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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/39/150.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, called upon the United Nations Development Programme, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in close co-ordination with the Economic Commission for Western Asia, in identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people. The Council, in the above resolutions, also urged those agencies and organizations to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in establishing and implementing concrete projects for the purpose of improving the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people.
2. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1983/43 of 25 July 1983, expressed its gratitude to the Governments and United Nations bodies which had provided humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestinian victims of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and reiterated the appeal to the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system to sustain and intensify their efforts in this area.
3. The General Assembly, in resolution 36/70 of 4 December 1981, requested the United Nations Development Programme to undertake direct execution of projects approved by the UNDP Governing Council in the occupied territories. In resolution 37/134 of 17 December 1982, the Assembly requested the appropriate agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in co-operation with PLO, to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people; it also requested that United Nations assistance to the Palestinians in the Arab host countries should be rendered in co-operation with PLO and with the consent of the Arab host Government concerned.
4. The General Assembly, in resolution 38/145 of 19 December 1983, requested the Secretary-General:
 - " (a) To convene in 1984 a meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system to develop a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and to ensure its implementation;
 - " (b) To provide for the participation in the meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;
 - " (c) To utilize existing inter-agency mechanisms to prepare proposals for assistance projects to be considered at the meeting." 1/
5. The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted in response to that request.
6. In implementing paragraph 3 (c) of General Assembly resolution 38/145 in

preparation for the meeting (see para. 4 above), the Secretary-General took into account that he reports annually to the Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the actions taken by the agencies and organizations concerned in implementing resolutions calling for assistance to the Palestinian people. The latest report on such actions (A/39/265-E/1984/77) is available to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session for consideration.

7. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation requested organs and organizations of the United Nations system to provide the Secretariat with proposals for future assistance projects to be considered at the meeting, bearing in mind their contributions to the report of the Secretary-General (*ibid.*). Communications in response to that request were received from the Economic Commission for Western Asia, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations University, the World Food Programme, the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Bank, the Universal Postal Union, the International Telecommunication Union, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Intellectual Property Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

8. The proposals received were compiled in a conference room paper and considered at a Meeting on Economic and Social Assistance to the Palestinian People convened on 5 and 6 July 1984 at Geneva, with a participation of relevant organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of PLO, Arab host countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

II. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING CONVENED ON 5 AND 6 JULY 1984 AT GENEVA

9. The participants were unanimous in regarding the meeting as a valuable opportunity to jointly assess progress to date in economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people with respect to the individual mandates of their organizations, and to exchange views on needs and problems in terms of resources and modalities for a co-ordinated programme for such assistance.

10. The Palestine Liberation Organization appealed for urgent optimum deployment, especially for assistance to Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territories, of all possible resources in funds or in kind that could be mobilized from the international development community, including the United Nations development system, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations.

11. The meeting noted with appreciation, the readiness of the Arab host countries to co-operate in the effort to assist the Palestinian people.

12. At the meeting, reference was made to the economic and social surveys,

studies, monitoring of trends in economic and social conditions and enhancement of statistical and other capacities. In this connection, attention was invited to the comprehensive study undertaken by UNCTAD in which the relevant United Nations entities would be asked to co-operate and provide available inputs within their fields of competence. The meeting agreed that duplication should be avoided and every effort should be made to achieve optimal utilization of assistance resources in regard to research and related activities.

13. In connection with viable modalities for operational assistance through the United Nations system, there was general recognition that, in addition to the UNRWA programme in co-operation with WHO, UNESCO and UNICEF, there are fellowships for training provided by other agencies. The pipeline of projects which UNDP had reported as ready for detailed formulation and implementation if funds were forthcoming offered a useful approach to multi-sectoral development assistance. In addition, UNICEF's programmes for children and mothers for the years 1984-1987 are now fully funded and are being implemented.

14. The meeting devoted considerable time to clarifying the extent to which the documented proposals for assistance from other United Nations entities in the same sectors or sub-sectors could be realized.

15. Recalling General Assembly resolution 36/70, UNDP pointed out that it was seeking funds for the implementation of projects accepted by all parties concerned; it emphasized its wish to ensure earliest possible concrete implementation of the very considerable pipeline which had such assent and which only awaited contributions of the indicated funds. In this connection, PLO informed the meeting that it had provided UNDP with suggestions on the pipeline.

16. With regard to activities proposed by other organizations, it was suggested that, if desirable, they could consult with UNDP and, subject to the consent of all parties concerned, arrangements could be developed to facilitate implementation.

17. The meeting also provided a valuable opportunity for clarification of the actual availability of funds relative to the various proposed project activities. In the ensuing discussion, it became clear that there were major and urgent identified needs for operational economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people for which no funds existed at present within the United Nations system. It became clear from this examination that a cohesive effort for the mobilization of financial resources within the international development community, and including intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system as well as non-governmental organizations, would be necessary for the effective implementation of General Assembly resolution 38/145.

18. As regards funding from outside the United Nations system, the meeting heard with particular appreciation a report by the representative of the European Economic Communities (EEC) concerning their assistance through UNRWA, co-financing of European NGO assistance, scholarships, and food and emergency relief, as well as EEC's readiness to consider financing other assistance proposals conforming to international law. PLO expressed its particular appreciation of the EEC's participation in the meeting and of the valuable assistance being provided by other intergovernmental as well as non-governmental organizations.

19. The meeting regretted that several of the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that were invited did not attend. It was generally felt that there is need for enhanced co-ordination and rationalization of assistance as between the United Nations system and other intergovernmental and also non-governmental organizations, taking into account the importance of ostensibly small-scale but incrementally very valuable non-governmental organization projects.

20. In respect of paragraph 4 of resolution 38/145, in which the General Assembly requested that the meeting should look into the most effective inter-agency machinery to co-ordinate and intensify United Nations assistance to the Palestinian people, there was general acceptance of the recommendation of the Organizational Committee of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) at its meeting from 3 to 5 April 1984, 2/ regarding the use of the existing ACC machinery. It was stressed, in this connection, that such machinery would ensure operationally effective co-ordination and avoidance of wasteful duplication.

21. The Palestine Liberation Organization expressed the hope that it would be possible in the future for them to continue a constructive dialogue jointly with the concerned United Nations entities.

22. It was noted that the information contained in the conference room paper should be updated and completed incorporating contributions of all concerned organizations and agencies. Consultations should take place with organizations and agencies to clarify some of the proposals, including the financial resources which are available or need to be mobilized and to identify gaps and avoid duplication. A revised paper should be prepared taking into account additional programme proposals made at the meeting for review at the inter-agency level. It was stressed, in this connection, that this work should in no way delay the ongoing activities of the organizations and agencies.

III. DISCUSSIONS AT THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL, 1984

23. The representative of the Secretary-General presented an oral report outlining the conclusions arrived at during the meeting held on 5 and 6 July 1984, to the Third (Programme and Co-ordination) Committee of the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session on 9 July 1984 under item 22 of its agenda. Following the discussions, the Council adopted resolution 1984/56 on assistance to the Palestinian people. In that resolution, the Council, inter alia, took note of the oral report made by the representative of the Secretary-General and of the report on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/1939/265-E/1984/77) and expressed its gratitude to the Secretary-General for convening the meeting pursuant to General Assembly resolution 38/145, which provided a valuable opportunity to assess progress in the provision of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and explore ways and means of enhancing such assistance.

24. The resolution draws the attention of the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to the need to ensure that their aid to the occupied Palestinian territories is disbursed only

for the benefit of the Palestinian people and is not used in any manner to serve the interests of the Israeli occupation authorities.

25. It requests the competent programmes, organizations, agencies and organs of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts, in co-operation with PLO, to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people.

26. It also requests that United Nations assistance to the Palestinians in the Arab host countries should be rendered in co-operation with PLO and with the consent of the Arab host Government concerned.

27. Finally, the resolution requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the provision of assistance to the Palestinian people.

IV. PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION

28. Subject to discussions on this subject by the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, it is intended to review and update the proposals discussed at the meeting held at Geneva on 5 and 6 July 1984 for consideration and further development with or in the existing machinery of ACC.

Notes

1/ In its resolution 38/58 D of 13 December 1983, the General Assembly also:

"Urges the meeting of specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to be convened in 1984, referred to in General Assembly resolution 38/145, to take into account the recommendations of the five regional preparatory meetings of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and the United Nations resolutions concerning economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people in developing a co-ordinated programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people, and to ensure the implementation of that programme."

2/ ACC/1984/7.
