



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 32nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUBAREZ (Yemen)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 65: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued)

- (a) REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL (A/37/13, A/37/479)
- (b) REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (A/37/591; A/SPC/37/L.10 and L.11)
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1. The CHAIRMAN called on the representative of Iraq so that he might complete the statement he had begun at the preceding meeting.

2. Mr. AL-ZAHAWI (Iraq) * said that the Zionist allegations concerning the so-called "Jewish refugees" from Arab countries were nothing more than a futile attempt to divert the attention of the Committee from the Zionist crimes and violations being dealt with under the item before the Committee. The allegations concerning refugees and the pogroms said to have taken place in Arab countries had been repeatedly refuted by him in the Committee during the past 10 years. On the other hand, he asked whether the Zionists could deny the fact that the ingathering of Jews from the entire world was the cardinal aim of zionism and that Zionists were doing all in their power to induce Jewish communities the world over to settle in the lands from which the Palestinians had been expelled. He also asked whether they could deny that Zionist leaders had co-operated with the Nazis in order to facilitate the emigration of the Zionist élite to Palestine while abandoning the others to the concentration camps, that zionism's greatest enemy was Jewish assimilation in non-Jewish communities or that zionism's greatest ally was anti-semitism.

3. With regard to the "exchanges of population" and the so-called "mass flight" of Iraqi Jews from Iraq in the 1950s, he recalled the Zionist programme of 1942 which had ordained that the Arab population of Palestine should be transferred to Iraq. It must be borne in mind that Jews and Arabs had lived together in peace in Iraq until the emissaries of zionism had come and spread terror by throwing bombs into Jewish centres in Iraq. He then quoted from an article written by Kokhavi Shemesh, an Israeli Jew of Iraqi extraction, which had appeared in the Israeli newspaper "Ma'arvi" of 11 April 1972. The panic-stricken Iraqi Jews had then sought to emigrate, and the Iraqi Government had granted them the right to leave the country. The relevant laws, which the Israeli representative had once

* The full text of this statement will be issued as document A/SPC/37/PV.32.

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again quoted out of context, had been published in the United Nations Yearbook on Human Rights for 1951 (United Nations publication, 1953) under the title "Laws of 1950 and 1951 concerning the voluntary relinquishment of Iraqi nationality by Iraqi Jews", which interested representatives could consult. In addition, Iraq had promulgated Law No. 1293 of 1975 concerning the return of the Iraqi Jews to Iraq (Official Gazette No. 2503), whereas Israel had never recognized the right of return of the Palestinians.

4. Replying to the allegation that the Arab countries fomented hatred of Jews, he quoted from a statement made by Moshe Dayan in an interview published in the Sunday Times of London of 23 March 1969, in which Mr. Dayan had admitted that one of the reasons for the enmity between Jews and Arabs had been the fact that the Jews had come to Palestine as invaders, not to contribute to the Arab countries, but to establish their State because they had felt that that was their homeland. Also, in a lecture he had delivered at the Haifa Technical Institute, Moshe Dayan had said that Jewish villages had been built in the place of Arab villages and that not a single place had been built that had not had a former Arab population. Those villages had been systematically destroyed to ensure that no Palestinian refugee would ever dream of coming back to his home or to his village. Dreams, however, were more difficult to destroy than dwellings, and the Zionists perhaps had finally become aware of the futility of the ultimate aim of that policy of systematic destruction, as Palestinian nationalism had survived for 35 years despite all the tragedies. Begin and his gang of the Irgun and the Stern group, not content with the destruction of Palestinian villages, had recently turned on the Palestinian refugee camps and had massacred their innocent and destitute dwellers. It was truly intolerable that they were able to continue with impunity to commit their crimes, year in and year out, by resorting increasingly to the use of weapons of mass destruction which took an ever-greater toll of victims. History would condemn the United States of America for its irresponsible and short-sighted policy of aid. However, the Americans and their Zionist protégés could be sure that the Palestinian people would never forget Palestine as long as Israel existed. If the Zionists could claim Palestine simply because the Jews of antiquity had briefly had a kingdom there some 3,000 years ago, and if they could take over the land through duplicity, terror and repression, no Palestinian would forget the land where his forefathers had lived and died for 1,300 years. The Zionists should remember that if they were seeking a "final solution" for the Palestinians, such a solution could never accomplish its aim.

5. The representative of Israel, in his statement of 16 November, had alleged that no refugee had left the Gaza camps against his will. It must not be forgotten, however, that in 1971 the Israeli army had destroyed 7,700 dwellings in three of the Gaza camps, thus forcing 18,000 persons to go elsewhere. The Israeli representative had also said that many Palestinian students had voluntarily departed to study abroad, but he had forgotten to mention that that had been allowed in the hope that they would never return.

6. In reply to the statements that there was no unemployment in Judea or Samaria, he quoted from an article in The Observer of 21 February 1982, which described how every working day unemployed Palestinians from the West Bank - desperate fathers of

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large families and youths as young as 14 who had never known anything else but Israeli occupation - assembled at a place in East Jerusalem, known locally as the "slave market", and awaited an Israeli contractor who offered them work for half the wages an Israeli could command.

7. The representative of Israel had also said that his country did not prohibit the importation of books other than works fomenting hatred of the Jews and Israel. However, in an article by Anthony Lewis, appearing in The Herald Tribune of 16 March 1982, the author noted that more than 2,000 books had been placed on the index by the occupation authorities and that a curious feature of the list was that it was not published and that someone could be prosecuted for possessing a book that he had not known was prohibited. West Bank universities negotiated with the military command over what books they might buy, but even those were usually seized when the shipments arrived.

8. The representative of Israel had taken exception to the general tenor of the Commissioner-General's report, which he had deemed to be unfair to Israel. The delegation of Iraq on the contrary found that the report had gone out of its way in order not to embarrass Israel because of concern at what Israel might do by way of reprisals against UNRWA. The report, like so many previous reports, should have reflected the refugees' strong desire to return to Palestine - a desire which was stronger than ever after the disaster in Lebanon - as well as the necessity of giving the refugees the choice between repatriation or compensation, as stipulated in the relevant United Nations resolutions.

9. In regard to the Sibliin Training Centre, it was understandable in view of the massacres in the refugee camps, that the Palestinian refugees should have felt sufficiently concerned about their security to undertake some basic military training. The Zionists who pointed a finger at the Palestinian refugees for abusing UNRWA's facilities for military purposes had themselves committed innumerable offences. Leaving aside the massive violations connected with the Israeli invasion itself, including violations of UNRWA's facilities and personnel, Israel had never abided by its obligations towards the Security Council and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which had been deployed in the area after Israel's previous invasion in 1978. UNIFIL had never been allowed to fulfil its mandate, which had been to ensure the total withdrawal of Israeli forces from the south of Lebanon and to control the territory between the Litani River and the border with Israel.

10. While awaiting a just settlement of the Palestinian problem, the least the United Nations and the international community could do would be to allow the refugees to do what they could to rebuild their lives without the fear that they would be the target of yet another onslaught. The physical and legal safety of the Palestinian refugees should be the responsibility of the United Nations, which had been responsible for the partition and loss of their homeland. UNRWA's terms of reference included no responsibility in that area. Such a situation should be remedied as soon as possible by revising the mandate either of the Agency or of UNIFIL.

(Mr. Al-Zahawi, Iraq)

11. In conclusion, he paid tribute to the Commissioner-General and his associates for the heroic task which they had accomplished in particularly difficult circumstances.
12. Mr. SAFIULLAH (Bangladesh) requested that the statement of the representative of Iraq should be reproduced in extenso.
13. It was so decided.
14. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to draft resolutions A/SPC/37/L.10 and L.11 concerning the item under consideration.
15. Mr. VAN HOUTUM (Netherlands), introducing draft resolution A/SPC/37/L.10 entitled "Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East", on behalf of the sponsors, said that the draft resolution, in its preamble, would have the Assembly recall a number of its previous resolutions, as well as its decision 36/462, in which it had adopted the recommendations contained in the Working Group's special report (A/36/866 and Corr.1). The General Assembly would express its grave concern at the critical financial situation of the Agency and would emphasize the urgent need for extraordinary efforts in order to maintain the activities of UNRWA at least at their present minimum level. It would commend the Working Group for its efforts to assist in ensuring the Agency's financial security, and would request it to continue its efforts, in co-operation with the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General, for the financing of UNRWA for a further period of one year.
16. The Working Group considered that the humanitarian services of UNRWA continued to be indispensable and should receive the unreserved support of the entire international community. He expressed the hope that the Committee would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.
17. Mr. EIMER (Sweden), introducing draft resolution A/SPC/37/L.11 entitled "Assistance to persons displaced as a result of the June 1967 and subsequent hostilities" on behalf of the sponsors, said that the draft resolution was similar to previous resolutions on the item and had the same purpose. The title of the draft resolution and also paragraph 2 had been revised in order to take account of the new situation which confronted the Agency. The sponsors hoped that, as in the past, the Committee and subsequently the General Assembly, would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.
18. Mr. RYDBECK (Commissioner-General, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) said that the statements made by delegations had attested to a consensus that UNRWA should continue to provide services to the Palestine refugees on behalf of the international community until a political settlement in the Middle East had been achieved. One of the most valuable assets of the agency had been the capacity of its staff, comprising 17,000 Palestinians and a handful of international civil servants who supervised them, to work together as a closely-knit team whose complementary skills and shared experience over more than

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30 years had permitted a prompt and flexible response to the requirements of particular situations. The strength of that asset had been put severely to the test in Lebanon during the previous five months and, despite the extraordinary difficulties, it had been proven. Throughout the emergency, UNRWA had required total dedication from its international staff in Lebanon. He had therefore been distressed to hear criticism from one representative of his decision in mid-September, more than three months after the start of the emergency operations, to send on leave a senior official and to hand over co-ordination in south Lebanon to a colleague who had worked alongside him throughout that time. The official in question had been seconded to the emergency operation from his post as UNRWA's field director in the West Bank, a post which had routinely carried more than a fair share of stresses and strains; he had been sent on home leave after an interval of five years, after the Commissioner-General himself had consulted medical opinion and determined that such leave was essential.

19. While the debate had been proceeding, there had been further progress in restoring services in Lebanon and in the efforts to rehouse the refugees in Beirut and south Lebanon for the winter. The enormous task of clearing the camp sites in the Tyre and Sidon areas and in Beirut had almost been completed and was ahead of schedule. It was continuing only in Burj el Barajneh in Beirut where there had been two further explosions on 13 November but such work should be finished by the end of the current month, as should the remaining 15 per cent of the work in the Ein el Hilweh camp. The construction of the health infrastructure as well as of platforms and retaining walls for tent sites was well advanced. The planned erection of tents had, however, run into difficulties as the refugees had opposed the provision of such a flimsy form of shelter which in their eyes represented a return to the conditions of 1948. More solid structures were clearly needed but, given the political restrictions and the need to rehouse the homeless with the greatest speed before the winter, there had been no option but to prepare for tented settlements in the ruins of the original camps. A number of refugees had torn down and burned tents in the belief that prefabricated shelters, of which the Israeli authorities had offered a few hundred, would be made available to them.

20. UNRWA had thus been obliged to modify its plans and, in that connection, it had been assisted by the Israeli authorities' offer of cement for every homeless family. Self-help shelter repair programmes had been commenced in the camps. For those who had accepted tents as a temporary arrangement, it was planned to provide tent heaters, the first 500 of which had been received in Sidon on 11 November from a Jewish voluntary organization. The education programme in Lebanon was also gaining ground. A further nine schools had been reopened since the beginning of November, bringing the total to 55, of the 87 which had functioned before the invasion. The other schools had been badly damaged or were occupied by squatters and it was planned to use large tents as classrooms at Ein el Hilweh and at Burj Esh-Shemali. Of a potential population of 36,600, 33,600 children had been registered and about 20,000 of them were attending UNRWA schools.

21. UNRWA's own health services were back to some 90 per cent of their pre-war level and there had been an improvement in the hospital facilities available to the

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refugees through Agency subsidies. The supplementary feeding programme had been reactivated and extended to all refugee children up to the age of 15 years rather than the usual 6 years. All that activity had been facilitated by the co-operation which UNRWA enjoyed with other international organizations and voluntary agencies.

22. He shared the concern expressed by a number of delegations for the safety of refugees and the condition of those still in Israeli detention, and he assured members of the Committee that he would continue to exercise his moral obligations in that respect. Several delegations had called for the return of the Agency's headquarters to Beirut or elsewhere in the area of operations, and he reaffirmed that it was his intention to take that step as soon as it was practicable. At the forefront of the considerations which would affect the timing of the move was the prospect of the headquarters being able efficiently to carry out its role of co-ordinating and supervising operations in the five fields in which UNRWA provided services.

23. He was firmly of the opinion that the Agency's limited resources should be put to the uses which were most relevant to the contemporary situation of the refugees and that services should be modernized and, wherever possible, improved. Disquiet had been expressed over his decision to phase out the basic ration programme, and he assured the Committee that he would certainly not have taken that decision had he believed that token food supplements were essential for the health of the 830,000 refugees concerned. There were, however, between 60,000 and 70,000 refugees who genuinely needed far more assistance than the basic ration and a derisory cash hand-out. In view of the fact that several delegations had asked for the restoration of the basic ration programme, he pointed out that the financial regulations of UNRWA provided that the Commissioner-General could incur commitments and make disbursements only to the extent that funds were actually available and against certain pledged contributions duly confirmed by Governments. Moreover, at the time of an earlier crisis, in 1974, when the question of a radical cut in education services had arisen, he had asked the United Nations Legal Counsel to give a legal opinion, which he had done on 26 June 1975. In that opinion the Legal Counsel had stated that the Commissioner-General was responsible to the General Assembly for the prudent conduct of the Agency's operations and that such conduct necessarily involved a planned reduction of services if maintaining them at current levels would lead, in his view, to bankruptcy and the collapse of the Agency. Again, in a further opinion asked of him the previous year, the Legal Counsel had stated that it was clear that, within the limits of the budget considered by the General Assembly, the Commissioner-General's authority to incur commitments and make disbursements was absolutely limited to the funds actually available and to certain confirmed governmental pledges. Consequently he had no choice but to conduct the Agency's operations in such a way that he did not incur excess commitments. The restoration of the basic ration programme would therefore be possible only if enough additional funds were made available to him or if there was a change in the order of priorities among food rations, education and health. It seemed to be generally agreed that the education programme had the highest priority.

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24. If the Agency was to fulfil its responsibilities for the education and health of 1.9 million refugees, it had to be assured of stable and adequate financing, and in that connection he commended the members of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA for the useful work they had performed. If at the end of 1982 the gap between income and expenditure was narrower than had been expected, that was due just as much to a reduction in services and deferring essential construction and maintenance work as to increased income. He accordingly appealed to all delegations to make good their commitments so that UNRWA could continue to carry out its mandate until such time as a just and lasting settlement of the problem was achieved.

25. Mr. LEVIN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of Iraq in his statement had tried to paint an idyllic picture of the former relations between the Jewish community in Iraq and the Iraqi Government and the country in general. In fact, the situation had been quite different because of the measures taken by the Iraqi Government of the time. In 1935, for example, Jews had been excluded from government services and many of them had been banned from visiting Palestine. In 1936 10 Jews had been killed during Arab riots at Baghdad and Basra, and the teaching of Hebrew had been banned. In 1947 public schools had refused to enrol Jewish children and in 1948 zionism had been declared a crime, many Jews had been imprisoned and some of them had been hanged. In 1950 all the property of Jews going to Israel had been confiscated by official decree and sold by auction and the bank accounts of the emigrants had been seized by the State. Finally, in 1958, the statute of the Jewish community had been abolished and all its property, including schools and hospitals, transferred to the Government. Moreover, as the British ambassador to Jordan at the time had reported in his memoirs covering the period 1947-1951, the Prime Minister of Iraq, Noori Said, had proposed to transport all Iraqi Jews by a convoy of military lorries escorted by tanks to the frontier between Jordan and Israel and to compel them to cross the frontier.

26. He pointed out that the General Assembly in resolution 194 (III) had resolved that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date. That desire to live in peace had always been lacking because successive Arab Governments, with a single exception, had never wanted to maintain peaceful relations with Israel. Shortly after the adoption of that resolution Israel had proposed to take back certain refugees and negotiate compensation terms in conditions of peace. Obviously the situation had changed since that time because of the exchange of population brought about by Arab policies and practices with regard to both Palestinian Arab refugees and Jewish refugees from Arab territories. Nevertheless Israel, even in the absence of peace, had taken back over 100,000 Arab refugees, resettled 50,000 Palestinian Arabs who had been dispersed and taken measures with a view to compensation despite the fact that all the Arab States, with a single exception, had been hostile to it. Nothing in the statement of the representative of Iraq indicated that the Iraqi Government wanted to put an end to that state of belligerence. The fact was that, although it had been part of the invading armies in 1948, Iraq had never signed an armistice or a withdrawal agreement and had never accepted Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). The hostility of the Iraq Government was not directed against Israel alone as the actions carried out

(Mr. Levin, Israel)

by it in a neighbouring Moslem country, the uprooting of over 2 million people and the expulsion of a 120,000 Iraqis said to be of Shiite or Iranian origin demonstrated.

27. Israel's position continued to be that the majority of the 1948 Palestinian refugees were actually integrated into the Arab world and that what lay at the heart of the current problem was not the refugee question but the conflict between the Arabs and Israel. Only a peaceful settlement of that conflict would enable the peoples of the Middle East to tackle problems which were far more pressing than the refugee question.

28. Mr. HUSSAINI (Observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Committee was considering the current problems of Palestinian refugees, whether in southern Lebanon or in the occupied Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza. To discuss the situation of Palestinian refugees in 1948 or the problems of Jews in Iraq was out of order, although it should be borne in mind that the Palestinians had been forced to leave their homes and property by Zionist military forces in 1947-1948.

29. He wanted to stress once again the problems confronting Palestinian refugees, particularly in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, as a result of UNRWA's decision to reduce its assistance to them. In that connection he read out a memorandum sent on 3 November 1982 by the Higher Islamic Council of Jerusalem to the Director of UNWRA in the occupied West Bank. In the memorandum the Council recalled that UNWRA had been established by the United Nations to provide medical, educational and social assistance to Palestinian refugees until such time as their problems were solved and their legitimate rights were restored, and expressed its concern at learning that the Agency had decided to suspend the distribution of food rations to those refugees. It had asked UNRWA to reconsider that decision and to take no measure to dismiss Agency personnel or reduce their salaries. He endorsed the Council's appeals: it was imperative for UNRWA to increase its assistance to Palestinian refugees in view of the additional problems they were facing in southern Lebanon. The States concerned should increase their assistance to UNRWA in order to help it to overcome its financial problems and continue to supply financial, medical, food and other aid to Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories or southern Lebanon.

30. In conclusion, he mentioned, as a further example of the repression to which religious leaders were subjected by the Israeli military authorities, the decision of the Government of Israel to expel the Armenian Archbishop of Jerusalem.

31. Mr. AL-ZAHAWI (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the manner in which the Israeli representative had referred once again to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) was a perfect example of the way the Israelis distorted the content of United Nations resolutions. That resolution had never made the return of the Palestinians subject to the establishment of peace between Israel and the Arab States. It mentioned refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours; it did not mention Governments of Arab States.

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(Mr. Al-Zahawi, Iraq)

32. With regard to the situation of Iraqi Jews, he could cite facts which antedated those mentioned by the representative of Israel. For example, it was clear from a confidential dispatch addressed to the Foreign Office by the British Ambassador to Iraq in December 1934, published in The Guardian on 21 December 1975, that before the war the Iraqi Jews had been in a better situation than any other minority in Iraq. Nevertheless, beginning in 1920, Zionism, by establishing a distinction between Jews and Arabs, had created a tension between the two peoples which had not existed earlier and whose repercussions on the situation of Iraqi Jews had been deplored by Jews of good faith. The fact was that the Jews had never been victims of Arab xenophobia. According to an English Jewish writer known for his sympathies with the Zionist cause, even in the spring of 1948 when the crisis was at its height, when the information offices of the British and United States Embassies had been sacked and the press was full of anti-Zionist exhortations, no Jewish merchant in Baghdad - and there were many - had been molested and no Jew had been attacked in Baghdad by a crowd. Moreover, as reported by an Israeli Jew of Iraqi origin in The Israeli Digest of 30 August 1974, the transfer of Iraqi Jews to Israel in 1950 had been accomplished thanks to a huge airlift operation organized by the Jewish Agency and Zionist groups in Iraq. According to the author of the article, those Jews had brought to Israel not only their money but their skills and their education. The minimum level of education of the majority of them had been higher than that of the Jews coming from Europe and America, yet they had been obliged to live in Israel in discriminatory conditions. That had been confirmed by a long article in the review Black Panther of 9 November 1972, published in Jerusalem, stating that a community which had had control of the greater part of the resources of Iraq and which had its own ethical values had found itself being discriminated against by the Ashkenazi community, whose culture was totally foreign to it. Lastly, with regard to the Israeli representative's assertion that Iraq did not wish either to conclude a peace with Israel or to accept resolution 242 (1967), he reminded the Committee of the situation of the Arab States which had accepted it. Israel had done everything in its power to prevent the implementation of that resolution and frustrate all efforts to establish peace even when those efforts were being made by the President of the United States. Why, therefore, should Iraq declare itself ready to make peace with Israel when Israel continued to occupy the Palestinian territories and to refuse to grant the Palestinians the right to return to their homes?

33. Mr. HAMMAD (United Arab Emirates), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of Israel had just put forward a curious interpretation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III). That paragraph was in two parts, but the representative of Israel had cited only the first part. It was stated in that part that the refugees wishing to return to their homes should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, on condition that they would live in peace with their neighbours. That condition applied exclusively to the refugees, and not to relations between the Arab countries and their neighbours, as the Israeli representative claimed. If, however, one accepted the Israeli argument to the effect that the refugees should not return to their homes because the Arab countries were not at peace with their neighbours, it would have to be noted that the second part of paragraph 11 stipulated that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return to their homes. Israel had never compensated them and thus had not implemented the second part of the paragraph.

(Mr. Hammad, United Arab Emirates)

34. With regard to the exchange of populations referred to by Israel, it was true that some Jews had left the Arab countries to settle in Israel, but it should not be forgotten that the Zionist movement had always incited, and sometimes even forced, Jews of all countries to settle in Israel. Moreover, there had not really been any population exchanges because the Palestinians constituted a separate entity and their right to return to their homes should not be linked to their immigration to neighbouring Arab countries or their emigration from them. The fact that the United States, Israel's principal ally, submitted a draft resolution every year calling for implementation of resolution 194 (III) was sufficient proof of the erroneousness of Israel's interpretation to the effect that the paragraph was not applicable. Furthermore, the United Nations had unanimously approved the return of the refugees to their homes. The Israeli delegation had also claimed that the refugees were integrated into the Arab countries which had received them. That was obviously untrue, for they were still living in camps, as shown by the Commissioner-General's report. In that connection, he proposed that the Commissioner-General should be requested to conduct an inquiry among all the Palestinian refugees asking them if they were really integrated into the societies among which they were living or actually wanted to return to their homes.

35. Mr. LEVIN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the events he had mentioned, which had taken place in Iraq after 1920, had been able to occur because there had been a completely different system which had emanated from the San Remo Conference, and the Iraqi Government had not begun to function until after 1920. In another connection he mentioned a progress report of the Conciliation Commission dated 1951 in which it was stated that the Commission had been requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 194 (III), which constituted the Commission's charter, to establish contact between the parties and the Commission at the earliest possible date. However, it had not been possible to establish any such contact because the Arab States had refused to sit down at the same table with Israel, to recognize Israel and to conclude peace with it. That sterile attitude had persisted to the present day, which explained why no problem between Israel and the Arab countries had been settled. If peace were concluded, all problems could be settled, including the question of compensation, but in that case it would also be necessary to consider the question of compensation for the Jews who had left the Arab countries. In a war situation, however, that was not possible.

36. Mr. HAMMAD (United Arab Emirates), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that what the Israeli representative had just said was another distortion of the facts. The mandate of the Conciliation Commission was not limited to the contents of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III). Under paragraph 2 of that resolution, the Conciliation Commission had two main functions: on the one hand, to serve as mediator between Israel and the Arab States, and, on the other hand, to facilitate the repatriation of the Palestine refugees to their homes and to see that compensation was paid them. However, there was no link whatever between the attitude which the Arab States or Israel might take in the future and the functions of the Commission relative to the repatriation of and compensation paid to the Palestinian refugees.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.