

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

FIFTH SESSION

Official Records



AD HOC POLITICAL COMMITTEE 35th

MEETING

Tuesday, 7 November 1950, at 10.45 a.m.

Lake Success, New York

CONTENTS

Page

Palestine: Assistance to Palestine refugees (A/1451, A/1451/Corr.1, A/1452, A/AC.38/4, A/AC.38/L.28); repatriation of Palestine refugees and payment of compensation due them (A/1323, A/1324, A/1325, A/1326, A/1346, A/1349, A/1366, A/1367, A/1367/Corr.1, A/1367/Add.1) (continued)	207
---	-----

Chairman: Mr. Víctor A. BELAÚNDE (Peru).

Palestine: Assistance to Palestine refugees
(A/1451, A/1451/Corr.1, A/1452, A/AC.38/4, A/AC.38/L.28); repatriation of Palestine refugees and payment of compensation due them (A/1323, A/1324, A/1325, A/1326, A/1346, A/1349, A/1366, A/1367, A/1367/Corr.1, A/1367/Add.1) (continued)

[Item 20 (a) and (b)]*

1. Mr. ROSS (United States of America) paid tribute to the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and his colleagues for the excellent work they had done.

2. The report of the Director of the Agency (A/1451, A/1451/Corr.1) contained a wealth of information on the plight of some hundreds of thousands of men, women and children whose lives had been uprooted through no fault of their own. The document revealed the countless difficulties encountered by devoted workers in the deeply humanitarian task of assistance to the refugees. It was true that with regard to work projects the Agency had not made the progress which the General Assembly had hoped for when the question was considered at its fourth session. Nevertheless, it was encouraging that 17,000 refugees were already working and in that way helping to supply the needs of five times that number. Moreover, it was to be noted with satisfaction that the Agency was striving to assure that only refugees who qualified for relief were actually receiving direct assistance from the United Nations. The most interesting and encouraging part of the report was that (A/1451, para. 68) in which the Agency spoke of the possibility of resolving the problem of the Palestine refugees by reintegration, either through repatriation or rehabilitation. Reintegration would give the ever-increasing number of refugees the courage and the material means to begin a new life.

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

3. The United States delegation hoped that all the Members of the United Nations in general, and in particular the States of the Near East, who were very specially concerned with the welfare of the refugees, would approve the spirit of the report. It must be hoped that those States would be encouraged by the prospects which would be afforded if the report were approved.

4. It was well known that hitherto the refugees had had no choice: they had had to keep on struggling in the wretched plight which had lasted for so long; they had not been able to return to their homes, and, for various reasons, including their poverty, they had not been in a position to set up new homes elsewhere in the Near East. If, as was to be hoped, the Relief and Works Agency were granted the necessary funds to enable it to carry out its programme, the refugees and their families would be able to decide whether it was in their own interest to choose resettlement in another country in the Near East or to await an opportunity to return to their homes. Clearly, several years would be needed to carry out a programme involving the reintegration of 150,000 families; but the sooner the programme was begun the sooner it would be completed.

5. The report said nothing about the way in which the funds for the reintegration of the refugees should be used. Its reticence was justified in so far as the sum contemplated was to be no more than a first instalment. Before the funds were granted to the Agency, however, evidence would be required of any projects that had been or were to be initiated by the governments concerned with the Agency's approval. Accordingly, he hoped that all the Near Eastern governments concerned would give prompt and determined consideration to definite proposals for reintegration.

6. He then proceeded to explain the various proposals contained in the draft resolution which his delegation had submitted jointly with those of France, Turkey and the United Kingdom (A/AC.38/L.28).

7. Resolution 302 (IV) of the General Assembly had been quoted in the preamble for the purpose of stressing the fact that the various provisions of that resolution relating to the establishment, operational duties, responsibilities, and limitations of the Relief and Works Agency were still fully in force. In fact, the provisions of the resolution had proved satisfactory in practice and for the moment required no modification.

8. Paragraph 1 drew attention to the need for sufficient contributions to the Agency for the current budget, which covered the period ending 30 June 1951. The fact that the refugees were still dependent on outside assistance was in itself deplorable enough; but it was just as discouraging to note that the response to the appeal addressed by the General Assembly in resolution 302 (IV) for the purpose of establishing by voluntary contributions a fund of \$54,900,000 to satisfy the minimum requirements had not been as generous as had been hoped. Thus, for example, the assistance in material and supplies that had been expected from the governments of the Near East had not reached the proportions expected by the Economic Survey Mission.¹ It had, moreover, been hoped that many Member States would make a substantial contribution to refugee relief in cash or in kind. On the whole, the response had been disappointing. The United States delegation nevertheless hoped that all governments would endeavour to the fullest extent possible to contribute to the budget of the Relief and Works Agency for the period in question.

9. Paragraph 2 of the joint draft resolution providing for the continuation of direct relief was indispensable since under resolution 302 (IV) direct relief was to be discontinued at the end of December 1950 unless the General Assembly decided otherwise at its fifth session.

10. Paragraph 3 of the joint draft accepted the Agency's estimate of \$20 million as the cost of direct relief to refugees during the period 1 July 1951 to 30 June 1952. That estimate was prepared on the basis of the consideration that as many refugees as possible should succeed in making their own living.

11. Paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 of the joint draft resolution dealt with the establishment of a reintegration fund. For the reasons stated earlier, the United States delegation considered that the United Nations in general and the States directly concerned in particular should realize that direct assistance to refugees could not continue forever. Accordingly a constructive programme had to be adopted which would enable refugees to become an economic asset for the Near East countries.

12. The reintegration fund was intended to replace the fund established to finance the work projects; the provisions of the draft resolution were designed to give effect to the recommendations made in the Agency's report, which proposed that the reintegration fund should be used exclusively for the execution of projects initiated by the Near Eastern governments with a view to reintegrating refugees in the economy of the area either through repatriation or through resettlement.

13. The United States delegation felt that the Agency's estimate that the reintegration fund would require a

contribution of \$30 million for the period 1 July 1951 to 30 June 1952 should be accepted. While the Agency's report did not give any detailed justification in support of that estimate, the report of the Economic Survey Mission² made it clear that there were many plans for which much larger sums would be required, which had as their object the provision of a livelihood for a much larger population in that area. The total of \$30 million was therefore a minimum for the purpose of starting the reintegration programme.

14. The United States delegation hoped that circumstances would permit the Agency to transfer funds available for current relief and works programmes to the reintegration fund, as was permitted in paragraph 7 of the joint draft resolution.

15. Paragraph 8 had been left open: it was to deal with the method of financing, which his delegation regarded as a crucial question. It was anxious that the joint draft resolution should be acceptable to as many delegations as possible, but it was no less anxious that the proposed relief and reintegration programmes should be prepared and carried out with the greatest efficacy. Whether or not those two conditions would be fulfilled would largely depend on the method of financing adopted, and the choice of method was therefore most important. The charges on the budgets of Member States for contributions to other United Nations projects must be taken into account. The *Ad Hoc* Political Committee should therefore ask for the views of the Fifth Committee, which was competent to give the necessary advice. The Chairman of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee should apply to the Fifth Committee for its advice on the method of financing. The *Ad Hoc* Political Committee should not adopt a text for paragraph 8, nor could it take a vote on the draft resolution as a whole until the advice requested had been received.

16. The United States delegation itself had no fixed views on the method of financing. The United States Government would ask Congress to determine the amount of the United States contribution to the programme, but for the moment Mr. Ross could not give any indication of the amount. The attitude of the United States Government would, however, be considerably influenced by the action taken by other governments in connexion with their contributions to the Agency's relief and works programmes. It would also depend on the measures taken during the next two or three months by the Near Eastern governments in the preparation of plans for the reintegration of refugees.

17. The object of paragraph 9 of the draft resolution, which was modeled on a similar clause in resolution 302 (IV), was to assure that the work of the Agency would not be paralysed by delay in the payment of cash contributions by a number of Member States.

18. Paragraph 10 of the joint draft resolution was intended to support the measures already taken by the United Nations Technical Assistance Board: the co-ordination of the various technical assistance programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the areas in which the Agency was operating would be a constructive step.

19. The final paragraphs of the joint draft resolution required no explanation; they contained an expression

¹ See *Final Report of the United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East*: United Nations publications, Sales No.: 1949 II.B.5., Part I, annex I A.

² *Ibid.*, Part II, section C.

of thanks to all the organizations which had contributed to the alleviation of the plight of refugees for their disinterested assistance without which the relief and works programmes could not have been carried into effect.

20. He wished again to pay tribute to Mr. Kennedy and his colleagues and to wish them every success in carrying out their difficult task.

21. Mr. LAPOINTE (Canada) said his delegation had noted with some concern that the Committee's discussions had not always been marked by a clear appreciation of realities. That was probably why a number of delegations appeared reluctant to take part in the discussion, the object of which was ill-defined. The problem involved was in fact indivisible, and its political and humanitarian aspects could not be treated in isolation.

22. The Government of Canada considered that the problem called for a permanent solution. Canada felt the deepest sympathy for the refugees, who had been enduring privations and material difficulties of every sort for nearly three years. The Government of Canada had contributed to relief for refugees and would sympathetically consider the possibility of doing so again. It was, however, of the opinion that it was desirable to encourage the permanent reintegration of refugees either through their resettlement in the Arab countries or through their repatriation.

23. The Canadian delegation supported the recommendations of the Relief and Works Agency in principle. It regarded those recommendations as sound and practical and noted with satisfaction that the joint draft resolution had taken them into account. Thus, for example, the resolution proposed the permanent reintegration of refugees and, consequent thereto, the termination of direct assistance. In paragraphs 5 and 6 of resolution 302 (IV) it was proposed to terminate direct international relief at an early date and not later than 31 December 1950 unless otherwise determined by the General Assembly at its fifth session.

24. The Canadian delegation agreed with the Director of the Relief and Works Agency that it was not possible to adhere to the deadline of 31 December 1950 for the termination of direct assistance. Still, any subsequent contributions to the relief and works fund ought to contribute to the final settlement of the problem of the refugees.

25. Without going into the details of the financial recommendations made by the Director of the Agency and without expressing an opinion on the method of financing the programmes, he pointed out that paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 302 (IV) requested all Member States to make voluntary contributions; his delegation regretted that the response to that appeal had not been more generous and trusted that the financial charges resulting from the continuance of the programme would be more equitably distributed in the future.

26. He drew the Committee's attention to the conclusions of the Conciliation Commission (A/1367) concerning the refugee problem, which were that the Assembly should consider permanent measures which would make it possible to end direct United Nations relief.

27. The Conciliation Commission, in paragraph 10 of its supplementary report (A/1367, Add.1), recommended the return of that number of refugees to Israel which would be consistent with their own best interests. Moreover, all relevant reports showed that the large majority of the refugees had expressed a desire to return to the territories under the control of the State of Israel. His delegation hoped that refugees would be told that their future would perhaps be more promising if they agreed to permanent settlement in Arab countries. The time had come to regard the problem more realistically, while at the same time respecting the purposes of resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948. The Israel Government had indicated that repatriation of refugees would take place by groups and that they would be resettled in keeping with the country's economic needs. In view of the difficult circumstances in which repatriation would take place, the Canadian delegation considered that a very careful estimate should be prepared of the number of refugees who thought it unlikely that their best interests would be served by repatriation to Israel. Such refugees should be immediately compensated for the losses they had sustained; the compensation might be paid out of the reintegration fund, the establishment of which was contemplated by the Relief and Works Agency.

28. In any decision taken concerning repatriation and compensation, the Technical Committee on Refugees appointed by the Conciliation Commission should be expressly directed to study problems which might arise in connexion with determining the property of refugees and evaluating the losses sustained. The Arab States concerned should grant all possible assistance to those refugees deciding to remain in Arab countries.

29. The resettlement of a large number of refugees in the Near East States would, of course, require substantial financial and technical assistance. But the United Nations should not shrink from incurring such expenses, since those measures would lead to the final settlement of that serious humanitarian problem, while at the same time they would promote the economic development of all Near East countries and contribute to stability and security in that area.

30. In conclusion he said his delegation would favourably welcome any proposal for the purpose of finally settling the thorny problem of the Palestine refugees.

31. Lord MACDONALD (United Kingdom) said that because it shared some of the Canadian representative's misgivings concerning the trend of the debate, the United Kingdom delegation had decided, jointly with other delegations, to submit the draft resolution. That draft would make it possible to treat the question realistically.

32. His delegation agreed that measures taken by the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee should aim at a permanent settlement of the problem. Whatever might be the divergences of view concerning the nature of the measures required, everyone who had taken part in the discussion had stressed the magnitude, complexity and urgency of the problem.

33. It was not surprising that some delegations had expressed regret at the slowness of the progress made, but his delegation felt that a good deal had been done by the Relief and Works Agency in the six months of

its existence. In face of a task of such magnitude, very striking results could not be expected.

34. The United Kingdom delegation noted that the governments of the Near East were actively co-operating with the Relief and Works Agency, and welcomed the promises of support made to the Agency by the representatives of those governments. At the same time, he wished to pay a tribute to the Agency for the way in which it had carried out its difficult mission.

35. The over-riding need was for proper measures for the future. The Agency's report and the statements by delegations showed that the task of the Agency had been hampered by lack of funds: the Agency could not draw up adequate programmes unless it had assurance that the necessary funds would be placed at its disposal; otherwise, its task became impossible.

36. In resolution 302 (IV) the General Assembly during its fourth session had instructed the Agency to stress employment of the refugees rather than the continuation of direct relief. It appeared, however, from the statement of the Director of the Agency (A/AC.38/4) that the programme was not satisfactory, since it cost roughly five times as much to keep a refugee at work as to maintain him and his dependants on relief.

37. Logically, therefore, in those circumstances the countries which had hitherto carried the full weight of the relief and works programmes could reasonably expect other countries to make a similar effort. Direct relief would accordingly still be required for a further period and the nature of the relief would depend upon the amount of the funds available. Moreover, since the works programme recommended by the Economic Survey Mission could not be carried out in full owing to lack of funds, it should be reduced in scope.

38. His government would, however, support the establishment of a reintegration fund, which was essential both for the repatriation of refugees and for their resettlement in Arab countries.

39. The United Kingdom Government was in favour of utilizing all means at the disposal of the Agency in connexion with technical assistance and would support recommendations for developing the economic resources of the area.

40. His delegation regretted that the report of the Director of the Agency had not given more prominence to the possibility of transferring responsibility for the administration and operation of the relief and works programmes to the governments of the Near East. That had been one of the important points of the programme recommended by the Economic Survey Mission.

41. His delegation nevertheless supported the recommendations contained in the report, and for that reason had joined with other delegations in submitting the joint draft resolution which was before the Committee.

42. As regards the method of financing the programme for 1951-1952, he thought that the system of voluntary contributions had not thus far been too successful. The Director of the Agency had emphasized the need for arrangements to meet the cost during the period in question. The United Kingdom delegation agreed with the United States representative that on that question the advice of the Fifth Committee should be obtained.

43. In conclusion, Lord MacDonald expressed the hope that the members of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee would support the joint draft resolution, as its adoption would help greatly to solve the serious problem of the Palestine refugees.

44. Mr. NAUDY (France) recalled the extent to which the United Nations, anxious to fulfil its duty to bring help and assistance to those in need, which was one of its main functions, had contributed to the alleviation of the sufferings of the Palestine refugees. With the help of charitable organizations and through the Agency it had set up, the United Nations had enabled the refugees to subsist by supplying them with food, medical aid and shelter. In order to make its assistance more effective, the Organization had decided to institute a works programme for the refugees which would gradually enable them to be self-supporting. The governments in the area had shown the greatest understanding and had fully co-operated with the organs established by the United Nations, which was an essential factor for the success of such an immense task.

45. The report of the Director of the Relief and Works Agency set forth the efforts made to settle the daily problems of the refugees and to lay the foundation for a lasting solution. The recommendations contained in the report were based on experience and had been drawn up after consultation with the most diverse local authorities; the report recommended that direct assistance to refugees should be continued and indicated a suitable method for finally settling the question. The joint draft resolution, of which the French delegation was one of the sponsors, was based on those recommendations.

46. The French delegation had from the outset shown its interest in the problem and had in the past collaborated in the measures taken to settle the question. His delegation thought that the application of the measures recommended in the joint draft resolution would lead to a solution of the existing situation. Accordingly, it appealed to all States, whether they were Members of the United Nations or not, to contribute as much as they could towards the establishment of the funds proposed. The setting up of such funds was in fact an indispensable condition for the settlement of a question which affected seriously not only the fate of a large number of people, but also the peace and security of the whole world.

47. He concluded his remarks by paying a tribute to the organs and institutions which had taken part in carrying out the humanitarian task of helping the refugees, and also to the self-sacrifice, which had often remained anonymous, without which it would have been impossible to reach the results already achieved.

48. Mr. BIRGI (Turkey) said it was unnecessary to explain in detail the joint draft resolution, as the other authors of that proposal had already done so. He would simply emphasize that the proposal was the natural outcome of the programme recommended by the Director of the Relief and Works Agency whom he wished to thank for the lucid, constructive and frank report which he had submitted to the Committee.

49. The object of the joint draft resolution was to secure the General Assembly's approval for the practical conclusions set forth in the report in order that the recommendations made therein might be made techni-

cally applicable. The joint draft resolution dealt solely with humanitarian and technical matters, and if it mentioned certain political considerations, it did so merely to emphasize that direct assistance to the refugees was of a temporary nature, since the true goal was the restoration of normal conditions which would make the continuance of direct assistance unnecessary. The humanitarian and political questions were admittedly closely linked; nevertheless, assistance to refugees was essentially a humanitarian and technical problem. Besides, the need for continuing direct assistance was so obvious that a definite decision could not await the study of the political questions. Whatever might be the decision taken on the political question, a livelihood had to be created for the masses of refugees who were reduced to such tragic plight. For that reason the joint draft resolution contemplated the continuance of direct assistance but did not ignore the fact that efforts should be made to reduce as rapidly as possible the number of refugees requiring assistance.

50. Referring to paragraph 1 of the joint draft resolution, he pointed out that the Turkish Government and the Red Crescent had contributed very large sums during the year 1948-1949. The disasters suffered by Turkey—earthquakes, floods and large conflagrations—had, however, added to the serious problem of assistance to refugees, more and more of whom were coming to seek shelter in Turkey; hence the Turkish Government had been obliged to stop its contributions to the Agency's funds. That was why it did not appear in the list of donors annexed to the report of the Director of Relief and Works Agency. There could be no doubt, however, of Turkey's interest in that question, nor of its determination to do a great deal more than it had been able to do in the past. At the moment he could only state that, in the future, Turkey would do its best to renew its contributions if that was at all possible in view of its own refugee and immigrant problem.

51. Referring to the methods of financing mentioned in paragraph 8 of the joint draft resolution, he said it would be somewhat unrealistic to abandon the system of voluntary contributions, since circumstances were often stronger than the desire of States. His delegation would reserve its position if the terms of paragraph 8 represented a radical departure from the system of voluntary contributions hitherto applied.

52. Mr. KYROU (Greece) said his country also had a refugee problem, which enabled his delegation fully to appreciate the tragic plight of the Palestine refugees. It was obvious that the necessary steps must be taken promptly to settle the Palestine refugee problem. His delegation felt strongly that the measures to be taken should fully meet requirements and should be in line with the work already accomplished by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. Consequently his delegation fully supported the joint draft resolution.

53. The Greek delegation also believed that the suggestion that the Fifth Committee should settle the terms of paragraph 8 was sound; it supported that suggestion. Similarly it would be advisable to leave a decision on paragraph 9 to the Fifth Committee although that paragraph merely reproduced the terms of a comparable clause adopted in 1949.

54. Mr. CHENG (China) welcomed the slow but steady progress made in the assistance to Palestine

refugees. His delegation considered that United Nations contributions could allay the refugees' suffering to a large extent, but that it was primarily the responsibility of the States directly concerned to take effective action.

55. He proceeded to comment on the joint draft resolution. His delegation had no particular comments on paragraphs 1 to 7 of the proposal. It was, however, its duty clearly to state its position concerning paragraph 8. His delegation had always played an active part in the work of the United Nations and it had always supported the measures taken by the Organization. Thus, from the beginning of hostilities in Korea, the Chinese Government had been one of the first, as shown in document S/1562, to offer the United Nations the support of its armed forces to carry out the resolution of the Security Council;³ later, the Chinese Government had placed rice, sugar and medical supplies at the disposal of the Organization for relief in Korea. At the moment, however, his government could not take part in any compulsory financing for it was facing most serious problems in China; the government had to prevent the invasion of the country and to prepare its own invasion of continental China. The Chinese Government could therefore participate in the financing of the assistance programme only through voluntary contributions. He agreed that it was sound procedure to obtain the advice of the Fifth Committee concerning methods of financing.

56. He believed that paragraph 9 might well include a reference to that part of the statement of the Director of the Relief and Works Agency (A/AC.38/4) which affirmed that \$5 million must be had immediately to meet emergency needs of food and clothing during the coming winter. The Director's report also emphasized that the funds at the disposal of the Agency amounted to some \$733,000 as of 31 August 1950. Paragraph 9 of the joint draft resolution provided that a sum of \$5 million should be drawn from the Working Capital Fund, to which it should be repaid not later than 31 December 1951. It was clear from the figures cited that \$5 million would not be enough to cover the cost of the relief programme even for the winter months alone; accordingly he suggested that the delegations sponsoring the joint draft resolution should reconsider paragraph 9 and, if necessary, amend it suitably.

57. In conclusion, he said the Chinese delegation associated itself with the sentiments expressed in paragraphs 11 to 14 of the joint draft resolution.

58. Mr. DE MARCHENA (Dominican Republic) said his delegation was deeply moved by the tragic situation of the Palestine refugees. Effective measures ought to be taken at the fifth session of the General Assembly to settle the problem. The attitude of his delegation had been entirely consistent ever since the problem had first been raised. Immediately after the vote on resolution 302 (IV) of the General Assembly, the Dominican Republic had made a contribution of \$10,000 for aid to refugees; and its contribution to UNICEF and similar funds had been proof of the abiding interest of his country in all humanitarian problems. Again, his government had very recently informed the Relief and Works Agency that it was preparing to make a new contribution of \$5,000 to aid Palestine

³ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Fifth Year*, 474th meeting.

refugees. However modest such a contribution might appear to be, it was substantial in comparison with his country's slender resources; he hoped that other countries would follow the example set by his own.

59. His delegation fully supported the joint draft resolution because of its realistic approach, which would make it possible to settle at least certain parts of the question, to increase the effectiveness of the services of the Relief and Works Agency, and to enable Member States better to understand their responsibilities.

60. Mr. AL-JAMALI (Iraq) said the Committee's debates provided a good yardstick for measuring the degree of justice and humanity of the moral standards set up by the United Nations, as well as the success which it met when translating its ideals into practice.

61. He would not deny that some progress had been made, as most delegations had said, but did not think it was progress in the right direction. A tendency was discernible to disregard the legitimate right of the Arabs to return to their homes. Most of the speeches, and particularly the statement of the Canadian representative, allowed the inference that it was apparently the goal of the United Nations to chase the Arabs from their homes in Palestine. Such an attitude was contrary to the fundamental principles of the Charter which proclaimed human rights, the right to property and the right of self-determination. It was inadmissible that those principles should be ignored, even for humanitarian considerations.

62. As the United States representative had said, the Arab refugees were the innocent victims of a circumstance which was no fault of their own. Mr. Al-Jamali had warned the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Palestinian Question in November 1947 of the dangers inherent in the decision which it was then proposing to take, and how tragically the partition of Palestine would affect human beings. The General Assembly had turned a deaf ear to that appeal; by adopting resolution 181 (II) it had decided to partition Palestine, thus depriving the Arabs of more than half of their ancestral lands. The Arabs had rebelled against that injustice. The tendency which had been noted in 1947 was even more striking in 1950. Attempts were being made to deprive the Arabs of their sole remaining possessions, of their right to return to their homes, and to make them forget the homes which they had left behind in Palestine.

63. Surely it was not being argued seriously that any amount of relief given to the Arab refugees, no matter how large it might be and no matter how noble the guiding motives, could ever cause the Arabs to abandon their legitimate aspirations or give up their desire to return to Palestine. A solution on those lines could never be permanent. The truth was that the refugees desired to return to their homes and that the Arab States could guarantee neither their resettlement nor their employment. As the Director of the Relief and Works Agency had said in his report, Lebanon was overpopulated; it was impossible to promise work for the refugees living in the Gaza area; and Jordan could guarantee employment only to one-third of the refugees whom it had received. As to the others, his delegation considered that the United Nations, being responsible for the tragic plight of the refugees, had the duty to render all necessary assistance to those unfortunate people. It was not a question of humanitarian consideration but of an imperious duty. Moreover, if the Or-

ganization were to shirk its responsibilities—and his delegation, for one, refused to believe that would be the case, because it had too much faith in the idealism of the United Nations—the Arab refugees would become a disturbing factor which would threaten the peace of the Middle East, and neither the United Nations nor the States which were responsible for the Arab tragedy could allow such an eventuality to materialize.

64. Hence relief was not a final remedy. The only permanent solution would be to compel those who had despoiled the Arabs of their homes to comply with the decisions of the General Assembly and to restore to the Arabs the property which they had looted from them. The United Nations could not acquiesce in or remain indifferent to such a violation of property rights, or the usurpation of the rights of one group of human beings by another. It was the Organization's duty to apply in Palestine the fundamental principles which it was applying in Korea. Justice, like peace, was indivisible.

65. His delegation supported the report of the Director of the Relief and Works Agency, and wanted to thank him for his realistic approach and the sincerity with which he had put his case to the Committee. The relief given to the refugees, however, still was inadequate. He asked the Director to state whether, in his opinion, the living conditions of the Palestine refugees in camps were not as bad as those which had prevailed in Hitler's concentration camps. The sum of two dollars per month was quite inadequate to cover all the living expenses of a human being.

66. As for the joint draft resolution, the delegation of Iraq could not accept it as it stood, since it completely ignored resolution 194 (III) under which the General Assembly had in 1948 solemnly recognized the right of the refugees to return to their homes, or, if they chose not to return, the right to receive compensation for the damage sustained. That principle had been included in resolution 302 (IV) adopted by the Committee the preceding year. The omission in the draft resolution was further evidence of the tendency to forget that the Arabs possessed inalienable rights and that they could not be asked to abandon their homes in Palestine.

67. Mr. KYROU (Greece), speaking on a point of order, asked the sponsors of joint draft resolution A/AC.38/L.28 to explain whether their proposal referred only to sub-item 20 (b) of the General Assembly's agenda, dealing with assistance to Palestine refugees. As he understood it, there was no reference to repatriation.

68. Mr. ROSS (United States of America) explained that the joint draft resolution was concerned in the first place with the report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. He pointed out, however, that paragraph 4 of the draft resolution mentioned the reintegration of the refugees into the economic life of the Near East, either by repatriation or resettlement.

69. Mr. DROHOJOWSKI (Poland), speaking on a point of order, said that the Kuomintang representative had introduced into his speech matters which were not relevant to the discussion. He mentioned rule 99 of the rules of procedure, which authorized the Chairman to call to order any speaker if his remarks were not relevant to the subject under discussion.

70. The CHAIRMAN replied that he was always pleased to receive any advice which representatives might see fit to give him; he also reminded the speaker that the privileges of the Chair should be sufficiently elastic to remain compatible with the requirements of courtesy. That was why he had not felt bound to interrupt the Chinese representative when he had mentioned a matter which was not relevant to the subject under discussion. He accepted full responsibility and hoped that that explanation would satisfy the Polish representative.
71. Mr. DROHOJOWSKI (Poland) thanked the Chair and noted that the Chair had admitted that the Kuomintang representative had exceeded the scope of the debate.
72. The CHAIRMAN said that it was sometimes difficult to decide whether a speaker was referring to questions outside the scope of the discussion, and furthermore it was not very polite to interrupt him; he preferred to adhere to the rule of politeness.
73. Mr. CHENG (China) said he felt bound to point out that his observations had been relevant, and that he had mentioned Korea only in order to emphasize that it was the custom of his delegation to support the decisions of the United Nations under all circumstances, even if that support involved placing armed forces at the disposal of the Security Council.
74. Mr. PATHAK (India) said that his delegation would support the joint draft resolution subject to the reservation that the contributions mentioned would be voluntary.
75. Mr. EBAN (Israel) said that his statement would refer chiefly to the future as seen in the light of the joint draft resolution and the Agency's report.
76. The speech of the representative of Iraq, however, obliged him to make a brief statement of the views of the Government and people of Israel on the problem as a whole. At the 34th meeting, the Burmese representative had given a moving description of the sufferings inflicted by war on civil populations. When the ruin and devastation of war in Palestine still remained to accuse the instigators of that terrible war, which had started three years previously against the State of Israel, he was surprised that certain delegations should seek to evade responsibility. The Israel delegation had no doubt that the moral initiative and responsibility for those events lay with other governments. History would judge.
77. His delegation wanted to turn to the future. The refugee problem was a regional matter which all the governments concerned must be anxious to settle. It was international in scope, and the ways and means for its solution went far beyond regional resources.
78. He proceeded to comment on the report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (A/1367, A/1367/Corr.1, A/1367/Add.1), which emphasized the close relations between the re-establishment of peace in the Near East and a permanent settlement of the refugee problem. It was not the first time that the General Assembly had noted the close relations between those two questions. It seemed that certain delegations were still under the impression that the General Assembly had adopted in 1948 a resolution ordering the unconditional return of refugees to their homes and the payment of compensation to those who did not return. The reality was quite different. The General Assembly in 1948 had confined itself to adopting a resolution inviting the parties concerned to negotiate a final settlement of all disputes. Within the framework of that final settlement which it envisaged, the General Assembly had laid down principles governing the settlement of the refugee problem. It was not very likely that in the present situation the governments of the Near Eastern countries, which were obsessed with the need for security against their enemies, would co-operate in the constructive work of regional development. The idea of hundreds of thousands of refugees crossing the armistice lines before the conclusion of peace, regardless of the legislation of Israel or the country's economic situation, was quite unrealistic.
79. Just as the position of the refugees was a result of the decision to make war in 1948, so the failure to settle the refugee problem was due to the refusal to negotiate peace. He thought that the tragic situation of the refugees was due to the refusal of certain governments to negotiate peace rather than to military operations in themselves.
80. It was in that spirit that the Israel delegation had given its earnest attention to the chief recommendation contained in the Conciliation Commission's report. He quoted the last paragraph of the supplementary report (A/1367/Add.1), which summed up the Commission's conclusions, and said that Israel was in full agreement with the recommendation. The Israel Government desired to enter into direct peace negotiations under the auspices and with the assistance of the United Nations in order to reach a peaceful settlement. Within the framework of the negotiations his government was also prepared to give priority to the consideration of the refugee problem, and to reach a peaceful settlement by procedures consistent with established international practice and the obligations of Members of the United Nations.
81. Resolution 194 (III) of December 1948 mentioned two solutions for the refugee problem: repatriation, or the payment of compensation to the refugees who did not return to their homes. Israel had never concealed its opinion that it would be more advantageous, both for the refugees and for the Near East as a whole, if the refugees were resettled among populations with which they had social, cultural, linguistic and religious affinities. Several years had elapsed since the war, and the possibility of re-establishing pre-war conditions had gradually diminished; that was why the Conciliation Commission had expressed its conviction that the refugees who would not return to Palestine should be resettled in the Arab States.
82. Referring to paragraph 9 of the Conciliation Commission's report, he said his government was prepared to study the question of compensation with the competent organs of the United Nations. He quoted paragraph 10 of the supplementary report of the Conciliation Commission (A/1367/Add.1) and said he was gratified to note the recommendation that the Arab States should adopt measures to ensure the full reintegration of the refugees who would not be repatriated. The Conciliation Commission had thus opened the path towards a final settlement of the refugee problem.

83. Proceeding to deal with the report of the Secretary-General (A/1452) and the report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, he said the necessity for continued direct relief to the refugees was also due to the refusal of the Arab States to seek negotiated solutions. It was essential, for humanitarian reasons, to continue and intensify the implementation of the relief and works programmes. His delegation would support the proposal, contained in paragraph 65 of the report of the Director of the Agency, that direct relief would be continued, with special and appropriate provision for the approaching winter months. Similarly, the works programme ought to continue, but it would have to be directed gradually towards the improvement of the existing and future living conditions of the refugees.

84. Direct relief, however, was a mere palliative. The works projects were more important because they were constructive, but in their current stage of development they did not offer a satisfactory solution.

85. With reference to the statement of the Director of the Agency (A/AC.38/4) that large sums would be required for the reintegration of the refugees, Mr. Eban supported the recommendation in paragraph 69 of the Agency's report, which proposed that the United Nations should authorize contributions to a fund that would be available for projects of refugee reintegration; that suggestion was restated in the draft resolution. His government was willing to pay compensation for abandoned lands. It was essential that those sums should be paid into the refugee reintegration fund, and it was preferable to adopt collective methods of paying the compensation, rather than to attempt to solve the problem by means of individual indemnities.

86. The Israel delegation considered that it had taken the first step towards a final settlement by agreeing to take part in the work of the agencies dealing with the

problem of compensation and with the establishment of a reintegration fund; it reserved its right, however, to safeguard the property of its own nationals in Arab countries and also their rights to war damage compensation.

87. In conclusion, he summarized his government's views on the solution of the Arab refugee problem.

88. First, the General Assembly should take a decision on the recommendation, set forth in paragraph 11 of the Conciliation Commission's supplementary report (A/1367/Add.1), concerning the direct negotiations to be undertaken.

89. Secondly, the Israel delegation supported the recommendations of the Relief and Works Agency for the continuance of the relief programme.

90. Thirdly, the Israel Government was prepared to co-operate with the technical committee proposed in chapter III, paragraph 9, of the Conciliation Commission's report.

91. Fourthly, the Israel delegation supported the recommendation in paragraph 67 of the Agency's report, concerning the reintegration fund.

92. Fifthly, it accepted the principle that any compensation payable by the Israel Government should be paid into the reintegration fund.

93. Sixthly, it attached great importance to the movement of opinion discernible in the reports of the Conciliation Commission and the Relief and Works Agency.

94. He was convinced that if the General Assembly were to adopt the recommendations contained in the reports before the Committee, an important step would have been taken towards the final solution of the serious problem which loomed so large in the Middle East.

The meeting rose at 1.2 p.m.