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UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

Offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for Palestine refugees

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report, which is submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of paragraph 8 of its resolution 38/83 D of 15 December 1983, includes the substance of the responses by Member States and United Nations agencies to the appeal contained in that resolution, together with references to further actions taken by Member States and specialized agencies in response to the appeal contained in General Assembly resolutions 32/90 F of 13 December 1977, 33/112 C of 18 December 1978, 34/52 C of 23 November 1979, 35/13 B of 3 November 1980, 36/146 H of 16 December 1981 and 37/120 D of 16 December 1982. By those resolutions the Assembly appealed to all States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to make special allocations for grants and scholarships to Palestine refugees, and invited the relevant United Nations agencies to continue, within their respective spheres of competence, to expand assistance for higher education to Palestine refugee students. The Assembly requested the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to act as recipient and trustee for such special allocations and scholarships and to award them to qualified Palestine refugee candidates.

2. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany offered an unspecified number of scholarships to Palestine refugee graduates of UNRWA vocational training centres in Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in November 1983. At the time of reporting, one graduate from Gaza and one from the West Bank had begun their

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courses in the Federal Republic. Negotiations are continuing on this offer. Following an offer of 10 scholarships by the Federal Republic in November 1982, three graduates from the West Bank and two from the Gaza Strip began their courses in July 1983. These are in addition to nine Palestine refugee graduates who started their courses in 1981 following an earlier offer of 10 scholarships by the Federal Republic in 1981. These awards, while not specifically in response to the General Assembly resolutions, are in keeping with their spirit and represent the continuation of a series of such awards made annually by the Federal Republic of Germany to UNRWA over a period of several years.

3. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) followed up its award of three scholarships in 1980 (see A/35/438, para. 5), two in 1981 (see A/36/385, para. 7), one in 1982 (see A/37/427, para. 7), two in 1983 (see A/38/149, para. 5) with an invitation to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA to propose candidates for 1984. Accordingly, UNRWA has proposed three candidates for such training and by the date of this report two candidates had been selected by WIPO.

4. The Universal Postal Union (UPU), responding to resolution 38/83 D, has noted that two Palestine refugees underwent long-term training (1979-83) at the Arab Higher Postal Institute in Damascus on UPU scholarships awarded in 1979 in response to resolution 32/90 F (see A/34/480, para. 5). UPU has again reiterated its willingness, within the limits of its resources, to consider any other application for scholarships from Palestine refugee students seeking training in the postal field.

5. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in response to the General Assembly resolutions, reported on two programmes of assistance to the Palestinian people in the area of training. One is in the area of specialized training in agricultural development and provides for the award of three fellowships for university graduates over a 23-month period. The objective is to provide the required means for improving and updating the technical skills of three graduates in animal husbandry, soil science and plant protection, respectively, through intensive training programmes. The fellowship in soil science was completed in 1983. Nominations for the other two fellowships are expected. This follows a similar project which provided three fellowships in botany, food technology and agricultural engineering. The second programme has a duration of two years and aims to assist the Palestinian families of Gilling and Ramadan refugee camps in the Syrian Arab Republic to improve the production and efficiency of crop and live-stock farmers and producers by providing facilities, knowledge, skills, material inputs and technical leadership for demonstration and training work.

6. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as part of its long-standing agreement with UNRWA, granted three fellowships in 1981, nine in 1982 and nine in 1983 to Palestine refugee education staff in UNRWA for special courses of training in overseas countries. So far in 1984 UNESCO has granted five such fellowships and more are expected later in the year. These awards, while not specifically in response to the General Assembly's resolutions, are in keeping with their spirit.

7. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has helped to prepare projects for implementation by UNDP which include the promotion of vocational and technical education in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the provision of scholarships for specific training in industrial management at the ILO International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin. The staff of the Hebron Polytechnic Institute, who have recently benefited from a number of scholarships for the regular courses provided by that Centre, have been advised of the new offer. In addition, ILO has taken an active part in the preparation of a project to promote opportunities for vocational training in Palestinian women's institutions and community development centres. This project will include the provision of scholarships in social work administration, community development and vocational instruction. These projects, while not specifically in response to the General Assembly's resolutions, are in keeping with their spirit.

8. The Commissioner-General of UNRWA has informed the Secretary-General that UNRWA will continue to make available to prospective candidates whatever information it receives about scholarships offered by Member States and specialized agencies for which Palestine refugee students might be eligible. It is also ready to act as the recipient and trustee of special allocations and scholarships whenever such funds and scholarships are made available to it for the benefit of Palestine refugees.
