



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NEUGEBAUER (German Democratic Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 55: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued) (A/32/238, A/32/263, A/32/264 and Add.1 and Corr.1, A/32/278; A/SPC/32/L.5 and Corr.1, L.6)

1. Mr. AKIMAN (Turkey) reiterated the view of his Government that the question of the Palestine refugees was primarily a political question and that it was unfair and inaccurate to consider the problem only from the angle of relief assistance and international humanitarian services to the refugees. A final and satisfactory solution to the problem of the Palestine refugees could only be found when a political settlement was reached in the Middle East. That would call for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians.
2. The success of the Geneva Conference would primarily depend on recognition that the Palestine issue was the crux of the problem and that the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the peace talks was essential. Furthermore, the parties to the dispute should refrain from any unilateral action which might aggravate the already complicated state of affairs.
3. His delegation, which was a member of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA, shared the concern of the Commissioner-General about the financial situation of the Agency, which was more serious in 1977 than it had been the year before. It considered it essential to continue and improve the services provided by UNRWA in order to alleviate the sufferings of over 1.7 million Palestinians; any interruption or further reduction of those services, which were already at their minimum level, could create unpredictable humanitarian and political problems which might not be easy to solve. In that connexion, it felt that the new income solicitation procedure proposed by the Commissioner-General was a step in the right direction.
4. Lastly, he wished to associate himself with those speakers who had congratulated the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the sixtieth anniversary of the October Revolution.
5. Mr. ROMEU (Spain) congratulated the USSR on the observance of the anniversary of the October Revolution.
6. His delegation was strongly in favour of extending the mandate of UNRWA. It was concerned about the level of the latter's budgetary deficit, estimated at \$11.9 million, even though that deficit might have been reduced somewhat by the special contributions recently made to the Agency by some Member States.
7. His Government, which was among the principal contributors to UNRWA, had to date contributed a total of nearly \$8 million, and it was continuing that support despite the delicate state of the Spanish economy. It should, however, be noted that a good many States Members of the United Nations had never contributed to the Agency or had contributed only small amounts: the time had perhaps come for those countries to make a special effort to contribute.

8. The question of the Palestine refugees in the Near East was not a humanitarian question or a matter of international charity but rather the result of a political situation which required a solution. The Agency would be dissolved as soon as the question of the Middle East was resolved in a just and lasting manner and the notion of refugees no longer existed.
9. Mr. BENCHEKROUN (Morocco) said that the Palestinian refugee had been the victim of terrorist groups which had driven him from his land. Israel had come into existence through the will of the great Powers and had been adopted by the United Nations, and it should therefore respect the principles of the Charter. Its creation had, however, brought anguish and suffering to another people. The victim had become the tormentor; those who had escaped the Nazi concentration camps had become the torturers of the Palestinian people. Nevertheless, the Palestine refugee had not accepted death, humiliation and ignominy and had risen against the occupying force, against the Nazi boot of the Israeli soldier.
10. The Palestine refugee, and hence the Palestinian people, did not wish to continue to live in camps. The international community supported their actions, which were directed not against the Jewish people but against a system of oppression; even in Israel there were Jewish voices which denounced the Israeli leaders.
11. The problem of the Palestine refugees and the difficulties being encountered by UNRWA were two aspects of the same problem: that of the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and establish a State in their own land. However, until peace returned to that land, UNRWA must continue to function, and its laudable activities should be supported by the international community. In that connexion, the responsibility of the great Powers with regard to the financing of UNRWA could not be underestimated. The continuation of UNRWA's services was no more than just, albeit minimal, reparation for the wrongs suffered by the Palestine refugees as well as a means of preparing the Palestinian citizen for the future Palestinian State to which he was entitled.
12. Mr. BENAVIDES (Peru) said that the solution of the problem of the Palestine refugees could only be based on the termination of their status as refugees; what was involved was not merely a humanitarian problem but a political problem which called for a just - and political - solution. In the meantime, the continued existence of UNRWA was a necessity and a moral obligation of the international community, which, sooner or later, would have to assume its responsibility for finding a definitive solution to the problem.
13. The precarious and unmanageable financial position of the Agency was therefore most regrettable, and it had led to a situation in which fund-raising was becoming the main responsibility of those who directed the Agency. In that connexion, the Working Group on the Financing of the Agency, in addition to preparing periodic reports on the latter's chronic difficulties, should engage in vigorous and constant fund-raising activities on its behalf. It should be recalled that the Working Group itself and the General Assembly had recognized that need in Assembly resolution 2964 (XXVII). It would also be useful for the Group, on the basis of its analyses, to make specific recommendations on the measures which could be adopted to ensure

(Mr. Benavides, Peru)

that the finances of the Agency rested on a solid foundation. He welcomed UNRWA's plan to introduce a new procedure for improving fund-raising activities and hoped that it would be successful.

14. He was in virtually complete agreement with the Commissioner-General's view that votes in support of the Agency were often invalidated by a failure to make financial contributions. However, he felt that that general statement should be slightly modified: Peru had not so far been able to contribute to the financing of UNRWA because it was forced to devote all its resources to the struggle against under-development. It not only had to eliminate internal short-comings, but sometimes also had to overcome the major limitations imposed by an unjust and obsolete structure of international economic relations in which some countries - the few - always won while others - the many - always lost. The same demands could not be made on States which enjoyed the privileged position of full development as on States which were severely limited and moreover had in recent years been enduring the worst consequences of a world crisis for which they were not responsible.

15. He associated himself with the appeal calling upon those States which were able to do so to make a significant increase in their contributions to UNRWA and believed that it would be advisable to meet at least the basic expenses of the Agency under the United Nations regular budget. In conclusion, he repeated his firm support for the cause so efficiently served by the Agency.

16. Mr. SURYOKUSUMO (Indonesia) said the debate had made it clear that the activities of UNRWA were a demonstration of international co-operation in promoting the cause of the Palestine refugees, that the majority of Member States believed that UNRWA was a common responsibility and that the Agency continued to find itself in a situation of chronic financial instability. His delegation regretted that no solution had yet been found to the illegal situation prevailing in the Middle East, which had resulted in the expulsion of the Palestinians from their homes. The Government of Indonesia had supported and would continue to support the aspirations of the Palestinians and was pleased to make a modest contribution to the alleviation of their sufferings.

17. It was more important than ever for the international community to show its support for the Palestine refugees, particularly at a time when there seemed to be a possibility of arriving at a political solution of the problem, which, if it was to be just and lasting, must pay special attention to the problem of the refugees. According to the report of the Commissioner-General, there would be another deficit in 1977, in addition to those accumulated in past years, and it was therefore incumbent on the international community to take measures to relieve the sufferings of the refugees. In that connexion, the Commissioner-General's proposal to adopt a forward planning procedure (A/32/13, paras. 17-22) deserved serious consideration. That might lead to an improvement in the functioning of the Agency, which was of the utmost importance, since, until a solution was found to the problem, UNRWA must, as a minimum, maintain the present level of services which it offered.

18. His delegation would also consider the possibility of having experts seconded by Governments, specialized agencies and other organizations to provide UNRWA with the services it needed. The corresponding expenses should be borne by the Government or institution which seconded the expert; that would constitute both

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(Mr. Suryokusumo, Indonesia)

concrete and symbolic support for the refugees and would ease the budgetary difficulties of the Agency.

19. Lastly, he pointed out that the task of UNRWA was rendered more difficult by the policies of Israel, which persisted in arresting and interrogating members of the Agency's staff, searching its facilities and obstructing its functioning in various ways. The occupying authority must refrain from such tactics and observe the internationally accepted principles with regard to UNRWA premises and personnel.

20. Mr. ZITU di NENKOTI (Zaire) said that, 28 years after its establishment as a provisional body, UNRWA seemed to have become a permanent agency. The General Assembly was morally and legally obliged to renew the Agency's mandate, since none of the conditions stipulated at the outset for its dissolution had been fulfilled. On the contrary, the situation had merely grown worse, which made the solution of the problem extremely difficult. At the present time, the fate and future of the Palestinian people continued to depend on international charity. The international community must therefore be told that the Palestinians could not continue to live in camps and receive rations for ever. In the meantime, however, it was clear that any interruption of the services provided by UNRWA would further aggravate the situation and irremediably compromise the prospects for peace in the Middle East.

21. Note should be taken of all the difficulties faced by the Agency in fulfilling its mandate. For example, the detention of Agency staff members, referred to in the Commissioner-General's report, hampered the Agency's operations. Perhaps most serious of all, however, was the Agency's chronic financial problem. In that connexion, contributions to the Agency's budget should continue to be voluntary. The new forward planning procedure proposed by the Commissioner-General in his report would assist the Agency in fund-raising, and in that connexion the Working Group on the Financing of the Agency could be of considerable assistance to the Commissioner-General.

22. Of all the aspects of the Palestine refugee problem, the most important was the political one. His delegation therefore hoped that the renewal of the Agency's mandate would be accompanied by a vigorous effort to arrive at a just and lasting solution to the Middle East crisis in the interests of all States in the region and of international peace and security. Those who opposed that aim should be unanimously condemned by international opinion.

23. Finally, he reminded members of the statement made in the General Assembly by the Commissioner of State for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zaire, in which he had said that in the Middle East the Israelis were afraid, the Palestinians were in despair and the Arabs felt humiliated. All the peoples of the region had a right to exist in dignity and to have their fundamental rights respected, whether they were Israelis, Palestinians or Arabs. In the opinion of his delegation, the Middle East crisis basically consisted in the problem of the Palestinians.

24. Mr. SIMBANANIYE (Burundi) said that a just and lasting solution of the Palestine refugee problem would call for the refugees to be able to exercise their right to return to their homes, regain possession of their land and property, and achieve self-determination, sovereignty and independence. Israel's refusal to

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(Mr. Simbananiye, Burundi)

recognize the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, in violation of United Nations resolutions, and the Israeli policy of aggression and annexation of territory, establishment of settlements, destruction and plunder were serious obstacles to a solution to the problem.

25. The international community should assume its historical responsibility and ensure the provision of relief, health and educational services to the refugees. UNRWA should for that purpose be provided with adequate and reliable means of carrying out effectively the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. His delegation supported the proposal to extend the Agency's mandate as well as the proposal by the Commissioner-General to establish a new procedure for financing the Agency. The procedure established a stable basis for preventing the catastrophe which would befall the refugees if further contributions were not received: 330,000 young people would be deprived of education, health services would be suspended for 1.5 million homeless, impoverished refugees, and 16,000 local staff members, most of whom were also refugees, would have to be dismissed. The PLO felt that the best means of preventing that tragedy would be to incorporate the Agency's budget into the United Nations regular budget. His delegation supported that idea, but it felt that the Powers which were financing and supporting Israeli aggression should make special contributions to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people.

26. The measures adopted by Israel in the occupied territories were aimed at the permanent annexation of those territories and ran counter to the wishes of the international community. Israel's stubborn refusal to comply with the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions undermined the authority of the United Nations, aggravated tension in the region and seriously jeopardized efforts to arrive at a just and lasting solution to the Middle East problem. That solution should be based on the following: Israeli evacuation of all Arab territories occupied by force since 5 June 1967, including the Holy City of Jerusalem; the restoration of all the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right of return, to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State in Palestine; and the participation of the PLO in the Geneva Conference as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, the principal party concerned in the Middle East problem.

27. Mr. ANOMA (Ivory Coast) said that the figures contained in the Commissioner-General's report (A/32/13) showed the magnitude of the work required by the effort to provide relief for the refugees, who were faced every day with new uncertainty. The efforts of the Agency in the areas of education, health and social welfare deserved universal admiration and made it incumbent on all to study the difficult financial situation of the Agency.

28. UNRWA's budget for 1977 amounted to \$134 million, with an expected deficit of \$12 million. It was regrettable that, as the Commissioner-General's report pointed out (A/32/13), the Agency had had to assume the task of fund-raising in order to be able to carry out its responsibilities towards the refugees and that on two occasions it had been on the point of suspending its activities for lack of funds, which would have left more than 1.7 million refugees without protection.

(Mr. Anoma, Ivory Coast)

29. The basic problem was in fact that of achieving peace in the Middle East; until peace was achieved, however, everything possible must be done to assist the Commissioner-General in carrying out the difficult task entrusted to the Agency, so that it could go on with its work on behalf of the refugees.

30. In view of the seriousness of the situation, his delegation proposed that consideration should be given to the possibility of designating a "United Nations Day for Refugees".

31. The CHAIRMAN, in conformity with a decision previously adopted by the Committee, suggested that the general debate on item 55 should be suspended and resumed at the following meeting.

32. Mr. SIDOROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on behalf of the Soviet, Byelorussian and Ukrainian delegations, thanked those representatives who had congratulated the Soviet Union on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the October Revolution.

The meeting was suspended at 5 p.m. and resumed at 5.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 28: QUESTION OF CYPRUS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL* (A/SPC/32/4)

33. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of members of the Committee to document A/SPC/32/4 containing the letter dated 7 November 1977 from the President of the General Assembly addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on the item entitled "Question of Cyprus". In view of the decision adopted by the General Assembly at its 59th plenary meeting, the Committee would, if there was no objection, hear the representatives of the Cypriot communities so that the relevant report to the General Assembly could be submitted on 8 November.

34. It was so decided.

35. Mr. PAPADOPOULOS (Representative of the Greek Cypriot community) noted that more than three years had elapsed since the Turkish military forces had invaded the Republic of Cyprus, a State Member of the United Nations and a small, independent, non-aligned and defenceless country which continued to suffer military invasion and foreign aggression.

* Pursuant to the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 59th plenary meeting, a verbatim record was prepared for the part of the 19th meeting of the Special Political Committee relating to this item. The verbatim record appears as document A/SPC/32/PV.19.

(Mr. Papadopoulos)

36. In the occupied areas, a puppet Turkish Cypriot administration had been established whose sole claim to authority lay in the Turkish military forces of occupation, which not infrequently spoke officially on behalf of the Turkish Cypriot administration. It was therefore unfortunate but not surprising that the representative of the Turkish Cypriot community had been told not to appear before the Committee to put forward the views of that community on the situation now prevailing in Cyprus.

37. The General Assembly had decided - and had reaffirmed its decision by an overwhelming majority - that the best procedure in the current situation would be the one which had been followed for the last three years, namely, to give the two main communities of Cyprus an equal opportunity to state their views in the Committee. The Turkish Cypriot side had refused to take advantage of the opportunity, claiming that it appeared in the United Nations only as a community and not as a State; in fact, what it sought was recognition of the so-called Turkish Federated Administration as a sovereign State and recognition of the separatist views of the Turkish Cypriot side as a first step towards the partition of Cyprus and the abolition of its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

38. From 1974 to 1976, the General Assembly had adopted resolutions urging the withdrawal of all foreign armed forces and foreign military presence from the Republic of Cyprus and calling upon the parties concerned to undertake urgent measures to facilitate the voluntary return of the refugees to their homes (resolutions 3212 (XXIX), 3395 (XXX) and 31/12). However, Turkey had treated those resolutions with complete contempt.

39. The Turkish occupation had not been carried out under the Treaty of Guarantee or in order to protect the rights and interests of the Turkish Cypriot population. According to Turkish Cypriot newspapers, the first to have been denied their rights and liberties by the Turkish occupation forces had been the Turkish Cypriots. Their properties and honour were at the mercy of the 40,000 occupying troops and an equal number of Turkish settlers. In other words, the question of Cyprus was not a constitutional dispute between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots but a question of aggression by Turkey against the Republic of Cyprus.

40. Approximately 200,000 Greek Cypriots had been evicted from their homes and dispossessed of their properties. The Greek Cypriots on the Karpas peninsula lived in an enclave under conditions of untold deprivation and harassment. The tragic irony was that in the intercommunal talks the only point of agreement was on the fate of those unfortunate persons. On 2 August 1975, in the second round of intercommunal talks and in the presence of the Secretary-General, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot negotiators had reached an agreement to the effect that those persons could remain in their homes and enjoy their property without harassment, receive medical and educational services, carry out their work activities freely and enjoy religious freedom.

41. Two years after that agreement, of those 17,000 persons only 1,800 had been allowed to remain there. The others had been forced to flee or had been forcibly

(Mr. Papadopoulos)

evicted. Their properties had been taken away or stolen and distributed to Turkish settlers. The 1,800 persons in question lived under a permanent curfew and were not allowed to cultivate land or to sell their produce. No secondary school was permitted to operate and the school buildings had been taken over and turned into Turkish schools. There were only two elementary schools, which were attended by more than 300 children, with only six teachers. Under a recent order, no person in the enclave was allowed to talk to any foreigner, including UNFICYP personnel, unless a Turkish policeman was present. Those persons were thus deprived of every basic human right, as could be determined by any fact-finding mission, or even the personnel of UNFICYP or the International Committee of the Red Cross, if Turkey allowed them freedom of movement in the area.

42. About 2,000 persons were still missing; not only had those who had been alive after the military operations not been released, but the Turkish side refused to give any information concerning them. The Turkish side had publicly stated that it held no undeclared prisoners and that "there were no missing persons in their hands". That statement, far from resolving the issue, raised many questions, the most serious of which was what had happened to the missing persons and who was responsible for their fate?

43. At the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, he had made some specific proposals in the Committee which had later been submitted officially to the Secretary-General. He had suggested that a mixed committee should be established to study the reports and evidence, to take testimony and to trace the whereabouts of the missing persons. Those who were still alive should be set free immediately, and an effort should be made to ascertain the names of those who had died, regardless of the circumstances of their death. It was merely a question of determining the truth and of putting an end to uncertainty. He appealed to the other side to agree to that proposal and to co-operate accordingly, so that the mixed committee could be established. Since the Turkish Cypriot side sometimes sought to shrug off the issue as a Greek Cypriot attempt at propaganda, he was prepared to agree that no publicity whatever should be given to the work or the findings of such a committee and that its reports should not appear in the press or anywhere else.

44. It would be noted that all General Assembly resolutions on Cyprus called for the resumption of "meaningful and constructive" talks between the two communities. There could be no real negotiations, meaningful and constructive or otherwise, unless the two sides were prepared to set out their views in the form of concrete proposals. Only then would it be possible to isolate the issues, to determine the differences of views and to undertake a real process of negotiation. Unfortunately, that stage had not yet been reached, since the Turkish side had managed to avoid submitting concrete and meaningful proposals. The Greek Cypriot side had submitted three separate proposals on the constitutional aspect and two proposals on the territorial aspect of the problem, one of which had been accompanied by a map. In his opinion, in the present situation, it was important for the members of the Committee to understand clearly why the intercommunal talks had bogged down or, in fact, had never even begun.

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(Mr. Papadopoulos)

45. The two sides should be asked whether they had agreed to submit comprehensive and concrete proposals on the constitutional and territorial aspects of the problem and whether they had in fact submitted such proposals. The Greek Cypriot side had submitted those proposals but the Turkish side had not. Moreover, the Turkish side had so far refused to commit itself to submitting any such comprehensive and concrete proposal on the territorial aspect, a crucial factor in the problem of Cyprus. In the first round of intercommunal talks, in May 1975, the Turkish side had given assurances that it would submit those proposals in the second round of talks. The same assurances had been given in July 1975, during the second meeting, to the effect that the Turkish proposal on the territorial aspect would be submitted at the third meeting, in New York, in August 1975. As that proposal had not been forthcoming in August 1975, the intercommunal talks had been interrupted until February 1976. At the meeting held at Vienna in February 1976, those assurances had been repeated in the presence of the Secretary-General, and an agreement had been reached that the two sides would exchange proposals in Nicosia on all aspects of the problem, including the territorial aspect, within six weeks. That agreement had been officially and publicly announced, and the Greek Cypriot side had complied with it; however, the Turkish side had confined itself to submitting vague principles on the constitutional aspect, and none on the territorial aspect, and the talks had once again been interrupted.

46. Through the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cyprus, Ambassador Pérez de Cuéllar, and the Secretary-General himself, in February 1977 meetings had been held in Nicosia between the President of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios and the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mr. Denktaş. It had been agreed that a new series of intercommunal talks should be held and, as a gesture of goodwill to demonstrate its adherence to the procedure of intercommunal talks under the auspices of the Secretary-General, the Greek Cypriot side had undertaken to make a new proposal on the territorial aspect in the hope that the Turkish side would express its views on the matter clearly and unambiguously.

47. At Vienna, in April 1977, on the first day of the meeting, he had submitted a comprehensive and concrete proposal from the Greek Cypriot side, accompanied by a map. Instead of giving clear indications on the territorial aspect, the Turkish Cypriot side had confined itself to rereading a lengthy statement which Mr. Denktaş had made during the talks held in February 1976, and in which no reference had been made to the territorial aspect. With regard to the constitutional aspect, the Turkish side had submitted a proposal for the signing of a treaty of co-operation, which was nothing more than a proposal for the establishment of two separate States. In the light of those developments, the Greek Cypriot side had submitted a third comprehensive and concrete proposal on the constitutional aspect, based on orthodox and internationally accepted precedents for a federal system. The Greek Cypriot side was prepared to accept in toto any federal system which the Turkish side might choose out of the 32 federal systems now existing in the world.

(Mr. Papadopoulos)

48. All that had been established at the last intercommunal talks at Vienna was that a considerable gap existed between the views of the two communities, a situation which had been pointed out in the official communiqué issued at the conclusion of the talks. For such negotiations to be meaningful, constructive and useful, they must be conducted in conditions of equality and be based on concrete proposals by both sides. They could not be held in conditions of equality when they were conducted in the shadow of Turkish tanks and under the continuous threat of the use of military might or of further faits accomplis, such as a unilateral declaration of independence.

49. There was no problem that could not be resolved if there was a meaningful dialogue, if there was goodwill and a common desire for success, if there was recognition for justice and equity and a total lack of arrogance based on military might. That was the view of the Greek Cypriot side, but Turkey regarded the negotiating table as a suitable platform for dictating unacceptable terms and putting forward unreasonable demands, whose acceptance would be equivalent to unconditional surrender.

50. The Greek Cypriot community would never legitimize by its signature the occupation of its country or make possible a change in its demographic structure, since that would lay the foundations either for the total occupation of Cyprus by the Turkish army at some future date, when the Turkish immigrants from the mainland would form the majority of the population, or for the final abolition of the State of Cyprus under the guise of partition. The Greek Cypriot community placed its faith in the conscience of the world. It knew that justice and morality were on its side and that they would prevail in the end.

51. The CHAIRMAN said that, as the General Assembly had requested the Committee to submit a report on the matter, he took it that the Committee agreed to ask the Rapporteur to take the necessary steps in that regard.

52. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.