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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983

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

Special identification cards to all Palestine refugees

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/37/L.23

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. The Special Political Committee, at its 44th meeting held on 3 December 1982, adopted the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/37/L.23. It had before it a statement of financial implications (A/SPC/37/L.40).
2. Under the terms of operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/37/L.23, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), to issue identification cards to all Palestine refugees and their descendants, irrespective of whether they are recipients or not of rations and services from UNRWA, as well as to all displaced persons, and those who have been prevented from returning to their home and their descendants, as a result of the 1967 hostilities.
3. The Secretary-General expects that in respect of the issuance of identification cards to Palestine refugees and their descendants who are registered with UNRWA financial implications would be limited as the cost of distribution and would be met by the Agency.

4. Extensive financial implications would arise in connection with the issuance of identification cards to the additional large number of Palestinians who would appear to be covered by operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution. In this regard, much would depend on the means chosen by the Secretary-General to implement the draft resolution. It would be essential that maximum co-operation be obtained from host Governments. Before any card could be issued, it would be necessary to develop precise guidelines concerning eligibility. The wording to appear on the identification cards would also need to be considered carefully.

5. In order to address these questions, the Secretary-General envisages that a team would be established within the Secretariat in order to assess the tasks that would be involved in implementing the provisions of the draft resolution. A group of about four Professional and one General Service staff member would travel to Vienna and the Middle East to gather information and to consult, as appropriate, with officials of UNRWA and of the countries where large numbers of Palestinian refugees now reside. In this connection, provision would need to be made for the group to travel in the area for approximately six weeks at a cost of some \$40,000, as follows:

	\$
Travel and subsistence (one D-1, three Professional, one General Service staff member)	37 000
General operating expenses	<u>3 000</u>
Total	<u>40 000</u>

6. Based on the group's findings the Secretary-General would determine the administrative measures required as well as the costs involved in order to carry out the tasks requested of him. To the extent that the Secretary-General could commence these tasks in 1983, prior to the convening of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, he would intend to seek the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for the incurring of the necessary costs under the provisions of resolution 36/241 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 1982-1983.

7. Very rough initial estimates indicate that the costs involved could be in excess of \$10 million in order to publicize the resolution, define the precise criteria required for the issuance of cards, and proceed with the identification of entitled persons and with the issuance of identification cards to them.

8. Therefore, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, an appropriation of \$40,000 would be required under section 1 of the programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983.
