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~~UN/SA COLLECTION~~Thirty-eighth session
Agenda item 73UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE
REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EASTQuestion of the establishment of a University at JerusalemReport of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, at its thirty-fifth session, in the course of its examination of the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) adopted resolution 35/13 B entitled "Offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for the Palestine refugees". In paragraph 5 of that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in co-ordination with the Council of the United Nations University, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "to study ways and means of establishing at Jerusalem a university of arts and sciences to cater to the needs of Palestine refugees in the area, under the aegis of the United Nations". In paragraph 6 of the same resolution, the Secretary-General was requested to submit a report on the establishment of the said university to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session.
2. In his report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session (A/36/593), the Secretary-General described, from information made available by UNRWA and UNESCO, the existing institutions of higher education and training on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, the numbers of school-leavers receiving higher education and, of those, how many obtained such an education outside those areas. The correspondence with the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations, which was annexed to that report (A/36/593, annex I), however, led the Secretary-General to the conclusion that the actual establishment of a university at Jerusalem was possible only with the agreement and co-operation of the Israeli authorities in control of the area, and that that co-operation had not yet been forthcoming.
3. In that correspondence, the Permanent Mission of Israel, in view of some hesitations it had about the essence and purpose of the proposed university, sought

clarification on a number of points. These touched on the apparently exclusive nature of student admission, the absence of precedent for a university sponsored by the United Nations specifically for refugees and, how such a university could operate within the framework of local legislation relating to higher education. The Secretary-General did not consider it appropriate to give authoritative answers to such questions as these would involve an interpretation of a resolution of the General Assembly. The Permanent Mission of Israel subsequently stated that, until the requested clarifications were received, the Government of Israel was unable to proceed further in the matter. It added that, "even the preliminary steps suggested to facilitate the implementation of the resolution in question would seem to substantiate the view that its sponsors were attempting to use the field of higher education for dubious political ends, totally extraneous to, and out of keeping with, genuine academic pursuits" (A/36/593, annex I (f)).

4. The General Assembly, at its thirty-sixth session, adopted resolution 36/146 G which, in operative paragraph 5, requested the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures, including a functional feasibility study, for establishing the university at Jerusalem.

5. In his subsequent report to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (A/37/599), the Secretary-General made two proposals. The first was to establish an advanced fellowship programme to enable university teachers and scholars at institutions of higher learning in the area, particularly faculty members of the universities of Bir Zeit, El-Najah, Bethlehem and the Gaza Islamic University, to be selected for fellowships to enable them to read for higher degrees or to carry out post-doctoral studies. Such a programme would enable the academic standing of the universities to be enhanced, their faculties strengthened and increased, as well as represent a first step towards the creation of the proposed university. This could be seen as a move in the direction of meeting the requirements of General Assembly resolutions 35/13 B and 36/146 G. At such a time as a university of the kind envisaged by these resolutions came into being, the fellows would be expected to be among those who could form the core faculties of that institution.

6. The second proposal in the report of the Secretary-General (A/37/599) was that the functional feasibility study, referred to in paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 36/146 G, could be prepared by a small group of academics and university administrators of high international standing. The study should be prepared bearing in mind the wider context of higher educational needs on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. It would not only include estimates of the growth in the numbers of school-leavers who would be seeking higher education and training but also the plans of existing universities and other institutions of higher learning, as well as the emerging needs for graduate study and professional training.

7. The General Assembly, in its resolution 37/120 C, in paragraphs 4 and 5, endorsed the various steps recommended in the report of the Secretary-General, including the creation of a voluntary fund to be administered by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development of the Secretariat, in order to provide graduate and post-doctoral fellowships for a highly trained core faculty of the proposed university. It requested the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary measures, including the conduct of a functional feasibility study, for

establishing the University of Jerusalem in accordance with the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/37/599). The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session on the progress made in the implementation of this resolution.

8. A first step in the establishment of the advanced fellowship programme (see paras. 5 and 7 above) was taken by the Secretary-General when he addressed a note verbale to States Members of the United Nations and non-member States and wrote to Arab regional development banks and intergovernmental organizations. In these communications, the Secretary-General inquired whether they would be prepared to make pledges to the trust fund that he would set up to meet the costs of the advanced fellowship programme which, at that time, were estimated at \$1,700,000 to enable 20 fellows to receive fellowships for up to four years each over a six-year period.

9. In June 1983, the Secretary-General constituted the small Group (see para. 6 above) recommended in his report (A/37/599, para. 16) and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/120 C. It comprised Mr. Richard Moreton Mawditt, Secretary and Registrar of the University of Bath, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Dr. Calvin H. Plimpton, latterly Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the American University of Beirut and Emeritus Professor of Medicine, Downstate Medical Center, State University of New York, and formerly President of Amherst College, Massachusetts, United States of America; and Professor Abdus Salam F.R.S. (1979 Nobel Prize for Physics), Director of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Trieste, Italy, and Professor of Theoretical Physics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London. The Secretary-General also appointed Mr. Ralph Townley, a director in the United Nations Secretariat, as a member of the Group as well as its Rapporteur. The Group completed its work in August. Its report appears as the annex to the present report.

10. With reference to that part of the Group's report entitled "Special relationships" (see annex, sect. C below), the Secretary-General received on 27 September 1983 the following communication from the Rector of the United Nations University:

"As the contribution of the United Nations University (UNU) to your progress report on the University of Jerusalem for Palestinian Refugees, I wish to state that the United Nations University Council has expressed interest in the establishment of such a university on the basis of General Assembly resolutions and communications on the matter which the Council and I have received from you. With this in mind, and in response to the report by the group appointed under General Assembly resolution 37/120 C to conduct a functional feasibility study of the proposed university, UNU is prepared, if requested by the appropriate parties, to collaborate in the further design of the said university, to explore specific ways in which its proposed graduate programme might be developed, and to examine how it could participate in UNU's advanced training through fellowships and in UNU's research and outreach activities. It is further understood that site visits by UNU staff and co-operating scholars would be required at some stage of the exploration and that any proposals on an institutional relationship would be submitted for the UNU Council's consideration and approval."

ANNEX

Report by the Group appointed under General Assembly resolution 37/120 C

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

12 August 1983

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

The General Assembly, in its resolution 37/120 C, endorsed the various steps recommended in the report of the Secretary-General (A/37/599). These included the suggestion, in paragraphs 15 and 16 of the above-mentioned report, that the functional feasibility study referred to in paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 36/146 G would be facilitated if it could be undertaken by a small group of academics and university administrators of high international standing. The report also stated that the Group would be expected to submit its report to you, Sir, who would report on the progress of the Group to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session. We note that the General Assembly, in paragraph 7 of its resolution 37/120 C, requests you to report to that session on the progress made in the implementation of that resolution. The present report has been prepared by the Group bearing in mind this request of the General Assembly.

We have the honour to transmit to you herewith the report, which for reasons discussed below cannot but be limited in character, prepared by the Group in accordance with the recommendation contained in the report you submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (A/37/599). In so doing, we wish to express our thanks to the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and the Rector of the United Nations University, as well as to your colleagues in the Secretariat of the United Nations for their co-operation.

(Signed) Richard M. MAWDITT
Calvin H. PLIMPTON
Abdus SALAM
Ralph TOWNLEY

Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar
Secretary-General of the
United Nations

/...

I. MANDATE OF THE GROUP

1. The mandate of the Group has its origin in General Assembly resolution 36/146 G, paragraph 5 of which reads as follows:

"Requests the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures, including a functional feasibility study, for establishing the university at Jerusalem."

The Secretary-General, following the mission of Mr. Ralph Townley, to which reference is made in the Secretary-General's report (A/37/599, para. 5), suggested that the study should be prepared bearing in mind the wider context of higher educational needs on the West Bank, in the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. It would include not only estimates of the growth in the numbers of school-leavers who would be seeking higher education and training but also the plans of existing universities and other institutions of higher learning, as well as emerging needs for graduate study and professional training.

2. It was also recommended that to facilitate the preparation of this study for submission to the General Assembly a small group of academics and university administrators of high international standing should be appointed by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Director-General of UNESCO, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA and the Rector of the United Nations University. These recommendations were amongst those endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/120 C which, in paragraph 5,

"Requests the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary measures, including the conduct of a functional feasibility study, for establishing the University of Jerusalem in accordance with the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General."

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE GROUP

3. The Group held two meetings, one in June and the other in August, during the course of which its members visited Jordan. Professor Abdus Salam was not able to travel with the Group, but met with them en route and the entire Group met to complete its report and recommendations at the International Centre for Theoretical Physics at Trieste, Italy.

4. In Jordan, meetings and conversations were held, as far as was possible, with all those concerned with higher education in the West Bank, in East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. These included the presidents (in exile) of the universities of Bir Zeit, El-Najah and Bethlehem, as well as representatives of the Gaza Islamic University and the Hebron Polytechnic. Members of the Group were received by H. K. H. Prince Hassan, The Crown Prince of Jordan, and met with educators with recent experience in the development of higher education in the Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967. While in Amman, members of the Group consulted with the delegate of the European Economic Community and other diplomatic envoys whose countries' programmes include assistance in meeting higher educational needs in the above-mentioned areas. On another visit to Jordan, the Rapporteur of the Group had further consultations with the concerned ministries in the Government and with the presidents of the universities of Amman and Yarmouk. At the International Centre for Theoretical Physics, members of the Group had an opportunity to discuss their recommendations with Israeli and Arab scientists.

5. It had been the hope of the Group that it would be possible to pay official visits to the universities listed in the preceding paragraph and more particularly to the College of Sciences and Technology at Abu Dis, the Arab Vocational and Medical College at Al-Bireh, the College for Religious Teaching and Islamic Jurisprudence at Beit Hanina and the Girls Art College in Jerusalem. However, this proved not to be possible.

6. Prior to completing its report, members of the Group met with officials of UNESCO and UNRWA, as well as with those concerned in the United Nations Secretariat, and corresponded with the United Nations University.

III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Al Quds: The proposed Arab university at Jerusalem

7. The initial resolution of the General Assembly on this subject (A/RES/35/13 B), in its operative paragraph 5, requested the Secretary-General, in co-ordination with the Council of the United Nations University, UNRWA and UNESCO, "to study ways and means of establishing a university of arts and sciences to cater to the needs of Palestine refugees in the area, under the aegis of the United Nations".

8. As will be seen from the exchange of correspondence with the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations, annexed to the first report of the Secretary-General (A/36/593, annex I), the principal difficulty in carrying out the provisions of the General Assembly resolution lay in the requirement that the institution should be a university at Jerusalem for Palestine refugees. Such was the title of the two subsequent Assembly resolutions on this subject.

9. It became immediately clear to the Group in all its meetings with those listed in paragraph 4 above that they wished to establish a university at Jerusalem but not one designed to cater exclusively to the needs of Palestine refugees.

10. It may be mentioned that, during the course of 1983, the Group was informed of several steps being taken to create Al Quds University. In January 1983, an association of four existing colleges, namely, the College of Sciences and Technology at Abu Dis, the Arab Vocational and Medical College at Al-Bireh (at present, principally a nurses training school), the College for Religious Teaching and Islamic Jurisprudence at Beit Hanina and the Girls Art College in Jerusalem drew up certain fundamental principles for Al Quds University. As a further measure, a Higher Board for the University was formed of the senior officials and trustees of the constituent colleges. The Union of Arab Universities gave recognition to the University of Al Quds as a full member of the Union.

11. The new Arab university at Jerusalem that, henceforth, will be called Al Quds is intended to serve principally the Arab students of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. Moreover, in keeping with paragraph 10 of the Secretary-General's report (A/37/599), forming as it would a part of the system of higher education for the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, the new university would be autonomous as are the others. While Al Quds University would not be

exclusive in its admissions and would be nonsectarian, it is seen by those concerned as essentially Arab in character to meet the needs of the Arab community and admitting, in the main, Arab students.

12. It would seem to the Group that the foregoing measures reported to it represent the initial steps in establishing a university by drawing into an association existing institutions in and near Jerusalem. The fundamental principles list the colleges and lay down the functions of the Higher Board. Abu Dis (which may be seen as the main centre) has a number of new buildings and is situated on 190 dunums (approximately 50 acres) of land. It has not yet graduated its first class, but it expects to do so in two years.

13. Although the political significance of creating a university at Jerusalem is not lost on the Group, the aspiration to have one which is Arab in character springs from profound cultural, religious and historic associations. Many graduates of the old Arab College in Jerusalem that was closed in 1948 wish to see a seat of Arab higher learning there again. For these reasons, the Group welcomes the initiative of the four colleges to enter into an association to form Al Quds University. In this manner, the university of arts and sciences at Jerusalem envisaged by the General Assembly in its resolution 35/13 B approaches realization. In the many separate and joint discussions with all those devoted to Arab higher education, it was agreed that such a university should be known by the Arab name for Jerusalem: Al Quds. It will thus be so named in the body of the report.

B. The existing universities and the structure of Al Quds University

14. The terms of reference of the Group are for a technical feasibility study to be prepared bearing in mind the wider context of higher educational needs on the West Bank, in the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. It is to include not only estimates of the growth in the numbers of school-leavers who would be seeking higher education and training but also the plans of existing universities and other institutions of higher learning, as well as the emerging needs for graduate study and professional training. It should be recognized that, even if the Group had had the opportunity of visiting officially the existing universities, as well as the four constituent colleges of the future Al Quds, it would not have been possible at the present time to complete a feasibility study, particularly one embracing the wider setting of higher educational needs and prospects in the areas concerned. Uncertainties about the present and anxieties about the future of Arab education abound; these make it difficult to project how increasing needs can best be met. Current difficulties, however, throw up in sharp relief the steadfastness of those who are committed to providing university education and training to the Arab community and this may be seen as a source of encouragement. The Group, nevertheless, has reached certain conclusions on the basis of which it wishes to make a number of recommendations.

15. Four questions need to be answered: What are the present and future needs for higher education? What are the employment prospects for successful graduates? Is there a need for a University of Jerusalem? If there is, what form should it take?

16. Ten thousand Arabs emigrate annually. In 1983, the figure may be as high as 12,000. Of these, many are students seeking a higher education abroad. Students all over the world receive higher and particularly post-graduate education abroad and, indeed, have always done so. It enables them to have a wider view on the world and receive specialized training which may not always be available at home. However, a high proportion of those from the area concerned who study abroad do not return but swell the ranks of professionalism elsewhere. For the Arab community, in the areas covered by the Group's report, this process is debilitating and creates an irreparable economic and cultural loss.

17. In 1983, the existing universities of Bir Zeit, El-Najah, Bethlehem and the Gaza Islamic University, as well as the Hebron Polytechnic had together some 6,300 students. For a population of some one and a half million Arabs in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, this represents only a small proportion (0.4 per cent) compared with the corresponding percentage of Israeli students (1.6 per cent). These rough comparisons are made to emphasize the significant variation and are not presented as prime statistics.

18. The estimates are rough because there are considerable differences in the estimated number of school-leavers, the pool from which university entrants, and eventually graduates, are drawn. Projections of places needed for undergraduates differ. According to AMIDEAST, a private United States based body devoted to assisting in providing educational opportunities for Arab students, there exist plans to establish a computer-based programme of estimates of future student requirements. In the meantime, projections are bound to and do vary. Taking into account the demographic bulge of the 1960s and 1970s, it is expected that there will be an increased demand for places, tapering off in the 1990s. The predicted annual rate of growth for the school-leaving age population, however, appears to be a fairly firm figure of 3 to 4 per cent for the next 20 years. In 1983, the University of Bir Zeit estimated that the total number of university places that would be needed annually by the year 2000 could approach 20,000.

19. In recent years, there has been an increasing interest on the part of Arab families to secure higher education for their children, particularly in the medical and technological professions. Employment prospects are brighter for those who have graduated from a university or a similar institution than those who have not. It is not possible to assess the prospects of employment, dependent as they are on economic uncertainties. Such an assessment falls outside the scope of the Group's task. Demand and supply in these as in other matters are subject to the vagaries of the market.

20. The colleges that are to constitute the University of Al Quds are reported to be in great need of strengthening, so that teaching quality and performance can be improved. The provision of funds does not itself seem to present a constraint. The statement of fundamental principles and the charter of Al Quds University, however, are in need of elaboration and it is the understanding of the Group that this will now be undertaken by its Higher Board. The relative isolation and weakness of the colleges, particularly the one at Al-Bireh, could be overcome if all four were eventually consolidated on the Abu Dis campus.

21. The quality and range of higher education on the West Bank, in East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip for the Arab community will be determined not only by the foregoing but also by the steps taken to improve the quality of teaching and to supply security and tranquillity, without which the teacher cannot teach or the student study. It seems to the Group that it would be advisable for the existing universities to remain undergraduate institutions (with the exception of the Master's degree in education offered at El-Najah and Bir Zeit) and to share in the common graduate facility which the Group proposed should be established at Al Quds University.

22. While the constituent colleges of Al Quds University will need time to consolidate and develop, there is no need to defer plans for the graduate facility. At some point graduate studies will have to be introduced. Al Quds University should then, in the nature of events, become residential. The advanced fellowship programme, coupled with the prospect of scholars from abroad wishing to study and carry out research in the new university, will result in a graduate centre emerging as a matter of course. It would be as well to plan and to plan boldly now. Graduate schools enhance the quality of undergraduate teaching and lend stability to a new university. The graduate facility should be designed to serve the four existing universities in such a way that the post-graduate student from one of them may return to receive his advanced degree from his home university. This pattern would accord with the Secretary-General's report (A/37/599, para. 9), which mentions that if a new university took the form of a facility at Jerusalem for advanced study helping to serve the post-graduate needs of the existing universities, a symbiotic relationship could develop with each serving some of the needs of the other, while each preserved its academic independence.

23. Even so, Al Quds University is a far cry from the centre of academic excellence that is needed if it is to make a significant contribution to historical scholarship, economic development studies, science, technology and education. It will be a long haul for it to become a university which, as foreseen in an earlier report of the Secretary-General (A/37/599), could also provide a graduate and research facility with laboratories that may serve all the universities in the area. Strong faculties in arts, sciences and technology now need to be created, including agriculture and medicine.

24. Al Quds University, transported to a higher level of academic excellence, expanding and increasing its faculties with a graduate facility conducted jointly with the other four universities, while serving the Arab community must preserve the principles of universality and internationalism which are the hallmarks of great academic institutions. The Group also considers that the concept of locating an international institute of advanced study in arts and sciences at Al Quds University should be kept in sight. Institutes which are international in character and devoted to advanced study are still few and far between and the attraction of Jerusalem for such a centre should not be underestimated. Not that Jerusalem is devoid of such institutes; far from it. They are, however, essentially, though not exclusively, Israeli in character. The Arab community needs and has a right to similar institutions of its own devising. Lest at this point the comments of the Group appear divisive, it should be recalled that in more

harmonious times co-operation between Israeli and Arab institutions of learning was common-place and worked to mutual advantage. The Group looks to the day when such relationships are restored.

25. These proposals call for financing and a degree of support of a completely different order of magnitude from present subventions. The Group understands that financing from the Gulf States will continue and increase. Financing would be assisted if Al Quds University established an endowment fund. The Group suggests that the quantum of the endowment should initially be that of the United Nations University in Tokyo: 100 million dollars.

C. Special relationships

26. General Assembly resolution 35/13 B sees the university as being under the aegis of the United Nations. The Group considers that the requirement of the Assembly resolution could, to some extent, be met if that organ took note of the prospective establishment of Al Quds University in fulfilment of Assembly resolution 35/13 B; expressed the view that it looked forward to the new university growing in strength and purpose in meeting the need for higher education in the Arab community; called upon interested Governments, organizations and other bodies to contribute to the university endowment; and called upon Al Quds University and the United Nations University to consider a mutually agreed upon special relationship with each other. This relationship could be as strong as an affiliation, in which case it would also meet the requirement of the Assembly resolution. Some Arab leaders and intellectuals have stressed this to the Group as desirable to safeguard "independence of thought and autonomy".

27. The Group does not wish to appear to impinge on the prerogatives of the Board of Trustees or those of the Rector of the United Nations University (UNU) or, indeed, those of Al Quds University. It does, however, appear to the Group that a more vigorous involvement by UNU would be welcomed. The three kinds of links between UNU and other bodies envisaged in the UNU charter distinguish respectively between associated institutions, incorporated institutions, and contractual and other arrangements. While the criteria for such links are constantly reviewed by the UNU Council, the Group suggests that particular consideration should be given to establishing from the outset a special kind of link, as envisaged above, between the two universities, whereby UNU plays at least a sponsorship role for the University of Al Quds.

28. The Group has not discussed in detail the role that UNESCO and other United Nations bodies can play. Clearly, it is their mandate to help to build up this university.

29. The United Nations Development Programme has a special programme of assistance to the Palestine people. The educational projects which appear to be foreseen in that programme, it seems to the Group, are mainly of a vocational training character. One, however, (item 6 in the annex to DP/1983/14) anticipates "a system of post-graduate fellowships in specializations agreed by all concerned as most in need of additionally-trained teaching staff". If such a system were developed, it should be administered with due consideration for the arrangements discussed in the following section.

30. In addition to UNRWA educational support schemes for Palestine refugees, the United Nations system offers scholarships and grants for "higher education for Palestine refugees". The Group took note of these in the report of the Secretary-General (A/37/427).

D. The United Nations advanced fellowship programme

31. Among the various steps recommended by the Secretary-General in his report (A/37/599) and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/120 C was one to establish an advanced fellowship programme. The Group consequently has the following observations to make on this programme, intended as it is to help meet the requirements of General Assembly resolution 35/13 B and 36/146 G.

32. The United Nations advanced fellowship programme was created originally to enable university teachers and other scholars at institutions of higher learning in the area, particularly faculty members of the universities of Bir Zeit, El-Najah, Bethlehem and the Gaza Islamic University, to be selected for fellowships to enable them to read for higher degrees or to carry out post-doctoral studies.

33. This programme is now being established for six years during which up to 20 such fellowships are to be made available each for a period of up to four years. Such a programme was seen as enabling the academic standing of the universities to be enhanced and their faculties to be strengthened and increased as well as representing a first step towards the creation of the University of Jerusalem.

34. The Group notes that the cost of the advanced fellowship programme has been estimated at \$1,500,000 which, with some \$200,000 to cover programme support cost, will total \$1,700,000. The Group understands that the Secretary-General is setting up a trust fund for this purpose and has sought pledges from the States Members of the United Nations, non-member States, Arab regional development banks and inter-governmental organizations. As the fund is modest in size, limited in duration and those invited to contribute have been asked to make one pledge only, the Group considers that the target should be met readily. The programme to which it is to give rise is the subject of lively interest. The Group sees particular merit in the invitation to Governments to earmark additional fellowships from their own programmes for this purpose within the context of the advanced fellowship programme. This could have the effect of substantially enlarging the programme.

35. A considerable augmentation of the amounts involved and an extension of the programme period from six to nine years would seem desirable in view of the imminent emergence of Al Quds University, the need to strengthen the teaching capacity at the constituent colleges and the proposed early formation of a graduate facility. The Group is of the view that fellowships should normally be granted only to those who are resident in the areas concerned.

36. While the fellowships will be administered by the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, the selection of the candidates, agreement on their field of study and advice on the placement of fellows is to be vested in a committee which could include the presidents of the chief administrative officers

of the universities of Bir Zeit, El-Najah, Bethlehem and the Gaza Islamic University. The Group considers that the committee should also include in its membership the president of Al Quds University or his representative, as well as similar representation of the Hebron Polytechnic. To assist the selection process, academic assessors (who would not be expected to serve as members of the Committee) should be invited to advise on the suitability of the candidates, their proposed study or research topics and the places where they would study.

37. Be that as it may, as the programme is one established by the United Nations, the initial convening of the Committee should be undertaken by a representative of the Secretary-General, at which time the modalities for advertising the fellowships decisions on preferred field of study, appointment of academic assessors, monitoring progress and other arrangements for the conduct of the business of the Committee could be decided

38. The strengthening of higher education for the Arab community lies at the heart of the mandate of the Group. It sees the need, consequently, that, without infringing upon the rights of the fellowship holder and subject to the availability of a suitable post upon return at the successful completion of the fellowship, formal assurances should be obtained by the Committee of the fellow's intention to return.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

39. We believe that, in our recommendations, the hesitations expressed by the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations, in his letters (A/36/593, annex I), have been substantively met. We hope, therefore, that all concerned may now be able to see their way to support the arrangements discussed in this report.

40. We envisage the proposed new University of Al Quds, together with the associated existing universities co-operating in a common graduate facility, particularly for science and technology, coming to play the role for the Arab community that the Hebrew University of Jerusalem played in the development of the Jewish community. Financing from external sources should similarly be found. The new university complex should be aimed at preserving and enriching the life of the Arab community, nurturing Arab scholarship and reviving science and technology. In so doing, the university complex will strengthen secondary education in the area and if, in time, an international centre for advanced study for arts and sciences is located at Al Quds university, it will become a centre for scholarship and enlightenment that may compare with other established centres of excellence in Jerusalem. Surely, it is in the darkest days, when times may seem least propitious for new departures, that fresh initiatives of peace and development, if they are bold enough, prevail.
