



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/43/656
30 September 1988

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-third session
Agenda item 76

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

Protection of Palestine Refugees

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/69 I of 2 December 1987, entitled "Protection of Palestine Refugees", the operative paragraphs of which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. Holds Israel responsible for the security of the Palestine refugees in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and calls upon it to fulfil its obligations as the occupying Power in this regard, in accordance with the pertinent provisions of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;

"2. Urges the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to undertake effective measures to guarantee the safety and security and the legal and human rights of the Palestine refugees in all the territories under Israeli occupation in 1967 and thereafter;

"3. Calls once again upon Israel, the occupying Power, to release forthwith all detained Palestine refugees, including the employees of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;

"4. Urges, the Commissioner-General, in consultation with the Government of Lebanon, to provide housing to the Palestine refugees whose houses were demolished or razed by the Israeli forces;

"5. Requests the Commissioner-General, in consultation with the Government of Lebanon, to provide emergency housing repairs for the shelters and Agency installations that have been partly damaged or destroyed in the fighting;

"6. Calls once again upon Israel to compensate the Agency for the damage to its property and facilities resulting from the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, without prejudice to Israel's responsibility for all damages resulting from that invasion;

"7. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Commissioner-General, to report to the General Assembly, before the opening of its forty-third session, on the implementation of the present resolution."

2. On 20 January 1988, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale to the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations, in which he drew attention to his reporting responsibility under the resolution and requested the Permanent Representative to inform him of any steps his Government had taken or envisaged taking in implementation of the relevant provisions of the resolution.

3. In a note verbale dated 7 July 1988, the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations replied as follows:

"Israel's position on this resolution was fully set out in statements by Israel's representative to the Special Political Committee on 15 November 1985 (A/SPC/41/SR.14), and in the report of the Secretary-General (A/42/481) dated 18 August 1987.

"The adoption of resolution 42/69 I entitled 'Protection of Palestinian Refugees' is clearly hypocritical, anachronistic and out of place. Despite Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 1985, this resolution still blames Israel for the 'continuous suffering of Palestinians' in Lebanon. Not surprisingly, the sponsors of this resolution continue to blame Israel for Arab persecution of Palestinian refugees.

"Over the past three years, thousands of Palestinians have been killed and wounded in Lebanese refugee camps in vicious fighting totally unconnected with Israel. Likewise, Palestinian refugee camps in Syria and Jordan have been the scenes of untold human misery which the authors of resolution 42/69 I chose to ignore.

"This selective and distorted presentation of the Palestinian refugees' situation in Arab countries by the sponsors of resolution 42/69 I, clearly illustrates the double standards inherent in this resolution and the blatant disregard for their general welfare."

4. In previous reports on this subject, the Secretary-General referred to the constraints he had faced in undertaking the measures requested of him by the General Assembly. Nevertheless, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, as the senior United Nations official responsible for providing services to the Palestine refugees, continued his efforts, in consultation with the Secretary-General, to do all that was feasible to contribute to the safety and security of the refugees in all the territories under occupation. His efforts in regard to Palestine refugees in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the reporting period are described in the Commissioner-General's annual report to the General Assembly. 1/

5. Following the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Saida and Tyre areas in February and April 1985 respectively (see A/40/756, para. 5), there is nothing further to state regarding the Palestine refugees in Lebanon in the context of the present report.

6. Section II A of the annual report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA to the General Assembly for the period 1 July 1987 to 30 June 1988 reviews the efforts made by UNRWA during the period under review to initiate a programme for repair of refugee shelters and agency installations damaged and destroyed during the fighting in Lebanon.

7. There has been no progress on the claim by UNRWA against the Government of Israel regarding damage to its property and facilities resulting from the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13). See, in particular, the Introduction and sect. II B.
