

**REPORT
OF THE
PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
FOR THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 46 (A/38/46)



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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

[3 November 1983]

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

14 October 1983

Sir,

I have the honour to enclose herewith the report covering the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine (4 February-29 August 1983), for submission to the General Assembly, in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 36/120 C.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Massamba SARRE
Chairman of the Preparatory Committee
for the International Conference on
the Question of Palestine

His Excellency
Mr. J. Pérez de Cuéllar
Secretary-General of the United Nations

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 2 of resolution 36/120 C of 10 December 1981, the General Assembly authorized the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to act as the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, to take all the necessary steps for its organization, to hold sessions particularly for that purpose and to make recommendations regarding, inter alia, the site, scheduling of and participation in the Conference, and the provisional agenda of the Conference.
2. At its first session, the Preparatory Committee had adopted a series of decisions concerning preparatory activities for the Conference. These were submitted in a first report to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session. 1/
3. At that session, by resolution 37/86 C of 10 December 1982, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee contained in paragraph 32 of its report, concerning preparatory activities, objectives, documentation, draft provisional agenda, draft provisional rules of procedure, participation in the Conference and organization of work of the Preparatory Committee.
4. In the same resolution, the General Assembly reiterated the responsibility of the United Nations to strive for a lasting peace in the Middle East through a just solution of the question of Palestine.
5. The resolution also called upon all organizations of the United Nations system to continue to extend their fullest support to the Conference and to its preparation, urged all Member States to promote heightened awareness of the importance of the Conference and to intensify preparations at the national, subregional and regional levels in order to ensure its success.
6. The resolution finally called upon all Member States to contribute to the achievement of Palestinian rights, to support modalities for their implementation, and to participate in the Conference and the regional preparatory meetings preceding it.
7. The General Assembly decided to consider the results of the Conference at its thirty-eighth session.

II. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. Duration of the session

8. The Preparatory Committee held 13 meetings during its second session at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 4 February to 27 July 1983, and one at the United Nations Office at Geneva on 29 August 1983.

B. Membership and officers

9. The following 23 States members of the Committee participated in the second session of the Preparatory Committee:

Afghanistan	Indonesia	Romania
Cuba	Lao People's Democratic	Senegal
Cyprus	Republic	Sierra Leone
German Democratic	Madagascar	Tunisia
Republic	Malaysia	Turkey
Guinea	Mali	Ukrainian Soviet
Guyana	Malta	Socialist Republic
Hungary	Nigeria	Yugoslavia
India	Pakistan	

10. The following States, observers and organizations also participated in the work of the Preparatory Committee, as observers.

Algeria	Morocco
Czechoslovakia	Nicaragua
Ecuador	Niger
Egypt	Syrian Arab Republic
Holy See	United Arab Emirates
Iraq	Viet Nam
Jordan	League of Arab States
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Organization of the Islamic Conference
Mauritania	Palestine Liberation Organization

11. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization was represented in the Preparatory Committee by observers.

12. The officers of the Preparatory Committee, elected at the 1st meeting of its first session, on 31 March 1982, continued to serve in the same capacity during the second session, as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Massamba Sarré (Senegal)

Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Raúl Roa-Kouri (Cuba)

Mr. Mohammed Farid Zarif (Afghanistan)

Rapporteur: Mr. Victor J. Gauci (Malta)

13. The open-ended Working Group of the Preparatory Committee, also established at the 1st meeting of the Committee's first session, on 31 March 1982, continued to work in that capacity under the chairmanship of Mr. Victor J. Gauci (Malta). The following participated in the Working Group:

Afghanistan	Romania
Cuba	Senegal
German Democratic Republic	Syrian Arab Republic
Hungary	Tunisia
India	Turkey
Indonesia	Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
Jordan	Yugoslavia
Malta	Palestine Liberation Organization
Pakistan	

14. The Working Group held 13 meetings. It considered various items on the agenda of the Preparatory Committee and made the necessary recommendations.

15. The Preparatory Committee welcomed all States Members of the United Nations and observers to the Working Group, so as to ensure universal participation.

16. At its 7th meeting, on 27 May, an open-ended mini-working-group of the Preparatory Committee was established to consider the documentation for the Conference. The following participated in the mini-working-group:

Afghanistan	Pakistan
Cuba	Senegal
Hungary	Syrian Arab Republic
India	Tunisia
Jordan	Turkey
Malta	Palestine Liberation Organization

C. Adoption of the agenda

17. During its second session, the Preparatory Committee gave further consideration to the following items relating to the preparation of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine:

- (a) Date and venue;
- (b) Preparatory activities;
- (c) Documentation;
- (d) Participation;
- (e) Organization of work.

III. PREPARATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

A. Date and venue of the Conference

18. The Preparatory Committee held its 9th meeting on 14 June 1983 to review the question of the date and venue of the Conference. With the constant objective of ensuring the success of the Conference and after reviewing all considerations relating to the venue of the Conference, taking into account the views of the Governments concerned, the Preparatory Committee decided to change the venue of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine from the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization's headquarters in Paris, which had been the original choice, to the United Nations Office at Geneva, on the dates previously scheduled.

19. After further consideration, at its 11th meeting on 20 June 1983, the Preparatory Committee, taking into account a number of technical considerations which would additionally facilitate the holding of the Conference, decided to change the original dates (16 to 27 August 1983) to 29 August to 7 September 1983.

B. Preparatory activities for the Conference

20. The recommendations submitted by the Preparatory Committee in its report to the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly ^{1/} and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 37/86 C covered a number of major preparatory activities prior to the holding of the Conference itself, as follows:

- (a) The organization of five regional governmental preparatory meetings;
- (b) The organization of a Round Table of Eminent Persons;
- (c) The active involvement of organizations of the United Nations system;
- (d) Activities by non-governmental organizations;
- (e) Public information activities organized by the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat.

21. So as to comply fully with these recommendations, the Preparatory Committee considered and took action on the questions outlined below.

1. Regional preparatory meetings

22. The Preparatory Committee considered the organization of the various regional preparatory meetings during its 1st to 8th meetings, held between 4 February and 2 June 1983. It had before it conference room papers prepared by the Secretariat (A/CONF.114/PC/2/CRP.1-CRP.6) containing information relating to various aspects of the organization of each of the regional preparatory meetings, with details on the agenda, documentation, participation, and guidelines for the conduct of work.

23. The Preparatory Committee was informed of the invitations extended by the Governments of the United Republic of Tanzania, Nicaragua, the United Arab Emirates

and Malaysia to host the regional preparatory meeting of the respective regions. The Preparatory Committee expressed its gratitude to those Governments and accepted their invitations.

24. It was decided that the States in the respective regions would be invited to participate on the basis of membership in the five regional commissions, that is, the Economic Commission for Africa; the Economic Commission for Europe; the Economic Commission for Latin America; the Economic Commission for Western Asia and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

25. In addition, organizations with a standing invitation from the General Assembly to participate in the sessions and work of all international conferences, national liberation movements, organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations were invited, as prescribed in section III, paragraph 29, of the Committee's report on its first session. 1/

26. Regional preparatory meetings were held for the African region at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 29 March to 1 April 1983; for the Latin American region at Managua, Nicaragua, from 11 to 15 April 1983; for the West Asian region at Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, from 25 to 29 April 1983; for the Asian region at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 3 to 6 May 1983; and for the European region at the United Nations Office at Geneva, from 4 to 8 July 1983.

27. The themes for the five regional preparatory meetings were approved by the Preparatory Committee during its second session. They were as follows:

- Africa: "Political and juridical aspects of the question of Palestine";
- Latin America: "Palestine and international law";
- West Asia: "Economic, civil, social and cultural conditions of Palestine" and "The status of the Holy City of Jerusalem";
- Asia: "The Question of Palestine and world politics";
- Europe: "The United Nations role and the future of Palestine".

28. The Preparatory Committee approved a list of documents consisting of papers prepared by consultants on behalf of the Conference secretariat as well as United Nations documents, reports and publications relevant to the specific agenda items of each meeting.

29. Over 100 States, a broad spectrum of intergovernmental organizations, organizations of the United Nations system as well as non-governmental organizations participated in the regional preparatory meetings. The Preparatory Committee was represented at each of these meetings.

30. Each regional preparatory meeting adopted by consensus a series of recommendations. These recommendations encompassed proposals for action or measures to be undertaken by the States of the region, by the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular by the Security Council, and by non-governmental organizations.

31. In addition, the documents adopted reaffirmed the basic principles relevant to a solution of the question of Palestine, as contained in the pertinent United

Nations resolutions. All meetings emphasized the timeliness and importance of convening the International Conference on the Question of Palestine as a contribution towards a resolution of the question and urged States to participate actively, and at the ministerial or other high political level, in the Conference.

32. The Preparatory Committee took note of the recommendations of the five regional preparatory meetings at its 5th to 7th and 12th meetings (A/CONF.114/PC/9-13). The Committee was of the view that the recommendations of those meetings collectively should form the basis of a programme of action to be adopted by the Conference.

33. The reports of the regional preparatory meetings, providing information on attendance and organization of work and containing a summary of the consideration of substantive agenda items and recommendations, were submitted as documents to the Conference (A/CONF.114/1-5).

2. Round Table of Eminent Persons

34. During its second session, the Preparatory Committee considered the necessary preparations for the holding of a Round Table of Eminent Persons to discuss some of the substantive issues of the question of Palestine. At the invitation of the Government of Austria, the Preparatory Committee recommended the convening of the Round Table of Eminent Persons at Vienna, Austria, on 1 June 1983. After further consultations and consideration, the Preparatory Committee decided to postpone the holding of the Round Table until after the International Conference on the Question of Palestine to a suitable date to be agreed on.

3. Activities of the organizations of the United Nations system

35. In accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 36/120 C, the Secretary-General of the Conference invited the specialized agencies and United Nations offices and programmes to co-operate in the preparations for the Conference. Contributions were invited in the form of documentation, participation in the regional preparatory meetings and in the Conference itself.

36. Two ad hoc inter-agency meetings were held on 19 and 20 January 1983 and 30 and 31 May 1983 to discuss the modalities of the co-operation of the United Nations agencies, programmes and offices in relation to the regional preparatory meetings and to the International Conference.

37. The Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters), at its 1st meeting held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 10 to 15 March 1983, considered and approved the report and the recommendations of the 1st Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting, and authorized the holding of a second one.

38. The representatives of organizations of the United Nations system decided (a) to establish comprehensive lists of their documentation relevant to the objectives of the Conference and to identify those which might serve as basic or background documents for the Conference; (b) to provide to the secretariat of the Conference information regarding assistance to the Palestinian people which they submit annually to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his report to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly; and (c) to participate in the regional preparatory meetings and in the Conference itself, as appropriate.

39. The results of the meetings mentioned above were brought to the attention of the Preparatory Committee at its 1st and 12th meetings, and were duly noted.

4. Non-governmental activities

40. The Preparatory Committee undertook to identify those non-governmental organizations, responsive to the question of Palestine, in accordance with the criteria set forth in its first report. 1/ It also considered efforts to organize outreach activities to mobilize global understanding and support of the objectives of the Conference. Activities of non-governmental organizations, and invitations to them to attend regional preparatory meetings and the International Conference, were considered by the Preparatory Committee at its 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 10th, 12th and 13th meetings.

41. Non-governmental organizations sponsored meetings, seminars and other events that related directly to the overall objectives of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, especially with a view to augmenting international public understanding of the facts underlying the question of Palestine. Members of the Preparatory Committee participated in some of these activities. The Preparatory Committee was also kept informed of the attendance of Conference secretariat staff at several of those conferences and seminars.

42. The Conference secretariat communicated with 650 non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and 450 non-governmental organizations not having consultative status with the Council, in order to ascertain that they subscribed to the objectives of the Conference and had a specific contribution to make to the work of the Conference.

43. Seventy non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council expressed their intention to participate in the Conference. Another 230 were determined to have goals closely allied with the purpose of the Conference.

44. Information material was disseminated by the Conference secretariat on a regular basis to all those non-governmental organizations that expressed an interest in participating in the International Conference. This was supplemented by frequent consultations and briefings for the non-governmental organization community at United Nations Headquarters in New York and Geneva. Non-governmental organizations attended the five regional preparatory meetings and reported back to their constituencies. At the European Regional Preparatory Meeting, participating non-governmental organizations jointly issued the "NGO Geneva Appeal".

45. As a result of the interest of these non-governmental organizations, a full agenda of activities was prepared, including briefings, workshops and exhibits for non-governmental organizations, at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine.

5. Public information

46. The Preparatory Committee considered, at its 1st, 2nd and 5th meetings, the implementation of the programme of public information activities as outlined in the first report of the Preparatory Committee 1/ and endorsed by General Assembly resolution 37/86 C. During these meetings, the importance of timely, accurate and

comprehensive information was stressed, in order to highlight the issues before the Conference and generate public understanding of these issues. Several proposals were made concerning the effectiveness and outreach of these information activities.

47. Information activities by the Department of Public Information for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine fell into three categories: production of information materials, organization of news missions to the Middle East and arrangements for news coverage of all pre-conference regional meetings and of the Conference itself. All these activities were undertaken in close consultation with the Conference secretariat.

48. The Department of Public Information produced three fact sheets, four newsletters and a brochure in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. It organized two news missions to Western Asia. Each mission consisted of seven journalists.

49. The first news mission began on 15 April and continued to 29 April 1983. It visited Tunisia, Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan. Journalists participating in that mission also attended the last two days of the Regional Preparatory Meeting at Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.

50. The second news mission, from 5 to 19 May 1983, attended the last two days of the Regional Preparatory Meeting at Kuala Lumpur and proceeded to visit the Syrian Arab Republic, Egypt and Tunisia.

51. An encounter for journalists was held at Geneva two days prior to the International Conference. Thirty journalists representing various regions and opinions were invited and attended the encounter.

52. In addition to organizing visits by media representatives to Western Asia, the Department of Public Information invited locally and internationally accredited journalists to attend and report on each preparatory regional meeting and on the journalists' encounter.

53. Other activities undertaken by the Department of Public Information were:

(a) A photo exhibit highlighting the issues to be discussed at the Conference, which was on display at the Conference site and at the European regional preparatory meeting;

(b) A poster, which was produced and distributed;

(c) Briefings for media representatives and non-governmental organizations' representatives held in New York and Geneva both before and during the Conference;

(d) Radio coverage in the weekly and monthly schedule of radio broadcasts featured issues relating to the Conference and its preparatory activities. Radio services also gave daily coverage to the Conference itself.

C. Documentation for the Conference

54. The Preparatory Committee, at its 5th to 7th and 10th meetings, considered the question of documentation for the Conference, in accordance with the recommendations contained in its report to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session 1/ and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 37/86 C.

55. It was agreed that several adjustments would be necessary in the list of documents originally proposed, taking into account the regional preparatory meetings. The Preparatory Committee accordingly decided at its 7th meeting to establish a mini-working-group to review the documentation. The mini-working-group held several meetings and reviewed, in particular, documents A/CONF.114/6-11 and 13-16.

56. The Preparatory Committee also considered supplementary documentation for the Conference. It agreed that United Nations documents, reports and publications relevant to the substantive items on the provisional agenda should be included as supplementary documentation for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. It produced a revised list of documents for the Conference (A/CONF.114/INF.2).

57. The Preparatory Committee also authorized the mini-working group to produce a draft programme of action for the Conference, compiled by the secretariat on the basis of the recommendations of the five regional preparatory meetings. In addition, the Working Group considered a draft declaration to be adopted by the Conference. These two drafts, when completed, were submitted to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine for further consideration.

58. Upon the recommendation of the mini-working group, the Preparatory Committee decided to submit the list of documents contained in the annex to this report for consideration by the Conference.

D. Participation in the Conference

59. In conformity with the recommendation of the Preparatory Committee at its first session, contained in paragraph 32 of its report 1/ and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/86 C, the Preparatory Committee approved a list of eminent persons to be invited to the Conference.

60. The Preparatory Committee also approved a list of non-governmental organizations subscribing to the objectives of the Conference and having a specific contribution to make, whether in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or not, to be invited to the International Conference on the Question of Palestine. In respect of those non-governmental organizations not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, the Committee satisfied itself that they met the criteria set out in paragraph 32 of its report.

E. Organization of the work of the Conference

61. At its 13th and 14th meetings, on 27 July and 29 August 1983, the Preparatory Committee considered details of the organization of work of the Conference. It had before it a conference room paper prepared by the Secretariat (A/CONF.114/PC/CRP.7). The Preparatory Committee decided that pre-Conference consultations should be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva on the morning of Monday, 29 August 1983.

62. The purpose of the consultations, which were open to all participating States and to the Palestine Liberation Organization as the representative of the people most directly concerned, was to reach an agreement on procedural and organizational matters to be dealt with by the Conference at its 1st meeting, on the afternoon of Monday, 29 August 1983.

63. The Preparatory Committee recommended that its Chairman should preside over the pre-Conference consultations. The recommendations of the Preparatory Committee on organizational and procedural matters are contained in document A/CONF.114/L.2 and consist of the following:

(a) The Head of the delegation of Senegal should be elected President of the Conference;

(b) The Conference should elect 21 vice-presidents with the following regional distribution:

(i) Six vice-presidents from African States;

(ii) Five vice-presidents from Asian States;

(iii) Four vice-presidents from Latin American States;

(iv) Three vice-presidents from Eastern European States;

(v) Three vice-presidents from Western European and other States;

(c) The General Committee of the Conference should be composed of the President, the 21 vice-presidents, the Rapporteur-General, the Chairman of the Main Committee and, in addition, a representative of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People;

(d) The Conference should consist of the plenary and one Main Committee, which would meet simultaneously. Items 1 to 11 and 14 of the provisional agenda should be allocated to the plenary and items 12 and 13 to the Main Committee.

64. Subsequently, in the spirit of General Assembly resolutions 3210 (XXIX) of 14 October 1974 and 3375 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, the Preparatory Committee also recommended that the Conference should give recognition to the Palestine Liberation Organization as the representative of the party most directly concerned and its delegation should be placed among the full participants in the Conference.

65. The Preparatory Committee pointed out that the aforementioned recommendations required, upon the endorsement by the Conference, appropriate changes or adjustments in the provisional rules of procedure of the Conference.

66. The Preparatory Committee expressed the hope that, on the basis of the regional meetings held and the extensive documentation prepared, the sound and comprehensive background on the question of Palestine presented to the Conference would help all participants and pave the way for a successful Conference.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 49 (A/37/49 and Corr.1).

ANNEX

List of documents

A. Basic documents

A/CONF.114/L.1	Provisional agenda
A/CONF.114/L.2	Organizational and procedural matters
A/CONF.114/L.3	Draft declaration
A/CONF.114/L.4	Draft programme of action
A/CONF.114/1	Report of the African Regional Preparatory Meeting
A/CONF.114/2	Report of the Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting
A/CONF.114/3	Report of the West Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting
A/CONF.114/4	Report of the Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting
A/CONF.114/5	Report of the European Regional Preparatory Meeting
A/CONF.114/6	Economic activity and access to national resources: Legal restrictions on access to land and water in Israel
A/CONF.114/7	The Palestinian people's legal right to exercise self-determination
A/CONF.114/8	Comparative study of land, labour and citizenship control in Israel and South Africa
A/CONF.114/9	The status of Jerusalem
A/CONF.114/10	United Nations initiatives on the question of Palestine
A/CONF.114/11	Palestine within the historical process of decolonization
A/CONF.114/12	Provisional rules of procedure
A/CONF.114/13	Review of the activities of the United Nations system of organizations to assist the Palestinian people
A/CONF.114/14	Economic viability of an independent Palestinian State
A/CONF.114/15	The strategic and economic significance of Palestine
A/CONF.114/16	Origins and evolution of the Palestine problem, Part III
A/CONF.114/17	Annotated agenda

B. Supplementary documents

- A/31/35 Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 35)
- A/37/49 Report of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine (Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 49)
- A/37/485 Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories
- A/38/265-E/1983/85 Implications, under international law, of the United Nations resolutions on permanent sovereignty over natural resources, on the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories and on the obligations of Israel concerning its conduct in these territories: report of the Secretary-General
- A/38/282-E/1983/84 Permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories: report of the Secretary-General
- DPI/745 Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People: Establishment, mandate, recommendations and activities
- E/1983/72 Assistance to the Palestinian people: report of the Secretary-General
- HR/GENEVA/BP.2 Applicability of international norms on human rights to the population in the territories occupied by Israel
- HR/GENEVA/BP.3 The Palestinian question from the standpoint of human rights
- S/13679 Report of the Security Council Commission established under resolution 446 (1979)
- S/14268 Report of the Security Council Commission established under resolution 446 (1979)
- ST/HR/SER.A/14 Seminar on Violations of Human Rights in the Palestinian and Other Arab Territories
- ST/SG/SER.F/1 Origins and evolution of the Palestine problem, Parts I and II
- ST/SG/SER.F/2 Right of return of the Palestinian people

ST/SG/SER.F/3	The right of self-determination of the Palestinian people
ST/SG/SER.F/4 and Corr.1	An international law analysis of the major United Nations resolutions concerning the Palestine question
TD/B/960	Palestine: Options for development (report by Mr. P. G. Sadler and Mr. B. Abu Kishk)

C. Background documents

A/CONF.114/INF.1	Information for participants
A/CONF.114/INF.2	List of documents

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