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UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY
COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

S/8988*
30 January 1969

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 30 JANUARY 1969 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
JORDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

My Government instructed me to inform Your Excellency that, as a result of wind, rain, floods and snowstorms which swept over the eastern part of Jordan, namely the area where the refugees have their temporary camps, the plight of those innocent Jordanian citizens has acquired a new, greater dimension.

Hundreds of tents housing scores of thousands of refugees went down under the impact of the storms. Most of the tent camps are now in flooded areas and subject to unprecedented heavy rains and hurricanes.

With nothing to protect them against the ravages of nature, most of the 450,000 newly displaced persons are within walking distance of their homes and camps which remain empty in the Israeli-occupied territories. This appalling situation cries for the conscience of mankind. It defies human values. To keep silent about it would add to the refugees' miseries and lead to more tragedies.

On 14 June 1967, in resolution 237 (1967), the Security Council called upon Israel "to ensure the safety, welfare and security of the inhabitants of the areas where military operations have taken place and to facilitate the return of those inhabitants who have fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities", and entrusted Your Excellency with the task of following the effective implementation of this resolution.

This was reaffirmed on 4 July 1967 in General Assembly resolution 2252 (ES-V).

It was also the subject of deliberations in the Special Political Committee during the twenty-third session of the General Assembly. The need for a speedy return of the displaced persons to their homes was emphasized.

* Also issued under the symbol A/7504.

Addressing the Committee Your Excellency stated:

"It cannot be questioned that the plight of many of the refugees could best be relieved immediately by their return to their homes and to the camps which they formerly occupied.... I think it is necessary to state that if the camps on the West Bank could again serve their original purpose, and if the displaced persons could return to their former homes, a long step would have been taken towards reducing the hardships faced by a large number of the refugees and displaced persons in Jordan."

Lord Caradon, speaking for the United Kingdom, said: "Many of them the displaced persons⁷ have homes, stone houses, to go back to on the other side of the Jordan Valley. They could go back tomorrow."

Ambassador Wiggins also emphasized the need for a greatly expanded programme for the return to the lands west of the Jordan of the displaced persons of the 1967 war.

Resolution 2452 (XXIII) was adopted, which, inter alia, called upon "the Government of Israel to take effective and immediate steps for the return without delay of those inhabitants who fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities".

None of the above resolutions was implemented by the Israeli authorities. This is but another act of defiance of United Nations authority and disregard for international will.

Since Your Excellency has been entrusted with following up the effective implementation of these Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and in view of the present situation, it is the earnest hope of my Government that appropriate steps will be taken to help the victims of continued Israeli occupation and facilitate their speedy return.

In the words of Lord Caradon to the Special Political Committee: "And, after all, when you come to think of it it is not asking a lot that people shall be allowed to go home. Surely this is an elementary human right."

May I request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly and Security Council.

Please accept, etc.

(Signed) Muhammad H. EL-FARRA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative