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Chairman: Mr. Charles T. O. KING (Liberia).

AGENDA ITEM 27

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/SPC/L.38) (continued):

- (a) Report of the Director of the Agency (A/4213);
- (b) Proposals for the continuation of United Nations assistance to Palestine refugees: document submitted by the Secretary-General (A/4121)

1. Mr. MENEMENCIÖGLU (Turkey) said that in trying to reach a decision on the future of UNRWA it was important to bear in mind the general background of the Palestine refugee problem, which was one of the most tragic the United Nations had had to deal with. A question which affected over a million people could not be isolated from its economic, political and psychological context or from humane considerations. In fact, the annual report of the Agency's Director (A/4213) and the Secretary-General's proposals (A/4121) drew attention to the interrelation between the various aspects of the problem. He was glad to note that the general atmosphere of calm and moderation which had so far characterized the current session of the Assembly had been reflected to a large extent in the Special Political Committee's work. He hoped that the debate would not only lead to an appropriate decision concerning United Nations assistance to the Palestine refugees, but would also create favourable conditions for progress towards a solution to the problem. In a region near to his own country, over a million Arab refugees were forced to live in exile and destitution because of the tragic events which had taken place in Palestine. The Turkish people had established close cultural, social and religious ties with their Arab neighbours and had every sympathy with the Palestine refugees. His delegation had in the past given its full support to all proposals for securing United Nations assistance for the refugees, without prejudice to their rights under General Assembly resolution 194 (III), but had never ceased to hope for the final settlement of the problem, which was reflected in every aspect of life in the Middle East. The solution of that problem could lead to the solution of others and so to peace and stability, enabling the

peoples of the Middle East to devote their energy and resources to economic, social, cultural and technical progress.

2. He expressed his delegation's appreciation of the outstanding work of the Agency's Director and staff, who, despite inadequate resources, had done their utmost to alleviate the distress of the refugees. However, as the Director pointed out in his report, the situation was far from satisfactory. The Agency's resources in the current year would not allow it to raise the existing level of subsistence, accommodation, medical care and education. While some progress had been made in meeting immediate needs, inadequate funds had prevented any progress in the long-term task of assisting the refugees to become self-supporting. He hoped that, when its mandate had been extended, UNRWA would be able to solve some of its immediate problems, such as that of accurate registration of refugees and the case of the Azazma Bedouin and the frontier villagers in Jordan. Careful consideration should be given to the suggestions made at the 149th meeting by the representative of Saudi Arabia, which he had described as provisional measures.

3. He expressed his delegation's appreciation of the contribution made by the host Governments, which, as the Director of UNRWA stated in his report, had borne a heavy burden with courage and perseverance. Jordan in particular was worthy of mention, as it had the highest ratio of refugees to total population.

4. In his delegation's opinion, the Director's report was in itself the best argument for continuing United Nations assistance to the refugees, as suggested by the Secretary-General. He hoped that the necessary arrangements would be made and that contributions from Members would be forthcoming. A number of speakers had suggested that the Conciliation Commission for Palestine should be enlarged and reactivated. Turkey was a member of the Advisory Commission of UNRWA and of the Conciliation Commission for Palestine, both of which had done their utmost to fulfil their tasks and the wishes of the General Assembly. However, the Conciliation Commission had never been conceived as an instrument for arbitration and neither of the interested parties had accepted such a role for it. The only task envisaged for it by the General Assembly was that of conciliation, as its name implied. The Assembly's last mandate to the Conciliation Commission was embodied in resolution 512 (VI) of 26 January 1952, noting the Commission's failure to fulfil its mandate under the Assembly's earlier resolutions and placing the primary responsibility for reaching a settlement on the Governments concerned, which were urged to make full use of United Nations facilities, including the Conciliation Commission. Since that date, there had been no appreciable progress towards the settlement of the outstanding differences between the parties concerned, which had obviously not considered it opportune to avail themselves of the Conciliation

Commission or the other "United Nations facilities" mentioned in the resolution. However, if there was any indication that present conditions might enable the Conciliation Commission or the other United Nations facilities to play a more active role, any proposals to that end should be carefully studied.

5. Mr. HOOD (Australia) said that a study of the Secretary-General's proposals and the annual report of the Director of UNRWA had convinced his delegation that, on humanitarian grounds, United Nations support of the unfortunate Palestine refugees must continue. A problem involving a million people living at a meagre level of subsistence could not be left to solve itself. The refugees could not at present provide for themselves, and would indeed have been in a worse plight had it not been for the devoted and efficient service of the Agency's Director and staff and the assistance of the host Governments and many private organizations.

6. Reviewing the conditions under which the Agency had been operating, as revealed by the Director and the Secretary-General, he expressed the hope that the present anomalous state of the refugee ration rolls would be corrected with the co-operation of the Governments concerned. While drawing attention to the heavy burden assumed by the host Governments on behalf of the refugees, the Director had also pointed out that, in certain respects, the Agency's day-to-day operations had been hampered by lack of recognition of its correct juridical status. In his delegation's opinion, the Director's recommendations in that connexion were eminently reasonable, and the statements made by the representative of the United Arab Republic seemed to justify the hope that, as far as his Government was concerned, the problems would not prove insoluble.

7. His delegation believed that the transfer of primary administrative responsibility for the programme of general education to the host Governments could usefully be discussed further by the Governments and the Director.

8. The Agency had been rightly commended for using its limited resources to the greatest advantage. In view of the inadequacy of its resources, however, it was difficult to see how the Agency could undertake responsibility for the so-called economic refugees, who did not fall within its mandate. Unless the Agency was provided with more funds, it would continue to have immense difficulty in maintaining even its present programmes, and the additional liability of at least another \$5 million a year clearly could not be met. His own Government had contributed as much as it was able, and he hoped that more Governments would find it possible to make contributions, as there seemed to be no practical alternative to the present system of financing by voluntary contributions.

9. It was encouraging to note that, despite its limited funds, the Agency had been able to make progress in the field of education during the past year. He agreed with the representative of the United Arab Republic that it was important to give more attention to the social, cultural and spiritual training of the refugees to prepare them for a useful, self-supporting life. He believed, however, that if the refugees were regarded as individuals rather than as a collective entity, there would be more likelihood of reaching a sympathetic understanding of their situation and of alleviating their condition. It was, unfortunately, un-

realistic in present circumstances to imagine that the refugees could make the choice offered them under resolution 194 (III). As other speakers had pointed out, there was no immediate prospect of a solution while the attitudes of the parties remained unchanged. Meanwhile, the refugees had to remain content with their present meagre subsistence, which was particularly frustrating for the 30,000 young people reaching maturity each year. They, at least, should be trained for a useful, self-reliant life and offered some prospect of a dignified existence. It was therefore essential for the Agency's vocational training programme to be given the fullest possible scope, and he again emphasized the need for further contributions from Member Governments.

10. Although he had concentrated on the practical aspects of the problem of continued United Nations assistance, he was fully aware of its wider political and emotional elements. The General Assembly had decided on the partition of Palestine in the knowledge that the resultant problems would not solve themselves without conscious and sincere changes of attitude within the area concerned. The Assembly had been unable to find a better solution to an already tense situation, which had existed long before 1947. Then as now, the United Nations could do no more than lend its authority to recommendations and it was unrealistic to expect it to exercise a directive influence on the refugee problem. As other speakers had pointed out, the Assembly considered that the Governments concerned were primarily responsible for settling their differences, and United Nations facilities, including the Conciliation Commission for Palestine, were available to them for that purpose. The Committee's present task was to decide the problem of continued assistance to the refugees, but it could also indicate that there was a growing desire in the General Assembly for the refugee problem, and others relating to the area, to be settled by direct negotiation between the parties concerned.

11. Mr. BAIG (Pakistan) recalled the statement made by his country's Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Assembly's general debate (808th plenary meeting), deploring the fact that after more than a decade the one million refugees who had been victims of international injustice in Palestine were still denied the repatriation guaranteed to them by successive resolutions of the General Assembly.

12. The Agency had itself been in existence for ten years and its mandate had been extended three times by the General Assembly, which was now called upon to consider a further extension. The United Nations had a continuing responsibility for maintaining the flow of relief to the refugees until they could be resettled in accordance with their freely expressed wishes and in conformity with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. Under operative paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), the refugees had been given the choice of repatriation or compensation. The United Nations in every successive resolution had endorsed that choice. The annual report of the Director of UNRWA stressed the fact that the implementation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) remained in the minds of the refugees the most essential and acceptable long-range solution. Directors of the Agency, year after year, had not failed to state that the desire of the refugees to return to their homeland continued unabated and that they believed themselves to be the victims of a great injustice and remained opposed to

any project which they felt would involve permanent resettlement and the abandonment of their hopes of repatriation.

13. Israel spokesmen had argued that the rights guaranteed to Palestine refugees by resolutions of the United Nations were in effect subject to Israel's veto, and that since those rights had not been exercised at the earliest practicable date after the adoption of resolution 194 (III), they no longer existed. As successive Directors of UNRWA had stated, it had not been possible to give that resolution practical effect, owing to Israel's refusal to co-operate. Israel had persistently defied those resolutions and prevented the refugees from exercising their choice.

14. Until the refugees were permitted to exercise that choice, UNRWA should continue to provide relief, and at the same time urgent steps should be taken to ensure that the Assembly's resolutions regarding repatriation and compensation were carried out. He therefore hoped that the Secretary-General's recommendation for the extension of UNRWA's mandate, which had received endorsement on all sides, would be accepted.

15. Turning to the work of UNRWA, he noted that attention had been drawn in the reports of the Secretary-General and the Director of the Agency to the refugee rolls. The Secretary-General stated that there was a considerable number of persons receiving assistance to which they were no longer entitled and that others who were entitled to assistance were not getting it. Rectification of the rolls seemed to him to be a form of administrative adjustment and he noted that the Director had expressed in his report the hope that the process could be accelerated. Related to that question was the condition of a large number of persons who had lost their means of livelihood but could not obtain relief as they were not technically refugees. Especially distressing was the plight of the Azazma Bedouin who had been expelled from Israel in 1950. His delegation endorsed the Director's appeal on behalf of all those unfortunate people.

16. If UNRWA's life was extended, it was axiomatic that it should be able to function in an effective manner. His delegation noted the suggestions made by the Secretary-General and the Agency's Director regarding its status in Arab host countries. In their comments (A/4236) on the Secretary-General's proposals, the Arab delegations stated that competent authorities in their countries were paying full attention to the question of facilitating the Agency's work. His delegation hoped that consultations between those authorities and the Agency would be initiated without delay.

17. His delegation felt that the Conciliation Commission for Palestine established by resolution 194 (III) should be reactivated, and it agreed with the suggestion that an increase in its membership would be an advantage. He felt that the Commission should study the constructive proposals made by the representatives of Saudi Arabia and Lebanon. The representative of Ceylon had urged (153rd meeting) that the Arab States should enter into direct negotiations with Israel without insisting on one solution only, but his delegation, while favouring negotiation as a means of settling international disputes, wished to remind the Committee that any solution to the Palestine refugee problem should conform to the principles of justice and international law. If Israel could be induced to accept those principles as a basis for negotiation, the prospect of

a lasting peace in the Middle East would be greatly enhanced.

18. The Pakistan Minister of Foreign Affairs had warned, after the adoption of resolution 181 (II) on the partition of Palestine, that the creation of the State of Israel, which had resulted in exile and destitution for hundreds of thousands of Arabs, would set into motion a deep and far-reaching conflict, affecting the peace not only of the Middle East but of regions beyond. That warning had come true. A precarious peace in the Middle East now depended on the vigilance of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization and the United Nations Emergency Force. The General Assembly was spending annually on those two organizations and the Palestine refugees a sum of about \$60 million. That was the price being paid for the partition of Palestine.

19. Tracing the origin of the Palestine conflict, he quoted from various sources to show that the creation of Israel and the tragedy of the Arab refugees were the outcome of a colonial solution to the Palestine problem. It was argued, he said, that the State of Israel was an accomplished fact and that Arab refugees could not now be repatriated but should be integrated with their Arab neighbours in the countries where they had taken refuge. It was claimed that Palestine refugees could not be absorbed into the life of Israel, yet more than one million Jewish refugees had entered the State during the past decade and unlimited immigration was still being continued. The conscience of the United Nations was committed to restore to the Arab refugees from Palestine the human rights which had been denied to them, and the General Assembly could not ease it by throwing the blame for their misery on their legitimate insistence to be permitted to return to the hearths and homes of their ancestors.

20. With those considerations in mind, his delegation had, in conjunction with the Indonesian delegation, sponsored a draft resolution (A/SPC/L.38) which took into account the views expressed in the course of the debate. He noted that no delegation had expressed the opinion that UNRWA should be wound up. Whatever their views as to the origin of the problem or the nature of its ultimate solution, all delegations had agreed that the extension of UNRWA's mandate was at present the only practical means of providing relief to the refugees. The draft resolution incorporated only the barest minimum of common agreement in the Committee and avoided all controversial issues. To those who would like to see the text of the draft resolution broadened, he would merely say that the answer to the Arab-Israel problem and the stability of the Middle East should be sought not in the context of the limited question of the continuation of UNRWA but in the separate consideration of all aspects of the Palestine problem.

21. Mr. PLAJA (Italy) said that the continued absence of any final solution to the Palestine refugee problem was very disheartening. From the humanitarian point of view, it was appalling that a million people should have to go on living in the conditions of material and spiritual deprivation described in the documents before the Committee. From the political point of view, the existence of a refugee problem of such magnitude posed a constant threat to peace and stability in the area as a whole. From the economic point of view, one million persons were an eco-

conomic asset which should be put to use, not forced into idleness. The Italian delegation was fully aware of the serious implications of the problem and its indissoluble links with other aspects of the Palestine question. It had no magic solution to offer, but it felt that the present debate was an appropriate occasion for re-examining the core of the problem and reconsidering the conditions necessary for a constructive solution.

22. The debate thus far had shown, for the first time in years, signs of a general realization that the problem could not be allowed to stagnate indefinitely, and a number of practical suggestions had been made including those of the representatives of the United Arab Republic, India, Ceylon and the United States of America. At the 154th meeting the representative of India had given the Committee a timely reminder that the General Assembly had consistently held to the principle that the Palestine refugees should be given a choice between repatriation and compensation. Within that framework, any constructive suggestion which might promote a solution should be welcomed.

23. A number of speakers had referred to the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, and the possibilities of action by that body merited careful consideration. Between 1949 and 1951, the Conciliation Commission had made great efforts to assist the parties concerned in arriving at a solution of all the outstanding problems and to achieve a durable peace in Palestine. Unfortunately those efforts had failed, and in resolution 512 (VI) the General Assembly had expressed the view that the Governments concerned had the primary responsibility for reaching a settlement of their outstanding differences in conformity with the resolutions of the General Assembly, and that the Conciliation Commission should be available to the parties to that end. The Commission had since then confined itself to tasks of a limited nature, though both practical and useful. It had worked towards the release of Arab refugee bank accounts and safe deposits blocked in Israel, and had compiled records for the identification and evaluation of Arab property. Given the necessary degree of collaboration by the parties concerned, the Commission could turn its attention again to wider tasks.

24. Before considering the activities of UNRWA, with particular regard to part II of the Secretary-General's proposals (A/4121) and the annual report of the Director of the Agency (A/4113), the Italian delegation wished to express its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his analysis of the problem and to the Director for his report and also for the ability and enthusiasm with which he had performed his important task. The first question before the Committee was the continuation of UNRWA. There was clearly a consensus of opinion in favour of a continuation of the Agency, and that view was fully shared by the Italian delegation. In the circumstances, the continuation of assistance to the Palestine refugees appeared to be a necessity. Such a decision would, of course, imply a continuation of the financial efforts of Members of the United Nations, and in particular of the main contributors. It would also imply sustained efforts on the part of the host Governments which had shared the burden of assistance to the Palestine refugees with UNRWA in so many ways, as was duly stressed in the Director's report.

25. There was some divergence of opinion on the question of the length of time for which the Agency's

mandate should be renewed. The representative of the Netherlands had suggested two years, and the draft resolution sponsored by India and Pakistan (A/SPC/L.38) indicated a five-year period. The Secretary-General stated in his proposals that assistance should be continued "for all the time and to all the extent necessary", and the Italian delegation agreed that assistance should be maintained as long as the problem of the refugees existed in its present form and its present magnitude.

26. It was clear from the Director's report that relief operations were proceeding as regularly and as well as funds allowed. The documents before the Committee contained a number of practical suggestions for improving the effectiveness of some of the Agency's operations. The problem of who was to receive assistance was becoming increasingly serious. It would seem appropriate that, before entering upon a new lease of life, UNRWA should correct some of the unsatisfactory aspects of that situation. The revision of the present refugee rolls must be considered; perhaps it could be started in an experimental fashion in those areas where conditions were more favourable. In regard to the administration of assistance, the Italian delegation shared the views expressed by the United Kingdom representative regarding the desirability of discussions between the host Governments and the Agency with a view to exploring the possibility of giving the host Governments greater responsibility for general education. On the question of types of assistance, the Italian delegation felt that stress should be laid on vocational and educational training for young people, with a view to making them entirely or partially self-supporting. In that connexion, the Italian delegation shared the opinion of the representative of the United Arab Republic that measures for self-support should not be connected with the political aspect of the problem, and that more attention should be devoted to the social, cultural and spiritual training of the refugees in order to enable them to develop as good citizens. The need to expand activities in the educational field and the field of vocational training could not be over-emphasized, and it was welcome news that funds from the World Refugee Year programme would probably be made available for further progress in that direction. Praiseworthy efforts had also been made by the host Governments to provide facilities in that respect. In view of the fact that most of the Agency's funds had to be used for basic relief and that very little was left over for activities of the kind indicated, it might perhaps be advisable to set up, within the framework of UNRWA, a special budget for contributions to that end from Governments and non-governmental bodies. Provision might also be made for special offers of scholarships and fellowships for Palestine refugees. Such arrangements would give Governments and agencies which had not yet contributed to UNRWA an opportunity to participate. Lastly, the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and the Special Fund might provide some financial assistance.

27. Although the final settlement of the Palestine refugee problem must be political in nature, there were several new avenues of possible activity which might be explored with a view to alleviating the position of the refugees, without in any way impairing their rightful aspirations and claims under the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

28. Mr. ZABARAH (Yemen) said that the tragic plight of the Palestine refugees had grave repercussions on every aspect of life in the Middle East.

29. If the income from the valuable property left behind by the refugees could be collected, it would contribute greatly towards solving the problem of extending the life of the Agency. It was therefore of paramount importance that a United Nations custodian should be appointed to administer refugee property until General Assembly resolution 194 (III) was implemented. Work on the identification of refugee property had advanced to a degree that would permit such an appointment to be made immediately. In paragraph 17 of its most recent report (A/4225), the Conciliation Commission for Palestine stated that the work of identification was virtually complete, and although there were certain important omissions—which had been pointed out to the Commission by his delegation—a good start had undoubtedly been made.

30. The Yemeni delegation endorsed the view of the Secretary-General and of the Director of the Agency that United Nations assistance to the Arab refugees should be continued. It expressed gratitude to the Director of UNRWA and his staff for their valuable work on behalf of the refugees. It felt that technical matters relating to the operation of UNRWA could be adjusted by direct negotiation between the host Governments and the Agency, to the satisfaction of all concerned. The fact that the host Governments had co-operated to the full with UNRWA was brought out in paragraph 8 of the Director's report. The Director also stated, in paragraph 41, that working relations between the Agency and the Governments concerned had been good, and in many ways represented an improvement over those reported in previous years. In addition to the heavy burden being carried by the host Governments, other Arab countries were contributing generously to the welfare of the refugees. For example, the Saudi Arabian Government had contributed about half a million dollars in the last two years to various projects for the benefit of the Palestine refugees.

31. The Yemeni delegation felt that if the Agency was to continue to operate satisfactorily, pending the repatriation of the refugees, its budget should become an integral part of the annual budget of the United Nations. At the same time, the definition of persons eligible for assistance should be revised in order to include groups which had lost their livelihood but not their homes. Special attention should be paid to the frontier villagers, the poor of Gaza and the refugees living in the southern region of the United Arab Republic, as well as the Bedouin—especially those mentioned in paragraph 32 of the Director's report. The revision of the refugee rolls and the question of the agreements between the host Governments and UNRWA should be settled by the parties directly concerned. The fact that the general education of the refugees conformed to the standards that applied in the host countries and that those countries were making a financial contribution towards the programme did not mean that they should accept primary administrative responsibility for it. General education was one of the major functions of the Agency and the host Governments were merely being co-operative.

32. The Palestine refugee problem owed its origin to Zionist terrorism. Deliberate attacks on the aged, and on women and children, had forced the Palestine Arabs to flee to safety. The United Nations Mediator,

the late Count Bernadotte, who had himself fallen a victim to Zionist terrorism, had told the General Assembly in his report dated 16 September 1948 (A/648)^{1/} that he had received numerous reports from reliable sources of large-scale looting, pillaging and plundering and of the destruction of villages without apparent military necessity. The pattern of Israel atrocities designed to force the Arabs out of their homeland had continued up to September 1959, when Israel had driven a section of the Azazma tribe across the Israel-Egyptian frontier, an act of aggression which had been condemned by the Mixed Armistice Commission on 6 October 1959. Since the adoption of its first resolution calling for the repatriation of the refugees, the General Assembly had met only with defiance from Israel. Continued Zionist immigration into Palestine was another flagrant defiance of the United Nations, for it was bound to impede the repatriation of the Palestine refugees. That fact had been noted by Count Bernadotte in his report.

33. It was most distressing that, after more than a decade, resolution 194 (III) had not yet been implemented. The Director of the Agency stated, in paragraph 9 of his report, that, in his view, the implementation of that resolution continued in the minds of the refugees to be the most essential and acceptable long-range solution. The problem of the Palestine refugees was no ordinary one; United Nations responsibility for it was clear. The problem had been discussed year in and year out but no satisfactory result had been achieved. A number of speakers in the present debate had urged that constructive steps should be taken to solve the problem. One such step which would bring about a partial solution would be the appointment of a United Nations custodian to administer refugee property and collect the income from it. However, the main constructive course had been unanimously agreed upon five years before by the countries represented at the Asian-African Conference at Bandung: in its final communiqué the Conference declared its support of the rights of the Arab people of Palestine and called for the implementation of the United Nations resolutions on Palestine and the achievement of a peaceful settlement of the whole Palestine question. Several practical ways and means of putting those resolutions into effect had been proposed, including the Saudi Arabian suggestion that the Conciliation Commission for Palestine should be reactivated. Full implementation of the General Assembly's resolutions was the only constructive solution, and the only one which would safeguard the dignity and prestige of the United Nations.

34. Mr. COMAY (Israel) said that in exercising his right of reply he would like to clarify a point raised by the representative of Yemen and other Arab delegations concerning properties abandoned by the Arab refugees, and the proposal to appoint a United Nations custodian of the revenues derived from them. The Conciliation Commission for Palestine was still engaged in the task of making an inventory and evaluation of abandoned Arab lands on the basis of the situation prevailing in 1947, and the Israel authorities had been co-operating in that task on the technical level and had opened their records and archives to the officers of the Commission. In his opinion the concern of the United Nations with such property should be confined to that task, since no provision of the United Nations

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Supplement No. 11.

Charter could possibly authorize the function of the proposed custodian. The profit which the Israel Government was alleged to be making out of the property was quite imaginary. The property in question had been left largely derelict in 1948, and the lands had long since been integrated into the land reclamation, land settlement, and irrigation programmes of his country. The huge capital investment of his Government in such schemes might be justified from the point of view of national policy but was certainly far from being a profitable enterprise in the commercial sense of the term. Moreover, his Government had entered into a voluntary undertaking to pay compensation for the abandoned lands in accordance with the terms of that undertaking which included taking into account the claims of Israel citizens who had a right to compensation for property left behind in Arab lands.

35. Dato' KAMIL (Federation of Malaya) said that his delegation had followed with deep interest and sympathy the references made during the debate to the sufferings of the Palestine refugees, and regretted the political deadlock that had for so long prevented a solution of the problem. Far from nearing a solution, the problem was becoming more serious with the increase in numbers of the refugees and the adverse effect of long years of exile upon their morale.

36. While his delegation fully appreciated the excellent work of UNRWA in providing such necessities as food, shelter, medical care and basic education for the refugees, and serving as a stabilizing factor in the Near East, the sad fact remained that the relief given to the refugees could only be regarded as a palliative. It was stated in the Director's report that the Agency's programmes of vocational training and plans for assisting young refugees to launch projects for self-employment were severely limited by the shortage of funds, and that the lack of opportunity and hope for the future of some 30,000 young people reaching maturity each year was even more tragic in terms of human waste than was the need for improved food, shelter and clothing.

37. Had the problem been purely humanitarian and economic, like some other refugee problems that had beset Europe and Asia after the Second World War, it might have been possible to find a solution; but the Palestine refugee problem had far-reaching political implications, since its very origin was political, and a just and permanent solution could only be found by taking that aspect into account. In stating that fact, his delegation was not attempting to minimize the importance of relief measures aimed at reducing the sufferings of the refugees, and would give its full support to the proposal for the continuation of UNRWA when its present mandate expired on 30 June 1960. Until a solution had been evolved, UNRWA was indispensable both for the relief of the refugees and for the peace of the Near East.

38. His country, as a young Member of the Organization, had had no part in the political decision of the United Nations in 1947 to partition Palestine, but it was prepared to contribute its share towards discharging the responsibilities to refugees resulting from that decision. From the first year of its membership in the United Nations it had pledged what modest annual contribution it could afford, and hoped that the generous contributions of other Member States would be continued.

39. It was the considered view of his delegation that any long-term measures for the settlement of the Palestine refugee problem must have due regard for the wishes of the refugees themselves. The United Nations had recognized that principle in adopting resolution 194 (III), which gave the refugees the choice of repatriation or compensation, and the General Assembly had reaffirmed that principle over the years at successive sessions. The reports of the Directors of UNRWA had made it clear that that resolution continued to be a source of hope to the refugees, for whom it represented the most essential and acceptable long-range solution. His delegation hoped that the United Nations would spare no efforts in seeking a just settlement of the question within the framework of resolution 194 (III) and would give due consideration to any proposal directed to that end provided it was in keeping with the legitimate rights of the million Palestine refugees. He would conclude by expressing his delegation's fervent hope that before long those refugees would be leading a normal life and enjoying justice and happiness instead of the hardships and uncertainties of enforced exile.

40. Mr. CABA (Guinea) said that his delegation had participated in the debate with the desire of serving the cause of justice and peace in the world, in accordance with his country's well-known policy. It was concerned at the plight of the Arab refugees as human beings, and as victims of an injustice which had driven them from their country and deprived them of their property. Although his delegation agreed in principle with the statement in paragraph 11 of the first part of the Secretary-General's report (A/4121) that, irrespective of the fact that humanitarian reasons would urgently call for continued assistance to the refugees, such assistance was strongly indicated as a sound part of any programme of economic development for the area concerned, it regretted the tendency to consider as a financial, economic or humanitarian problem what was essentially a political one. It was a political solution that must be found if the United Nations hoped to safeguard and consolidate peace in the Near East and improve relations between Israel and the Arab States. In the absence of such a political solution, the Agency's efforts on behalf of the Palestine refugees could never fully succeed, and the extension of its mandate would not in itself provide a solution. The refugees were still living a life of hardship and disappointment because the assurance of a solution given to them in 1948 had failed to materialize. That assurance was contained in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), offering the refugees the choice between repatriation and compensation. Many delegations felt that Israel's refusal to implement that resolution was responsible for the tragic situation of the Arab refugees, which was one of the causes of the constantly increasing tension in the Near East. In his delegation's opinion Israel was being supported in its defiance of United Nations decisions by certain imperialist Powers, who found it in their interest to perpetuate the conflict between the Arab nations and Israel. The problem of the Palestine refugees was only one of many problems in the Middle East which were contributing to the constant state of tension in that region, and which could only be solved if the United Nations took a firm stand against any kind of imperialist intervention in the affairs of the Arab peoples. Moreover, since the Organization was responsible for the creation of the State of Israel it must now persuade that State to

repair the harm it had done to the Arab refugees. His delegation could not see the justice of refusing the Arab refugees the right to return to their homeland while permitting extensive Jewish immigration into Israel.

41. The United Nations had the moral obligation of seeing that justice was done to the Arab refugees and of encouraging Arabs and Jews to live side by side in peaceful coexistence. His delegation had always supported the principle of self-determination laid down in the Charter of the United Nations. In that connexion, he recalled that the Asian-African Conference held at Bandung in 1955 had unanimously declared, in its final communiqué, its support of the rights of the Arab people of Palestine and had called for the implementation of the United Nations resolutions on Palestine. Any policy designed to keep the Arabs out of the country would only perpetuate the animosity and tension which existed today between Israel and the Arab States.

42. The refugees were asking for justice rather than charity. The Secretary-General's report stated that because there had not been a satisfaction of the political and psychological aspects of the problem, the refugees had refused to participate as a group in large-scale projects designed specifically for them, since they felt that would mean giving up rights (A/4121, part II, para. 16). Neither the continuation of relief to the refugees through UNRWA, nor their

resettlement in other countries, nor the putting into effect of good economic development programmes, could finally solve the problem.

43. In conclusion, his own delegation had various concrete suggestions which it would like to put forward. Peaceful coexistence should be made possible between Arabs and Israelis by the implementation of the appropriate General Assembly resolutions, and while the Arab refugees awaited repatriation they should be able to cultivate their lands and to receive the yearly income from their property in Palestine. The Conciliation Commission for Palestine should be revived in order to implement General Assembly resolution 194 (III) with, if possible, an increase in its membership and a broader geographical representation. His delegation agreed that United Nations assistance to the Palestine refugees should be continued pending their repatriation or compensation, which was the only valid political solution. It would like to see closer co-operation between the Agency and the host Governments. Finally, it felt that the United Nations should recommend to Israel that Jewish immigration, which made UNRWA's task even more difficult, should cease. It would whole-heartedly support any draft resolutions designed to satisfy the legitimate request of the Palestine refugees for repatriation and compensation.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.