



Chairman: Mr. Cornelius C. CREMIN (Ireland).

AGENDA ITEMS 38 AND 12

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (*continued*) (A/8366, A/8383 and Add.1, A/8403, A/8413, A/8432, A/8476, A/8526, A/SPC/147, A/SPC/148, A/SPC/L.225/Rev.1, A/SPC/L.226, A/SPC/L.228/Rev.1, A/SPC/L.229, A/SPC/L.230, A/SPC/L.231, A/SPC/L.232):

- (a) Report of the Commissioner-General (A/8413);
- (b) Report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/8476);
- (c) Report of the Secretary-General (A/8366);
- (d) Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapter XVIII (section D)) (A/8403)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the new documents before it. Regarding the revised draft resolution of the United States of America (A/SPC/L.225/Rev.1) he pointed out that the words "including resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948" should be added at the end of the first preambular paragraph. The Committee also had before it draft resolution A/SPC/L.230, which had been submitted by Afghanistan, Indonesia, Pakistan and Somalia, and draft resolutions A/SPC/L.231 and A/SPC/L.232, which had been submitted by Afghanistan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Somalia and Yugoslavia.

2. Mr. ŠIGUT (Czechoslovakia) said that the situation of the Palestine refugees had continued to worsen for 23 years: today 50 to 60 per cent of the people of Palestine—close to one and a half million people—were forced to live in exile, often without means of existence. In 1948, however, the General Assembly had adopted a position of principle in its resolution 194 (III), paragraph 11 of which had provided that the refugees should be able to return to their homes or receive compensation for loss of or damage to property. The situation had further deteriorated with the latest Israeli act of aggression in June 1967, which had provoked a new exodus of Palestinians towards the neighbouring Arab countries.

3. The Czechoslovak people had always been sympathetic to the refugees and had given as much assistance as possible to the Arab peoples who were victims of Israeli aggression. The top-level negotiations which had taken place in 1971 in Czechoslovakia, with Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic, offered new proof of the friendly relations and co-operation which existed between Czechoslovakia and the Arab countries.

4. As to the refugees, exactly two days previously, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic had sent to the Egyptian Red Cross and Red Crescent assistance in the form of clothes, blankets, tents, medicines and medical supplies worth 100,000 Czechoslovak crowns. It wished to reaffirm that it would continue to provide bilateral assistance.

5. As to UNRWA's activities, his delegation, like those of the other socialist countries, felt that the problem of the Palestine refugees was essentially a political one. As it had repeatedly indicated, in letters addressed to the Secretary-General and in its statements at the United Nations, Czechoslovakia energetically condemned the policy of aggression and the refusal of Israel to comply with United Nations resolutions. Moreover, the consequences of the aggression could not be limited to the humanitarian aspects of the problem. All those consequences should be eliminated—as the Arab States justly demanded—and, for that purpose, it was necessary, *inter alia*, that Israel should give full and rapid compensation to the refugees for the losses they had suffered. That would be the most reliable and most effective means of solving the refugee problem.

6. His delegation was convinced that some of the States that contributed to UNRWA did not do so sincerely and honestly with regard to the refugees; with one hand, they offered them help and, with the other, they supplied the Israeli aggressor with arms. The Arab peoples, for their part, had long known who was on their side.

7. If the international Zionist circles had not been supplying Israel with direct or indirect aid, particularly military, economic and technical aid, that country would long have been living peacefully with the neighbouring Arab countries. For its part, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic would continue to support the just cause of the Arab countries and the struggle of the people of Palestine.

8. Mr. ZENKYAVICHYUS (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the problem under consideration had existed for more than two decades and had become politically more acute each year. From the humanitarian point of view it was extremely important because it involved the existence and destiny of more than a million persons. From the political point of view, it was also an extremely important problem because it concerned not only the Near East but affected the international situation as a whole.

9. The failure to solve the problem of the Palestine refugees was due to Israeli expansionism. Expelled from their homes by the imperialist aggression and occupation of 1948, the Palestine refugees not only had not been able to return home but had seen their numbers increase by several hundred thousand as a result of the Israeli aggression of

June 1967. Israeli expansionism prevented any settlement of the question of the Near East and kept the people of Palestine in a state of exile. The refugee problem would be difficult to solve if the political problem was not settled, if, in other words, the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine were not restored.

10. Israeli expansionism constantly threatened the peace of the region. It would be unreasonable to believe that the Palestinians would become resigned and stop fighting to regain their rights, as it would be unreasonable to believe that the other Arab peoples would accept the exile of their Palestinian brothers. That, however, was what Israel and its protectors hoped for. They were counting on the world accepting the situation resulting from the 1967 aggression and the Palestine Arabs disappearing as a people. Those calculations were false and dangerous. All the progressive, freedom-loving peoples in the world supported the just cause of the Arab peoples.

11. The only way of settling the problem equitably would be to restore the rights of the Palestinians. In its resolution 194 (III), of 11 December 1949, the General Assembly had recognized the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes or to receive compensation. Israel had paid no attention to that resolution or to the ones which had later reaffirmed it. On the contrary, its new acts of aggression had aggravated the problem. The Israeli authorities continued to expel the Arab populations from the occupied territories in order to settle them with Israeli colonists. In the Gaza Strip their acts constituted a flagrant violation of the fundamental standards of international law, of international conventions and the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

12. Having succeeded in keeping the Palestinians in exile for 20 years, the Israelis believed that the situation could be prolonged indefinitely. Israel had not hesitated to reveal its expansionist plans and its leaders made no secret of the fact that they had no intention of accepting the return of the refugees to their homes or to their lands. Israel could not pursue that policy if it was not supported by international Zionism and the United States of America.

13. His delegation felt that General Assembly resolution 194 (III) and Security Council resolution 242 (1967) and the other decisions of the main organs of the United Nations constituted the political and legal basis for any settlement of the problem of the Palestine refugees and the Near East conflict. The withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territories and the elimination of the other consequences of the Israeli aggression against the Arab States were the necessary condition for any attempt at settlement. The Soviet Union supported the Palestine Arabs in their legitimate struggle against Israeli imperialism. It would continue to help them and to provide, on a bilateral basis, assistance to the Arab States which were victims of Israeli aggression. It was convinced that the just cause of the Arab peoples and particularly the liberation effort of the Palestine Arabs would finally triumph.

14. The CHAIRMAN announced that Malaysia had become a sponsor of draft resolutions A/SPC/L.230, A/SPC/L.231 and A/SPC/L.232.

15. Mr. EL-SHIBIB (Iraq) paid a tribute to UNRWA and its former Commissioner-General, Mr. Laurence Michelmore, for their humanitarian work in behalf of the Palestinian refugees and wished success to Sir John Rennie, the new Commissioner-General. He welcomed the work of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA and the efforts made by the representatives of Turkey and Norway within the Group.

16. Although the problem under review was a perennial one and although United Nations resolutions still remained unimplemented, his delegation felt obliged to express its views on the question since it affected the security of the whole Arab world.

17. First, in 1947 the General Assembly, by yielding to various pressures, including pressure from the Government of the United States of America, and adopting the plan for the partition of Palestine, had committed a grave breach of the United Nations Charter. That breach had deprived the people of Palestine of its right to self-determination and other rights.

18. Second, as a result of that breach, an alien, racist and expansionist enclave had been implanted in the heart of the Arab world and had proved to be not a bastion of Western democracy but a most aggressive manifestation of imperialism.

19. Third, the Palestinian people, the victim of dispersion, aggression and betrayal for two decades, not only had proved itself worthy of the inherent rights of every people but was an example of a heroic people determined to regain its freedom and rights even at the cost of great sacrifice.

20. Fourth, the essential purpose of the principles enunciated in the Charter was to safeguard international security and prevent wars. The denial of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination had created in the Middle East a situation that could explode into a global conflict. That situation was the result of Zionist aggression and expansionism, directed first against the people of Palestine and then against the whole Arab world, ever since the General Assembly's adoption of the Palestine partition plan.

21. Fifth, the question before the Committee was not a simple problem of international assistance to the Palestinian refugees but the essentially political problem of the struggle for the right to self-determination.

22. Sixth, the nature of the aggression committed by the Zionist settlers was becoming clearer to the world with every day that passed. A just solution of the problem could be found only through a realization of the fact that the Zionist State was based on aggression and lived by aggression.

23. Seventh, in spite of setbacks, the Palestinians had won growing recognition of their right to self-determination, most importantly from the General Assembly, in its resolution 2672 C (XXV).

24. Eighth, the Iraqi Government and people would never waver in their solidarity with the people of Palestine, which made it their duty to help that people regain its rights.

25. Lastly, he agreed with the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization that all palliatives were useless and that there could be no lasting peace in the area until the fundamental problem was resolved.

26. Mr. FU (China) said that the Chinese Government and people had always maintained their solidarity with the Palestinian people, tragically deprived of its land, and would continue, as in the past, to give that people aid and assistance through bilateral arrangements.

27. The reason why a people that had always resided in Palestine had become a refugee people was Zionist aggression against the Palestinian people, supported by United States imperialism. Consequently the only possible lasting and effective solution to the so-called "question of Palestine refugees" was the restoration of the Palestinian people's national rights. At the preceding meeting the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization had expressed the Palestinian people's determination to continue the armed struggle against the aggressors in order to

gain its rights. In recent years the struggle against Zionism had become an important element of the Arab liberation movement and of the world struggle against colonialism, imperialism and their lackeys and was supported by every country that loved peace and justice. Victory belonged to the Palestinians and the Arab peoples, for, as Mao Tse-tung had said, "the world progresses, the future is radiant and no one can change this trend of history".

28. Mr. CAHANA (Israel) said that he reserved the right to reply at the following meeting.

29. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee could still hope to conclude its debate on the question the next day if some speakers scheduled for the afternoon meeting agreed to speak in the morning and if the Committee decided to vote at the afternoon meeting on the six draft resolutions before it and hear the explanations of vote afterwards.

*The meeting rose at 4 p.m.*