

United Nations

Nations Unies

RESTRICTED

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

ASSEMBLEE
GENERALE

A/C.3/SC.2/SR 11
8 November 1948

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Dual distribution

Third Session

THIRD COMMITTEE

SUB-COMMITTEE 2

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING

Held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris,
on Saturday, 6 November 1948, at 3.30 p.m.

CONTENTS:

Draft resolution on assistance to Palestine refugees (A/C.3/SC.2/4,
A/C.3/315, A/C.3/318, A/C.3/SC.2/6 and A/C.3/323) (discussion continued)

1. New Zealand and French amendment to the New Zealand and French
draft resolution (document A/C.3/SC.2/4)
2. Joint Belgian, Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States
draft resolution -- paragraph 9 (document A/C.3/315)

Chairman:

Mr. PEREZ CISNEROS

Cuba

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At the request of the Chairman, and in reply to the Egyptian representative, Mr. KATZIN (Secretariat) stated that, on the assumption that the measures in paragraph 2 and in sub-paragraph (b), in particular, of document A/C.323, would be executed, there was no reason why the provisions of either the New Zealand and French draft resolution or of the four-Power draft resolution could not be applied within the framework of the Secretary-General's programme.

Mr. LUNDE (Norway) supported the principle of distributing the expense of assistance to Palestine refugees among all Member States as a matter of universal obligation. It was a problem that should affect the international conscience and Norway was prepared to do its part. Should the Sub-Committee decide that the total amount of \$30,000,000 should not be distributed on the basis of the United Nations scale of contributions, he would support the New Zealand and French suggestion that the initial advance of \$5,000,000 should be contributed in that manner.

Mr. HOUARD (Belgium) expressed the view that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate body to determine the manner in which money should be provided for the Palestine refugees. That Committee had taken a decision on the question and had made it subject to three conditions. The second condition was of particular interest to his delegation. Should certain Member States assume the responsibility for making contributions early in 1949, the problem would, in fact, be solved.

Mr. FLAZA (Venezuela) felt that the Sub-Committee had to decide the manner in which the initial advance of \$5,000,000 would be contributed. The four-Power draft resolution had no suggestions to offer in that respect. In paragraph 3, it stated that contributions could be made in currency or kind. It had to be borne in mind, however, that if all contributions were made in kind, it would be impossible to reimburse the United Nations for the advance of \$5,000,000.

He also shared the United Kingdom representative's point of view that it was inappropriate to make contributions obligatory for a purely humanitarian question and that such a procedure would put certain countries in a very difficult position.

He could not accept the time limit put forward in the New Zealand and French draft resolution and suggested that enough should be contributed to repay the advance of \$5,000,000 by 1 March 1949. Otherwise, on the calculation that there would be \$30,000,000 contributed for a period of nine months, it could happen that that advance would be exhausted by the middle of February.

/In paragraph 3

In paragraph 3 of the four-Power draft resolution, he proposed the substitution of the words "before 1 March 1949" for "as soon as possible". He also moved the first Venezuelan amendment set forth in document A/C.3/SC.2/6 and the Venezuelan amendment contained in document A/C.3/318.

Mr. GRUMBACH (France) said that the substitute New Zealand and French amendment had been put forward for two main reasons. It would encourage the speedy reimbursement of the United Nations' advance of \$5,000,000. Unlike the Belgian representative, he considered that the Fifth Committee had taken no decision on the financial implications of the four-Power draft resolution. Furthermore, there were not sufficient guarantees in the Fifth Committee report that the \$5,000,000 would be advanced. In that regard, he cited the provisions of paragraph 2 of the report.

Secondly, it had to be remembered that a spirit of international solidarity did not always prevail. IRO had been set up to assist the victims of the Second World War; France's contribution to that organization was almost five times the amount of her contribution to the United Nations Organization. He did not draw attention to that fact in a complaining or boastful spirit. Only fourteen Members of the United Nations had joined IRO, however. Member States were now being given another opportunity to show a spirit of international solidarity and it was perhaps wise to ensure from the start that all nations contributed their share to the assistance of the Palestine refugees.

Mr. SUTCH (New Zealand) had also been disappointed by the Fifth Committee's report. The words "a sum up to \$5,000,000 might be made available" were insufficient. The figure of \$5,000,000 had been arrived at after unofficial consultation with members of the Secretariat. They had stated that it might be possible to utilize that sum in other currencies besides the American dollar, but too little was known about that aspect of the question for the Sub-Committee to take a final decision.

The French and New Zealand delegations had never suggested that \$5,000,000 would be needed in United States currency; they had spoken of dollars because that was the currency commonly referred to in the United Nations. The United Nations permitted payment in other currencies when it was possible to utilize them, as for example, with regard to the meeting of the General Assembly. A compulsory contribution would not necessarily be a dollar contribution.

/He requested

He requested the Secretary-General's representative to comment on that point; and also on the difference between the administrative and operational costs of the assistance programme, of what the operational costs would consist and in what currencies the administrative costs could be paid.

Mr. BORISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated with regard to the New Zealand and French amendment (A/C.3/SC.2/4) that the first paragraph might prevent some nations from co-operating in the programme of relief for Palestine refugees. Both the four Power draft resolution on Palestine refugees (A/C.3/315) and the report of the Fifth Committee (A/C.3/323) had been based on the premise that contributions would be voluntary. If the principle of compulsory contributions was adopted as suggested by the New Zealand and French amendment (A/C.3/SC.2/4), the relief programme might be defeated in the General Assembly. The USSR representative considered that the Fifth Committee would not have agreed to that change. The Fifth Committee had not specified the sum of \$5,000,000 but rather "a sum up to \$5,000,000" (A/C.3/323).

There were obviously a number of budgetary difficulties with regard to a loan from the Working Capital Fund for the Palestine refugee relief programme. He saw no reason to complicate the matter further by attempting to put the contributions on a compulsory basis, especially since some countries had stated that they did not have the necessary dollar credits.

With regard to the principle of international solidarity, the representative of the USSR considered that the New Zealand and French amendment would endanger that solidarity rather than strengthen it. To make the contributions compulsory would not provide a solution to the problem, which in his opinion could only be settled successfully on the basis of voluntary contributions. He pointed out that the Fifth Committee had agreed that an advance could be made from the Working Capital Fund and in sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of paragraph 2 of its report (A/C.3/323), it had specified the conditions under which that loan would be granted. Perhaps some countries were able to repay the loan in dollar credits, but there was no justification for attempting to force other countries to do so.

The USSR favoured the principle of voluntary contributions, because those countries which did not have dollar credits should be given the freedom to decide their own course of action. It was desirable that as many countries as possible should take part in the Palestine refugee relief programme, but if the contributions were made obligatory, the USSR felt that many countries might be prevented from collaborating and for that

/reason

reason the USSR delegation would vote against paragraph 1 of the New Zealand and French amendment (A/C.3/SC.2/4).

Mr. ANZE MATIENZO (Bolivia) considered that the Fifth Committee was better able to handle the technical aspects of the question than the Sub-Committee. He pointed out that he had been one of the first representatives in the Third Committee to question whether the loan of \$5,000,000 from the Working Capital Fund would be sufficiently guaranteed.

In contrast with opinions which had been previously expressed, he considered that the Fifth Committee had given a decision on paragraph 9 of document A/C.3/315. The discussion in the Sub-Committee might have arisen due to the fact that there was a discrepancy between the French and English texts of the report of the Fifth Committee (A/C.3/323). In paragraph 2 the word "might" appeared to be an inaccurate translation of the French "pourra", which would seem to indicate that the Committee had taken a decision.

With respect to the question of whether or not contributions should be voluntary, he fully understood the purpose of the New Zealand and French amendment which had been intended to give a more perfect technical basis to the four Power draft resolution, but he was afraid that it might alter the general aspect of the work in connexion with the relief operation. If the amount of \$5,000,000 was to be written in the regular budget, he would have to consult his Government before taking a decision on the matter.

Mr. KATZIN (Secretariat), in reply to the first point raised by the representative of New Zealand, stated that the figure of \$29,500,000 were based on the report of the Acting Mediator, and on the basis of a careful study, it had been decided that the figures were well founded. A justification of the Secretariat's plan would, of course, be presented in broad detail to the Fifth Committee.

With respect to the second point raised by the New Zealand representative, he stated that the sum of \$29,500,000 was intended to cover certain expenses, such as food, clothing, blankets, shelter, medicines, sanitary supplies, transportation, and so on, mentioned by the Acting Mediator in his report (A/689). The figure for operational charges had not been included in that report. The staff of sixteen now working under the Director of Relief were carrying out both administrative and operational tasks, but the latter were rather circumscribed because of the heavy load of administrative duties falling on such a small staff. A staff of fifty would not be sufficient to ensure the most efficient distribution and use of the supplies furnished by the United Nations. The Secretariat had

/therefore,

therefore, drawn up a plan which would ensure adequate supervision of the distribution of supplies, and required that operational costs should be added to the figure suggested by the Acting Mediator.

With respect to the third point raised by the representative of New Zealand, he stated that he could not give an estimate of the final costs of operational services, but on the basis of the experience of other relief organizations, operating in similar fields, operational expenses might amount to between five and seven and a half per cent of the total cost of the relief programme. The extra sum needed for administrative and operational expenses would therefore amount to between \$1,500,000 and \$2,500,000. The question would, however, be discussed in the Fifth Committee. He specified that administrative costs included the expenses for twenty-five staff members, who would serve under the Director of Refugee Relief. The Fifth Committee would have the final decision on whether certain items provided in the Acting Mediator's report such as transportation should more correctly be included under operational costs or under supply costs.

With regard to the question raised by the representative of New Zealand regarding the currencies that would be needed, he stated that he could make no prediction at that time. A considerable amount could, undoubtedly, be spent in soft currencies, but a final estimate could not be prepared before another month or so.

The main aspects of the report of the Acting Mediator had been well premised. There were certain necessary additions to be provided for and the Secretary-General's plan had been drawn up accordingly. The Secretariat also felt that the Secretary-General's programme could be carried out under the terms of either resolution under discussion.

Paragraph 1 of the New Zealand and French amendment (contained in document A/C.3/SC.2/4) to the New Zealand and French draft resolution (A/C.3/SC.2/2) was put to a vote.

Paragraph 1 was rejected by 10 votes to 3.

On the suggestion of Mr. BORISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), the word "voluntary" was added before the words "governmental contributions" in paragraph 9 of the four Power draft resolution (A/C.3/315).

Mr. PLAZA (Venezuela) requested that paragraph 9 of the four Power draft resolution (A/C.3/315) should be voted on in two parts, the paragraph being divided after the words "paragraph 3".

/The first

The first part of paragraph 9 of the four Power draft resolution, as amended, was adopted by 10 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

The second part of paragraph 9 of the four Power draft resolution (A/C.3/315) reading "before the end of the period specified in paragraph 2" was put to a vote.

The second part of paragraph 9 was adopted by 11 votes to 1 with 1 abstention.

Paragraph 9 as a whole was adopted by 9 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that, as had been previously decided, the paragraph which had just been approved would appear as paragraph 3.

Mr. PLAZA (Venezuela) explained that he had voted against the second part of paragraph 9 for the reasons he had given earlier in the meeting.

As a result of the vote that had just been taken, Mr. GRUMBACH (France), explained that the second paragraph of the New Zealand and French draft resolution, would automatically fall.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.