment of facilities for the promotion of culture and education. Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1, of which Jordan was a sponsor, was not proposing killing, or drug trafficking, or aerial bombing, to which, incidentally, refugee camps in eight areas of Beirut and its suburbs were currently being subjected; what his delegation wanted to do was to help the Palestine refugees to improve their level of living and, contrary to what the representative of Israel had affirmed, it was not asking for preferential treatment for them. He could not understand why there should be opposition to a draft resolution whose only object was to ensure the provision of education and the transmission of an ancient cultural heritage. No grants were requested; the Palestinians themselves, who had managed to pave the way by dint of their sacrifices, would finance the proposed university. If universities were being requested in Cambodia and in Somalia and other parts of Africa, he failed to see why a university should not be established for the Palestine refugees. The United Nations was merely being asked to study the possibility of establishing such an institution for the refugees, whose lot had been to live uprooted, as refugees, since the dismembering of Palestine 30 years earlier.

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(Mr. Huseibeh, Jordan)

25. The representative of Israel had referred to universities which had been in existence some 70 or 80 years. There was only one new university in Bethlehem, which had been founded with the help of the contribution made by His Holiness the Pope. But that university could by no means absorb the almost 1.8 million Palestinians who lived in the West Bank. The representative of Israel in his statement had revealed the racist character of the entity which he represented and which was now killing indiscriminately the refugees in Lebanon. Israel did not accept that Jerusalem was the heritage of everyone; having penetrated there some 3,000 years earlier and remained there only 70 years - whereas the indigenous inhabitants had been there for 7,000 years - it was denying the people concerned the right to their own homeland. Yet that aggressive and racist State protested whenever it was stated that racism and zionism were synonymous.

26. The CHAIRMAN said that Pakistan had joined the sponsors of draft resolutions A/SPC/35/L.5 and L.6. He announced that the debate on the item had been concluded and invited the Committee to vote on the draft resolutions before it.

Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.3

27. At the request of the representative of Israel, a recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.3.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Israel.

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28. Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.3 was adopted by 119 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1

29. At the request of the representative of Israel, a recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Israel.

Abstaining: Malawi, United States of America.

30. Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1 was adopted by 116 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.5

31. The CHAIRMAN said that, as no delegation had requested a vote on draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.5, if there were no objections he would take it that the Committee decided to adopt it.

32. It was so decided.

Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.6

33. The CHAIRMAN said that as no delegation had requested a vote on draft

resolution A/SPC/35/L.6, if there were no objections he would take it that the Committee decided to adopt it.

34. It was so decided.

Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7

35. At the request of one delegation, a recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Canada, Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malawi, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

36. Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7 was adopted by 100 votes to 3, with 18 abstentions.

Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.8

37. At the request of one delegation, a recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.8.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Israel.

Abstaining: Canada, Ivory Coast, Malawi, United States of America.

33. Draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.8 was adopted by 116 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

39. Mr. RANGA (India) said that he wished to clarify his delegation's position regarding draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4, which the Committee had just adopted. During the previous meeting, when introducing the draft resolution, the representative of Jordan had referred to one or two countries which had contributed to the higher education of Palestinian refugees. His own delegation would like to mention once more for the record the support traditionally given by his country to the Palestinian cause in general, and to the advanced studies of Palestinian refugees in particular. He reminded the Committee that India had been one of the first countries to offer scholarships to people displaced from Palestine, long before the General Assembly had requested, in resolution 32/90 F, that funds should be allocated for that purpose.

40. Mr. RAMIN (Israel), speaking in explanation of his vote, said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.3, because the text interpreted General Assembly resolution 194 (III) differently from the way Israel had always done. Moreover, since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), there had been an exchange of population in the region, and the solution to the problem of Arab and Jewish refugees in the Middle East could be envisaged only in the context of those population movements. In addition, Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) provided that the solution to the

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(Mr. Ramin, Israel)

problem of both Jewish and Arab refugees in the Middle East must be achieved through negotiation. Since that time, a new step in that direction had been taken under the Camp David Agreements, a process which would make it possible to find an appropriate and agreed solution to the refugee problem.

41. His delegation had voted against draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4 for the reasons previously stated by his Delegation during the meeting. It should be recalled that under the Jordanian occupation of Judea and Samaria, from 1948 to 1967, there had been no universities in those areas, and the Jordanian authorities had refused to grant university status to any of the institutions which had requested it. But since 1967, under Israeli administration, progress had been made in education, and there were now 13 institutions of higher education, including three universities.

42. His delegation had voted against draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7, as its contents were completely unrealistic and essentially part of the propaganda campaign against Israel conducted by certain Arab countries. In previous statements he had already spoken at length on the security matters connected with the return of persons displaced during the 1967 hostilities. Moreover, paragraph 2 of the draft resolution was a deliberate attempt to hamper and discredit the current peace process in the Middle East.

43. His Delegation had also voted against draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.8, as it was contrary to the real humanitarian needs of the refugees, who wanted better and more suitable homes. The refugee population itself was anxious to get away from the conditions in the refugee camps and live in a better and more decent environment. It was irrational, and contrary to all fundamental considerations of human decency, to ask Israel to refrain from giving decent homes to refugees in the Gaza Strip. Israel would continue to take account of the real needs of the refugees, including their need for housing.

44. Mr. HUTCHENS (Australia) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution entitled "Population and refugees displaced since 1967" (A/SPC/35/L.7), having serious reservations about operative paragraph 2. His Government believed that the question of the Palestinian refugees' return could be realistically solved only within the framework of an over-all settlement in the Middle East, a fact which the paragraph in question failed to reflect.

45. Mr. PETREE (United States of America) said that, as in the previous year, his delegation had voted in favour of three of the six draft resolutions just discussed. It had abstained on the resolution concerning offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for the Palestine refugees (A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1) because, while it supported the resolution's general aims, it felt that operative paragraphs 5 and 6 were impractical and constituted an inappropriate attempt to introduce into the resolution the question of Jerusalem. It had also abstained in the vote on the resolution on Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip (A/SPC/35/L.8) because the wording was out of date and exaggerated. Finally, it had once again voted against the resolution on the population and refugees displaced since 1967 (A/SPC/35/L.7) for reasons that were familiar to all.

46. Mrs. NOWOTNY (Austria) said that her delegation's votes in favour of five out of the six draft resolutions relating to item 53 were a tangible expression of Austria's support for UNRWA. Her delegation wished, however, to sound a note of caution about the resolution appearing in document A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1 on offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including, vocational training, for the Palestine refugees, and especially operative paragraph 5 on the establishment of a university for Palestinian refugees. Her delegation's supporting vote derived from Austria's genuine concern with the problem of higher education for the Palestinian refugees. It would be preferable to make use of outside educational establishments, instead of embarking on a financial undertaking of such a scale. She also wondered whether a university of the arts was what Palestinian refugees needed, or whether an institution of more specialized higher learning, such as agriculture or engineering, might not be more suitable.
47. Mr. RANGER (Canada), in explaining his delegation's vote on the draft resolution concerning offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for the Palestine refugees (A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1), said that Canada was in total agreement with the need to improve educational opportunities for the Palestinian people but believed that it would be much more effective to consider the possibility of using existing institutions in the immediate vicinity. It did not, therefore, approve of the notion of establishing a special university, or of doing so under the aegis of the United Nations as proposed in operative paragraph 5. The proposed study would doubtless conclude that it would be better to use existing educational institutions than to found a new university. His delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution because, as in the past, it strongly supported its general drift.
48. Mr. FUJITA (Japan) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution on offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for the Palestine refugees (A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1) on the understanding that operative paragraph 5 merely asked for the means of establishing a university in Jerusalem to be studied.
49. Mr. NEVES (Portugal) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution on the population and refugees displaced since 1967 (A/SPC/35/L.7) because Portugal supported the right of the Palestinian refugees displaced since 1967 to return to their homes. Nevertheless, its vote had been cast on the understanding that operative paragraphs 1 and 2 did not exclude the possibility of reaching a negotiated agreement on their return.
50. Mr. BLOKLAND (Suriname) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolutions appearing in documents A/SPC/35/L.3, L.4/Rev.1, L.5, L.6, L.7 and L.8 because the Government of Suriname had always defended the inalienable rights of the Palestinians, including the right to determine their own future and establish their own sovereign State. It had emphasized the rights of the Palestinian refugees displaced since the 1967 war. Nevertheless, Suriname's vote in support of the draft resolution on the population and refugees displaced since 1967 (A/SPC/35/L.7) should not be construed as a repudiation of the treaties concluded between Egypt and Israel.

51. Mr. DIDIER (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the countries of the European Community, said that the nine States members of the Community had felt constrained to abstain in the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7. The Community recognized the right of all displaced inhabitants to return to their homes or former places of residence in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967. The wording of operative paragraph 1 of the resolution, however, could in practice rule out any possibility of reaching a favourable negotiated settlement. The Community wished to reiterate its position of the previous year regarding operative paragraph 2, and to state that the ambiguity it contained was a further reason for its abstention. The States members of the European Community had voted in favour of the draft resolution on the Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip (A/SPC/35/L.8). They wished, none the less, to point out that the text was ambiguous. For example, the wording of the fourth preambular paragraph should not raise objections concerning the refugees' freedom to select their place of abode. The provision must not be allowed to interfere with refugees' right to return within the framework of an over-all negotiated settlement. Finally, the Community felt that, in view of UNRWA's precarious financial situation, the proposals appearing in operative paragraphs 5 and 6 of draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1 should, in so far as they contained financial implications for the future, be covered by additional voluntary contributions, independently of the UNRWA budget.

52. Mr. VIRGIN (Sweden) said that his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1 despite some doubts about operative paragraph 5, on the understanding that the expenses incurred by the study of the means of establishing in Jerusalem the university referred to in that paragraph would not be a burden on the UNRWA budget. As for the draft resolution on the population and refugees displaced since 1967 (A/SPC/35/L.7), his delegation had always supported the principle that the displaced inhabitants were entitled to return to their homes or former places of residence. But two years previously, ambiguities had been introduced into resolution 33/112 F that could be interpreted to mean that no negotiations on means of repatriating the refugees were admissible. His delegation had abstained in the vote at that time. Unfortunately, the same ambiguity appeared in operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7, while the true intention of the draft became even more confused in operative paragraph 2. His delegation had felt constrained to abstain in the vote, but that should not be interpreted as a departure from the important principle of the refugees' right to return.

53. Mr. FONT (Spain) said that his delegation's vote on draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.7 was consistent with its support for the right of the displaced Palestinians to return to their homes. His delegation had voted in favour of the draft on the understanding that operative paragraphs 1 and 2 would not obstruct other agreements on the refugees' return.

54. Mr. NUSEIBEH (Jordan) voiced his Government's appreciation of the tireless service rendered by UNRWA to the just cause of the Palestinian refugees despite the economic difficulties the Agency was facing, and of the virtually unanimous support of the members of the Committee for the draft resolutions relating to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian refugees. It should be noted, however, that the term "legitimate rights" was tautologous, since rights were rights and had no need of the qualifier "legitimate".

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(Mr. Nuseibeh, Jordan)

55. His country was grateful for the constant support it had received from the friendly Republic of India for the scholarship programme for a considerable amount of time prior to the adoption of any resolution on the question. Other countries in addition to India had responded to the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during the two preceding sessions and had provided educational assistance to the Palestine refugees. In spite of the scarcity of available economic resources, one of the major achievements of his country since then had been in the field of education. As a result of a slow and difficult process, opportunities had been made available in institutions of the unified State on both Banks and abroad. In that connexion, he recalled that the West Bank and the East Bank of the Jordan had been officially united in 1950 as entities with full equality and sovereignty, and there was no reason to speak of occupation. The populations of both Banks had retained their property and all their rights. At the same time, they had committed themselves to a joint endeavour to restore the full rights of the Palestinians, in accordance with the norms of international law and justice.

56. The outcome of the vote showed the position of the international community. Only a few delegations, such as those of the United States, Israel and Canada, had opposed unconditional repatriation of displaced inhabitants. He wondered whether that meant that their countries advocated absorption of the occupied territories by Israel.

57. The countries of the European Economic Community and other groups should bring the question of the Palestine refugees to the attention of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which was to be held at Madrid the following month. When human rights were discussed, the question of the Palestine refugees should be considered.

58. The establishment of the university at Jerusalem would give the city a universal character. Jerusalem would thus cease to be the city of a racist group, which had more than one university for thousands of Jewish students, while the Arabs had only a few hundred enrolled students. The Palestinian presence at Jerusalem was justified from the psychological, historical and cultural points of view. The university of arts and sciences would be a cultural manifestation of the presence of the original inhabitants of Jerusalem.

59. Mr. RAHMAN (Observer, Palestine Liberation Organization), speaking on behalf of the Palestine refugees and the Palestine Liberation Organization, expressed gratitude to Mr. Olof Rydbeck for his valuable co-operation and also to the representatives of States who had endorsed the resolutions whose purpose was to alleviate the refugees' situation.

60. The position of the Government of Israel with regard to education for the Palestinians was well known. Universities had been closed, and primary and secondary schools, institutes and even nursery schools, including those of UNRWA, had been the target of Israeli attacks. That was not accidental, it was part of the Israeli occupation authorities' established policy to place restrictions on the educational system of the Palestinians in the occupied territories and, furthermore,

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(Mr. Rahman, Observer, PLO)

to attack young Palestinians. Attacks were also made on curricula and textbooks, since the Palestinians were not permitted to learn about the history of Palestine.

61. Despite its commitment to its struggle for national liberation, the PLO shared its scant resources with brethren elsewhere who were struggling for their national liberation. It therefore supported any endeavour that contributed to the alleviation of the suffering of others who were in the same position as the Palestinians in South-East Asia, South Africa, Latin America and other parts of the world.

62. He was not asking for preferential treatment for the Palestinians; he was asking that when there was an opportunity to improve their living conditions, others should not oppose such an improvement. The Israeli position with regard to Palestine reflected its racist conduct and had the effect of limiting the capabilities of the Palestinian people and undermining their national character, since education was a factor in the struggle to attain national rights.

63. The position adopted by the United States in the Committee did not surprise him: on 4 November elections would be held in the United States. In explaining his vote, the representative of the United States had objected to the reference to Jerusalem since that word was not a favourable one in the electoral process. He took it that after 4 November it would be possible to refer to Jerusalem.

64. The exchange of population reflected the fact that persons were being treated as though they were merchandise, human beings could not be exchanged -- that contributed to elimination of the relationship that people had with their natural environment. What the representative of Israel was proposing ran altogether counter to the interests of the Jewish community of Arab origin, which would be displaced from its natural environment and transferred to other cultures that did not interact with, or relate to, each other. However, he was not surprised that the Zionist movement directed its efforts towards that kind of agitation, which would ultimately not be in the interest of the Jewish community, the Palestinian people or the peace process. The Zionist plan to save the Jewish communities of the world was a failure because the only place where there continued to be hostility between Jews and other peoples was in Palestine. The Zionist plan would continue to be a failure, since nobody could feel free while restricting the freedom of others.

65. He hoped that decent Jews would protest against their Government's racist policies. It was a question of time, but time was on the side of those struggling for their national liberation.

66. Mr. SITUSI (Malawi), speaking in explanation of vote, said that the financial problem of UNRWA had been considered in the Committee. The United Nations also had a deficit of over \$200 million. The Committee had just voted on draft resolution A/SPC/35/L.4/Rev.1, operative paragraph 5 of which requested that ways and means of establishing a university at Jerusalem should be studied, which represented a further burden for the United Nations. The representative of Jordan asserted that the Palestinians would find ways of financing and maintaining the university.

(Mr. Situsi, Malawi)

However, there was reason to believe that, if the General Assembly adopted the resolution, within two, three or four years the obligation to finance that university would arise. His delegation had therefore abstained in the vote on that draft resolution entirely for financial reasons.

67. Mr. HUSSAIN (Iraq) reminded the representative of Malawi that since 1950 the Government of that country had generously contributed the amount of \$280 to UNRWA.

68. Mr. DIGUINI (Ivory Coast) said that his delegation had voted in favour of all the draft resolutions, with the exception of that in document A/SPC/35/L.8, in respect of which it had abstained for the reasons given during the preceding session of the General Assembly.

69. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 53 and that the Rapporteur would prepare an appropriate report for submission to the General Assembly.

70. He also drew attention to the fact that consideration of agenda items 55 and 56, concerning peaceful uses of outer space, would begin the following day. He declared the list of speakers open and invited members of the Committee wishing to submit draft resolutions to do so as early as possible.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.