

Dual distribution

Third Session

THIRD COMMITTEE

SUB-COMMITTEE 2

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH MEETING

Held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris,
on Thursday, 4 November 1948, at 10.30 a.m.

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Chairman: Mr. G. de BEAUMONT France

Rapporteur: Mr. G. PEREZ CISNEROS Cuba

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STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY FUND.

At the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, Mr. PATE (International Children's Emergency Fund) explained the assistance to Palestine refugees that had already been given or that was planned by the organization he represented.

In August 1948 the Executive Board of the International Children's Emergency Fund had allocated a sum of approximately \$450,000 for relief to children and mothers among the Arab and Jewish refugees in Palestine. The supplies purchased with that sum had already been delivered. The Executive Board had, the previous week, voted an additional amount of \$6,000,000 for the same purpose, and some of the supplies to be obtained under the new allocation were at present being shipped to Beirut.

The Children's Emergency Fund considered the aid it was furnishing to be merely supplementary to the basic relief programme being worked out by the United Nations. It would provide an average additional 810 calories per day per person for mothers and children among the refugees -- a group which numbered almost half of a total of 500,000 refugees. The figure of 810 calories would vary according to whether or not the recipients were also getting government assistance. The supplementary supplies would be sent during approximately the same period as that contemplated for the general relief programme, though on account of the approach of winter and the urgency of the need for food and shelter, every effort was being made to speed up delivery and to build up reserves.

Speaking of the plan for relief put forward in the memorandum by the Secretary-General, Mr. Pate said that his own long personal experience in relief work made him feel that that plan was sound. The principle of decentralization on which it was based had been successfully followed by the Children's Emergency Fund which with a very small international staff, worked largely through agencies already existing in the various countries.

The small staff which the Children's Emergency Fund had at present in the Middle East worked closely with all United Nations efforts on behalf of Palestine refugees. Reports which had been received from that staff made clear the deeply distressing condition of the refugees and the critical need for prompt action.

In reply to a question by Mr. PEREZ CISNEROS (Cuba), Rapporteur, Mr. PATE (International Children's Emergency Fund) stated that in the ICEF it was considered that the \$6,000,000 contributed by it would be in addition to the \$50,000,000 being suggested for the general relief programme.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN thanked Mr. Pate for the interesting and valuable report he had given.

Mr. Pate, Executive Director of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, withdrew.

CONTINUATION OF THE GENERAL DISCUSSION ON ASSISTANCE TO PALESTINE REFUGEES

Mr. PEREZ CISNEROS (Cuba), Rapporteur, could not agree with the suggestion made at the previous meeting by the Belgian representative that an ad hoc committee such as had been proposed originally by the Bolivian representative should be an advisory rather than a policy committee. The only justification for setting up a committee would be that it would share the heavy responsibilities of the Secretary-General in the matter under discussion; but an advisory committee of experts would not fulfil that purpose. The question arose as to what kind of experts would be chosen. The \$25,000 which had been mentioned as the amount to cover the expenses of the committee would have to be divided among the ten members proposed. If each member were allowed, then, only \$2,500 for the period of nine months during which the work was to continue -- and that sum included the expenses of a journey to Geneva -- surely it could not be expected that many experts would be available. The committee would therefore necessarily consist of members of the Secretariat. Members of the Secretariat, however, were international civil servants and would not be in a position to bear the responsibilities which it was proposed that the committee should bear. Mr. Perez Cisneros did not think, therefore, that a committee such as was suggested would provide a solution to the problem.

Turning to consideration of the draft resolution submitted by New Zealand and France (document A/C.3/SC 2/2), Mr. Perez Cisneros thought that proposal was more in the nature of an amendment to the joint draft resolution presented earlier by Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America (document A/C.3/315). Several of the paragraphs of the two draft resolutions were similar and the Sub-Committee might discuss the relative drafting merits of each. The joint draft resolution submitted by the four Powers was superior, however, as regards the preamble and paragraph 3: the preamble was worded with more emotional force than that of the New Zealand-French proposal and paragraph 3 provided for a more flexible plan of contributions by Member States that would be better suited to the existing situation in the various countries. It might be well, however, to draw the General Assembly's attention to the need for an overall solution of the problem of contributions. As regards paragraph 9 of the New Zealand-French proposal, the Cuban delegation had already expressed its opposition to the principle of an advisory committee which was proposed therein.

Mr. Perez Cisneros could not agree with the Polish representative that the resolution to be adopted should deal with certain political aspects of the problem; he supported the Egyptian representative's view that all political implications should be avoided.

Mr. CHA (China) urged that the Sub-Committee should speed up its work by choosing a basic document for its discussions. The draft resolution submitted by New Zealand and France might be used for that purpose and related points included in the earlier joint draft resolution might be discussed in connexion with it.

The Chinese delegation was not in favour of having contributions based on the scale of contributions for the United Nations budget. The aid given in the present case should be on a purely voluntary basis.

Mr. Cha noted with satisfaction that in the excellent memorandum by the Secretary-General, the word "advisory" had been substituted for "policy", in describing the committee that it was proposed to set up. If the other members of the Sub-Committee agreed that a committee should be established, he would accept the idea of an advisory committee.

In reply to a point raised by Mr. Cha, the CHAIRMAN explained that the Fifth Committee had begun consideration of the question in connexion with assistance to Palestine refugees that had been referred to it by the Third Committee, but no decision had yet been taken. The Fifth Committee might decide to postpone reaching a final conclusion until a decision on the subject had been made by the Third Committee.

Mr. PLAZA (Venezuela) suggested that a time-limit should be laid down in the resolution for the submission of contributions. It need not be compulsory, but just the same would have an excellent psychological effect. The time-limit could be set for 15 or 30 November and if by that time the \$30,000,000 had not been contributed, the balance could be raised from those Member States who had not already contributed, on the basis of the United Nations scale of contributions. Such a procedure would take into consideration those countries who had been unable to make an initial contribution because of internal economic difficulties.

He could not accept the Chinese representative's point of view that contributions should not be made compulsory as there would be a risk that insufficient funds would be forthcoming. Neither could he accept the Norwegian representative's view that it would be desirable to lay down a definite scale of contributions, as certain countries might be prepared to give more than they would be required to under such a scale.

The Franco-New Zealand proposal should contain a similar reference to that included in the Joint Belgian, Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States resolution, in regard to the initial advance of \$5,000,000. The Polish representative had been right to draw attention to the incompatibility between the provisions of paragraphs 3 and 9 of the latter text. Not more than 83 per cent of the contributions should be allowed to be made in kind, thus ensuring the reimbursement of the United Nations advance of \$5,000,000.

The CHAIRMAN declared the closure of the general debate and drew attention to the various resolutions and amendments that were before the Sub-Committee for its consideration.

In reply to the Chairman, Mr. DEHOUSSE (Belgium) explained that he was sponsoring the original Bolivian proposal in a somewhat altered form; he proposed the setting up of an advisory committee. The principle of the question could be decided immediately or it could be discussed in connexion with the Franco-New Zealand proposal or paragraph 1(a) of the Secretary-General's Memorandum.

Mr. PLAZA (Venezuela) and Mrs. LIONAES (Norway) requested that their proposals should be discussed in connexion with paragraph 3 of the Joint Belgian, Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States resolution.

Mr. PEREZ CISNEROS (Cuba) explained that the Peruvian proposal was not an exclusively financial one and therefore, would have to be considered by the Sub-Committee.

After a short discussion on the procedure to be followed in the debate, Mr. ANDRAOS (Egypt) proposed that the Sub-Committee should begin with the consideration of the Joint Belgian, Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States resolution, in connexion with paragraph 7 of which the Secretary-General's Memorandum could be discussed.

Mr. PEREZ CISNEROS (Cuba) moved the closure of the debate on procedure.

As no objections were expressed, the debate was closed.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN announced that he would follow the procedure outlined by the Egyptian representative. In reply to the United States representative, he stated that the Secretariat would do its best to have the necessary documentation prepared in time.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.