



UNITED
NATIONS

A



International Conference on the Question of Palestine

Geneva, 29 August - 7 September 1983

A/CONF.114/NGO/2*
29 August 1983
ENGLISH AND FRENCH ONLY

Statement to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine**

Submitted by the International Progress Organization, a non-governmental organization accredited to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

* Non-governmental organization documents are distributed at the Conference site only, in the quantities and languages as submitted by the non-governmental organization.

** The designations employed, the presentation of material, and the views expressed in this paper are those of the International Progress Organization and do not necessarily reflect the views and practices of the Secretariat of the United Nations.

GE.83-69180

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Geneva, 29 August - 7 September 1983

Statement submitted

by the INTERNATIONAL PROGRESS ORGANIZATION (I.P.O.).

1. The International Progress Organization, well-known under its abbreviation I.P.O., was created in October 1972 under the auspices of Mr. Kurt WALDHEIM, then Secretary general of the United Nations.

The I.P.O. has its headquarters in Vienna. It enjoys consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations as well as with UNESCO.

In 1980, as it organized in Vienna (5 - 7 November 1980) the International Conference on the legal aspects of the Palestine Problem with special regard to the Question of Jerusalem, the I.P.O. benefited by the kind official support of Mr. Bruno KREISKY, then Federal Chancellor of Austria.

In 1982, for its tenth anniversary, the I.P.O. received wholehearted messages of congratulation and encouragement from Mr. PEREZ DE CUELLAR, Secretary general of the United Nations, as well as from Mr. Amadou M'BOU, Director general of UNESCO.

2. The keen interest which I.P.O. takes in the Question of Palestine stems from one of its major preoccupations, which is to strive for the defense, reinforcement and development of the basic principles of international law and of the Human rights - principles which, as was brilliantly explained by Professor Hans KOECHLER, president of I.P.O., need be harmonized with each other and made compatible with the minimum requirements of universal morality. (1)

Now, the policies conducted by the Israeli government since its very inception on May 15, 1948, that is to say for more than thirty-five years, have amounted to a total, constant and deliberate negation of the principles of international law and of Human rights as well as of the essentials of basic morality.- as will be presently recalled.

3. The exactions practised in Palestine by the Israeli occupant for the past thirty-five years have more precisely amounted to as many violations of numerous rules of international law, either general or detailed. Apart from infringing the general prohibition to resort to the threat or use of force (United Nations Charter, Article I), these Israeli exactions have especially included systematic breaches of the humanitarian rules embodied in the Geneva Conventions as well as of the international labour standards embodied in the conventions prepared by the International Labour Office.

The Israeli exactions in Palestine, just as the general policies of the Israeli government, have moreover systematically ignored, flouted and violated the many decisions made with respect to the Question of Palestine by the several United Nations organs as well as by the other qualified international organizations.

(1) See Hans KOECHLER, The Principles of International Law and the Human Rights, a study published by the I.P.O. in its series "Studies in International Relations", No V, Vienna 1981.

4. A list of the Israeli exactions in Palestine cannot find room within the limited framework of this statement. One should turn in this respect to the sizable documentation that has been assembled by the United Nations and the other public international organizations as well as by various non-governmental organizations. (2)

Be it merely recalled here for the sake of clarity that, beginning with the willful destruction, as from 1948, of several hundreds of Arab villages and the ensuing factual expulsion from their homeland of almost one million Palestinians who thus were spoliated and thrown into misery and exile, the Israeli exactions continued and worsened with the occupation in 1967 of Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan.

Far from being exhausted with the methodic destruction in June 1974 (in spite of a clearly accepted cease-fire) of the syrian city of Kuneitra (a destruction that was completed by systematic looting, and also by the desecration of the mosques, the churches and the graveyards of the town), nor with the unprovoked attack of June 1981 against the Iraqi nuclear centre of Tammouz, nor with the invasion and devastation of Lebanon as from June 1982 (an adventure that lead down to the horrors of Sabra and Chatila), the Israeli exactions today go on in Lebanon as well as in the West Bank and the other occupied Arab territories.

5. Meanwhile, an international propaganda carefully scored has persistently tried to give credibility to the tale according to which militant Paestinians would be primarily terrorists, even though it is obvious that their exile, dispersion and transformation into refugees

(2) See inter alia the following sources, including their own references :

- a) Treatment of Palestiniens in Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza, a report published by the National Lawyers Guild, New York 1978 ;
- b) The West Bank and the Rule of Law, a study published by the International Commission of Jurists, Geneva 1980 ;
- c) The legal aspects of the Palestine Problem with special regard to the Question of Jerusalem, a collection of the papers presented to the international Conference organized by the I.P.O. in Vienna (5 - 7 November 1980), published by the I.P.O. in its series "Studie in international Relations", No IV, Vienna 1981 ;
- d) Henry CATTAN, The solution of the Palestine Refugee Problem, a study published by the I.P.O. in its series "Studies in International Relations", No VI, Vienna 1982 ;
- e) Report on the United Nations Seminar on violations of Human rights in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel (Geneva, 29 November-3 December 1982), published as a United Nations document under the symbol ST/HR/SER.A/14 ;
- f) Information Bulletin of the former Groupe d'Etude sur le Moyen-Orient Geneva, especially Nos 80 (December 1979) to 89 (March 1982) ;
- g) Israel in Lebanon, the report of the International Commission to enquire into reported violations of International law by Israel during its invasion of the Lebanon (Mr. Sean MacBRIDE, Chairman), London 1983 ;
- h) Human Rights Violations in the West Bank, a background publication of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, World Council of Churches, Geneva 1983 ;
- i) Nominal lists of victims of Israeli terrorism, successively published as from the Israeli invasion in Lebanon, along with various reports and newsletters, by the International Centre for Information on Palestinian and Lebanese Prisoners, Deportees and Missing Persons (with headquarters at the Centre d'information sur le droit humanitaire de la guerre, Paris).

have been the direct result of Israeli terrorism, indeed so remain to date. Inaugurated on September 17, 1948, with the assassination in Jerusalem of Count BERNADOTTE, United Nations Mediator, Israeli terrorism first took its free course in the innumerable acts of banditry, violence and atrocities without which it would not have been possible for so many Jewish immigrants and colonists arriving from all quarters of the world to settle massively in Palestine and take hold of the country and possessions of the Palestinians who thus were spoliated and driven away.

Then, Israeli terrorism found its full bloom in the progressive occupation and rampant annexation of the whole of Palestine, in the policy of unlawful colonization keeping pace with the spoliation and expulsion of as many Arabs as would be possible from among those who were found in the newly occupied areas, in the scheming of exorbitant spiteful raids (such as the abduction of a nazi in Argentina, the abduction of military launches from a French seaport, the commando operation on an airport in Uganda, the wanton destruction of Kuneitra, the aggression on the Iraqi reactor, etc.), finally in the invasion, devastation and occupation of Lebanon.

So it is that, after having made it possible for the Jewish state proclaimed in May 1948 to gain ominous reality, terrorism has finally come to be, indeed still is today the main foundation of Israel : it is terrorism as practised by a self-righteous "establishment" - a terrorism through which Israel, the self-styled "elect people" coveting the land of others under pretense of a "promised land", dreams of imposing and dominating ; through which however, in fact, Israel has merely procured among the international Community the rare place of an outrageous and intractable outlaw.

6. The close similarity of the political system enforced in Palestine by the Israeli occupant with the system of apartheid established in the Union of South Africa - a system universally condemned - has been for several years duly noticed : the basically discriminatory nature of Zionism such as has inspired all Israeli policies to this day cannot be honestly disputed. It was therefore not without grounds that, on the background of its Resolution 3236 of November 22, 1974, reaffirming the inalienable rights of the Palestinians, the General Assembly of the United Nations, by its Resolution 3379 of November 10, 1975, determined that Zionism is indeed a form of racism and of racial discrimination.(3)

The reluctance from part of some western governments to acknowledge the actually racist nature of Zionism such as has been at work in Israel has no other explanation than the shameful memories of the antisemitic persecutions of the hitlerian era - the infamy of which, however, could not possibly be ever exorcized by persecutions against the Palestinians or any other Arabs !

7. Moreover, in his special report on apartheid submitted to the 69th session of the International Labour Conference (Geneva, June 1983), the Director general of the International Labour Office provided, though indirectly, a signal confirmation of the racist character common to the discriminatory systems in force both in Israel and in South Africa.

(3) See inter alia on this subject the excellent study Zionism, a system of Apartheid by Elizabeth MATHIOT, pamphlet No 25 in the series published by the International Association for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (known by its abbreviation EAFORD), London 1982.

One would also usefully consult the collection Zionism and Racism, published by the same EAFORD, 1977.

This report indeed states that the creation of a South Africa with a Black citizens seems to be the ultimate objective being pursued by the South African authorities by means of granting independence to black "Homelands" doomed to form a constellation of economically dependent states meant to serve as labour reserves for the benefit of white South Africa : these are the famous "Bantustans".

Now, we are forced to the conclusion that, on the background of Camp David, and owing to the agreement with Israel that was imposed in May last on occupied and dismantled Lebanon, the Israeli policy to the Arabs is today exactly the same as that of the Union of South Africa to the Blacks : as the failure to win the war in Lebanon has proved that the extermination of the Palestinians is not possible, the present objective of Israel seems indeed to be the assertion in Palestine of a Jewish state riddled of Arabs by means of granting to the Arabs regimes of local autonomy kept under close supervision : the Arabs would thus have to be content with living in "Bantustans" subjected to the political and economic domination of Israel.

8. There is no more any need today to demonstrate that the inconsiderate and immoderate support given from abroad to Israel in its aggressive and domineering policies has been in flagrant contradiction to the democratic principle of self-determination as well as to the Human rights and to the basic principles proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.

Yet, it is fitting to note here that, in all the negotiation of the recent agreement with Israel imposed on Lebanon, no reparation by Israel of the colossal losses and damages inflicted on Lebanon by the invasion and occupation of her territory was ever so little contemplated ; far, very far from it since these losses and damages do persist under the protracted occupation of almost a third of the Lebanese territory by the Israeli army.

Does Israel possess a special right to strike others at leisure with impunity, with or without any justification ?

9. The incredible blindness which has characterized the support given from abroad to the aggressive and domineering policies of Israel has now developed into one of the most serious causes of demoralization and corruption of the international Community for the reason that the very principles of the United Nations Charter, owing to such blindness, prove to be openly betrayed by those who had proudly heralded them, indeed had made them prevail as the outcome of the second World War.

In fact, the whole of international Law, indeed the very coexistence of the several peoples on our planet are henceforth threatened by the accumulation of the disastrous precedents that have made up the seeming success of Israel - an accumulation that obtained only as an effect of the weakness, the cowardice, even the complicity of some western Powers.

10. The salvation of International Law as based on the United Nations Charter imperiously requires it today that all governments duly take heed of the perils which would result from a continuation of the racist policies of Israel and of its deportment as an outrageous outlaw.

The International Progress Organization therefore appeals to all governments and urges them to reach agreement so as to put an end to all Israeli exactions and so as to restore to the Palestinians the exercise of their inalienable rights, individual as well as collective - and to begin with : their right to self-determination and to have their own sovereign state on their own land, PALESTINE .

Geneva, 29 August 1983.

(A.-R. WERNER,
Permanent I.P.O. Representative
to the United Nations, Geneva)