



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
GENERAL

A/6772  
25 July 1967  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

Fifth emergency special session  
Agenda item 5

LETTER DATED 13 JUNE 1967 FROM THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS (A/6717)

Letter dated 24 July 1967 from the Permanent Representative of  
the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations  
addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to your letter transmitting General Assembly resolution 2252 (ES-V), which was adopted on 4 July 1967 by the emergency special session of the Assembly, I deem it necessary to state the following.

The Soviet Union is, as you are aware, providing substantial assistance to the Arab countries with a view to eliminating the consequences of the aggression committed against them by Israel.

The Soviet Government and Soviet social organizations are providing aid to the people of the United Arab Republic, Syria and Jordan, who have endured suffering as a result of the criminal actions of Israel's armed forces; in particular, they have sent these countries, free of charge, shipments of food, medicine, clothing, footwear, tents, blankets, etc. They have also indicated that they are prepared to send voluntary medical teams to the affected areas in order to provide emergency aid to the inhabitants and to the refugees from the Arab territories occupied by the aggressor.

Since it is providing this assistance to the Arab peoples through appropriate channels, the Soviet Union sees no need to send aid of this type through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

Any aid by other countries to the victims of aggression is, of course, welcome. However, the question of eliminating the consequences of Israel's aggression in the Middle East cannot in any sense be reduced to a simple matter of charity.

The Soviet Union believes not only that Israel's aggressive actions should be condemned and all the forces of the aggressor immediately withdrawn from the occupied Arab territories but also that Israel must make good in full and within the shortest possible period of time all the damage inflicted by its aggression on the United Arab Republic, Syria and Jordan and on the affected Arab population and must return all stolen property and other material assets.

Hence, compensation for the damage inflicted by Israel's aggression, including compensation for the damage suffered by the refugees and other victims of that aggression, should be effected primarily at the expense of the aggressor himself, namely Israel. This is dictated by the principles of international law, by the principles of justice and by concern with the future maintenance of international peace. It is also the surest and most effective means of solving the problem connected with the position of the Palestine refugees and other questions of a humanitarian nature.

The refugee problem in the Middle East, with which the United Nations has been dealing for many years, is obviously not the result of natural disasters of some sort but a direct consequence of Israel's unceasing aggressive actions against the Arab States.

The Arab refugee problem has remained unsolved until now because of the fact that Israel is continuing its aggressive policy and is, in particular, unwilling to comply with the General Assembly's resolution of 11 December 1948, which provides that it is Israel which must permit the Arab refugees to return to their lands, must return the refugees' property to them and must pay compensation to those choosing to settle in other countries.

It is therefore Israel's position and its unwillingness to discharge its obligations towards the refugees that are preventing a truly effective, drastic solution of the refugee problem in the Middle East.

I should be grateful if you would take the necessary steps to circulate this letter as an official General Assembly document.

(Signed) N. FEDORENKO

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