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UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR
PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

Population and refugees displaced since 1967

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of paragraph 5 of its resolution 36/146 B of 16 December 1981 concerning population and refugees displaced since 1967, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, after consulting with the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), to report to it at its thirty-seventh session on Israel's compliance with paragraph 4 of the resolution. In paragraph 4 of that resolution, the Assembly reiterated its call upon Israel (a) to take immediate steps for the return of all the displaced inhabitants and (b) to desist from all measures that obstructed the return of the displaced inhabitants, including measures affecting the physical and demographic structure of the occupied territories. In paragraphs 1 to 3 of the resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of all the displaced inhabitants to return to their homes or former places of residence in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, and declared once more that any attempt to restrict, or to attach conditions to, the free exercise of the right of return by any displaced person was inconsistent with that inalienable right and inadmissible; considered any and all agreements embodying any restriction on or condition for the return of the displaced inhabitants as null and void; and deplored the continued refusal of the Israel authorities to take steps for the return of the displaced inhabitants.

* A/37/150.

2. By a note verbale dated 1 March 1982 addressed to the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations, the Secretary-General drew attention to his reporting responsibility under paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 36/146 and requested the Government of Israel to communicate to him, as soon as possible, any information it may provide on the implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution.
3. In a note verbale dated 27 August 1982 the Permanent Representative of Israel replied that the position of the Government of Israel on the matters dealt with in resolution 36/146 B had been set out in successive annual replies, submitted to the Secretary-General in recent years. The report of the Secretary-General (A/36/558) contained the latest of those replies dated 20 August 1981.
4. In connexion with paragraph 4 (a) of General Assembly resolution 36/146 B, the Secretary-General has obtained from the Commissioner-General of UNRWA the information available to him on the return of refugees registered with the Agency. As indicated in earlier reports, 1/ the Agency is not involved in any arrangements for the return of refugees; nor is it involved in any arrangements for the return of displaced persons, none of whom is registered as a refugee. Its information is based on requests by returning registered refugees for transfer of rations to the areas to which they have returned and subsequent correction of Agency records. The Agency would not necessarily be aware of the return of any registered refugees who did not request the provision of rations or services, but believe they would be very few in number. So far as is known to the Agency, between 1 July 1981 and 30 June 1982, 100 displaced registered refugees returned to the West Bank and 83 returned to the Gaza Strip. It should be noted that some of these may not be displaced registered refugees, but rather members of the family of the displaced registered refugee who accompanied him on his return or joined him there, but who were not themselves displaced in 1967. Thus, taking into account the estimate given in paragraph 4 of last year's report (A/36/558), the number of displaced registered refugees who are known by the Agency to have returned to the occupied territories since June 1967 is about 10,000. The Agency is unable to estimate the total number of displaced inhabitants who have returned. It keeps records only of registered refugees and, as pointed out above, even those records, particularly with respect to location of registered refugees may be incomplete.

Notes

1/ A/9156, para. 5; Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes, agenda item 38, document A/9740, para. 4; ibid., Thirtieth Session, Annexes, agenda item document A/10253, para. 4; ibid., Thirty-first Session, Annexes, agenda item 53, document A/31/240, para. 4; ibid., Thirty-second Session, Annexes, agenda item 55, document A/32/263, para. 4; ibid., Thirty-third Session, Annexes, agenda item 54, document A/33/286, para. 4; ibid., Thirty-fourth Session, Annexes, agenda item 50, document A/34/518, para. 4; and ibid., Thirty-fifth Session, Annexes, agenda item 53, document A/35/472, para. 4; Thirty-sixth Session, Annexes, agenda item 60, document A/36/558, para. 4.
