

United Nations
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE, 633rd
MEETING



Wednesday, 11 December 1968,
at 3.45 p.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 33:</i>	
<i>Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (continued)</i>	1

Chairman: Mr. Abdulrahim Abby FARAH
(Somalia).

AGENDA ITEM 33

Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (continued) (A/7213, A/SPC/126, A/SPC/127, A/SPC/L.165, A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1, A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1, A/SPC/L.168)

1. The CHAIRMAN reminded the members of the Committee that the general debate had been concluded at the previous meeting and requested them to confine their comments to the draft resolutions before the Committee, which had been circulated as documents A/SPC/L.165, A/SPC/L.166, A/SPC/L.167 and A/SPC/L.168. He further recalled that Argentina had decided to join the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 (see A/SPC/L.166/Add.1) and that Argentina, Ireland, Nigeria, Turkey and Yugoslavia had been added to the list of sponsors for draft resolution A/SPC/L.167 (see A/SPC/L.167/Add.1).

2. Mr. HAGGLOF (Sweden), introducing draft resolution A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1, noted that the number of sponsors for the draft had now reached seventeen. The text was designed to assist the Commissioner-General in his humanitarian task by assuring the provision of the necessary financial resources. The draft resolution reaffirmed General Assembly resolutions 2252 (ES-V) and 2341 B (XXII) and complemented the other draft resolutions before the Committee—the United States draft (A/SPC/L.165) relative to the extension of the Agency's mandate, draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 concerning the return of newly displaced persons and draft resolution A/SPC/L.168 concerning the appointment of a custodian. The present draft resolution was essentially intended to meet the vital need of ensuring that the Agency had the resources required to reduce the expected deficit and to enable it to carry out its task. As the draft resolution was in no way controversial, its sponsors hoped that it would be adopted unanimously.

3. Mr. ALI (Pakistan) said that draft resolution A/SPC/L.168 would be officially tabled at the next meeting.

4. The CHAIRMAN stated that Yugoslavia had been added to the list of sponsors for draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 (see A/SPC/L.166/Add.1). He recalled that it had been agreed at the previous meeting to give priority to the consideration of that draft resolution which would be the first to be put to the vote.

5. Mr. COMAY (Israel) said that he had no real objection, but he would prefer a vote to be taken on the draft resolutions at the next meeting, in whatever order the Committee decided, as those resolutions could be examined at the present meeting.

6. Mr. DOSUMU-JOHNSON (Liberia) recalled that he had raised objections at the previous meeting to the suggestion that priority should be given to the vote on draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1. The normal procedure was to consider all the draft resolutions that had been submitted, after which a representative could request that priority should be granted to a certain draft. He thought the Committee should revoke the decision it had taken.

7. The CHAIRMAN read out the part of the verbatim record of the previous meeting concerning the decisions on draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1. No member of the Committee had raised any formal objections to the Turkish representative's request that prior consideration should be given to that draft resolution. He had therefore concluded that the Committee had agreed with the request.

8. Mr. COMAY (Israel) wondered whether he could refer to the other draft resolutions which had been duly tabled in the proper way.

9. Mr. EREN (Turkey) regretted that a procedural discussion was taking place on a question on which unanimous agreement had already been reached. Bearing in mind the urgency of the problem which draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 was designed to solve, he hoped that prior consideration would be given to it as had been envisaged, and that the Committee would adopt it unanimously.

10. The CHAIRMAN said that he would bear in mind the fact that it might be difficult to discuss the resolution carrying priority without referring to the others.

11. Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq) pointed out that the very purpose of deciding to give priority to draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 had been to depart from the normal procedure of considering that resolution at the same time as the others. The same situation had arisen in other Committees, for example, in the Fourth Committee during the discussion on Southern Rhodesia. It was therefore surprising that, at the last minute, controversy had arisen concerning

the decision taken with regard to draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1.

12. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to rule 121 of the rules of procedure to the effect that no proposal could be discussed unless copies of it had been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting. Accordingly, when discussing draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1, the representatives could only refer to draft resolution A/SPC/L.165.

13. Mr. COMAY (Israel) protested against the pressure which had been brought to bear on the Committee to adopt a certain draft resolution. His delegation considered that such procedure was unacceptable and that it put his delegation in a very difficult position. He had intended to explain his Government's views on the other related draft resolutions which directly concerned it, but he was being told that he could give his views on only one of the drafts, and must exclude the others. If it was absolutely necessary, his delegation would accept postponement of the discussion on the draft resolution which the representative of Pakistan had announced for the next day, since it had not been officially submitted. However, the others had been duly and properly tabled and should be considered together. With regard to the vote, his delegation would have no objections if draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 were put to the vote first.

14. Mr. DOSUMU-JOHNSON (Liberia) pointed out that to discuss and vote on draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 alone would be an abnormal procedure, and his delegation would prefer that such a precedent should not be established in the Special Political Committee unless provision were made for it in a new rule of procedure.

15. Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq) said that the request that priority should be given to draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 had been made purely and simply because the problem was pressing. If, notwithstanding the decision taken the day before, the Chairman considered article 121 of the rules of procedure to be applicable in the present case, his delegation was prepared to accept a discussion on the three draft resolutions which had been officially submitted in good time, provided that a vote was taken on draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 during that meeting in view of its urgency.

16. Mr. COMAY (Israel) said that he had no objection to the other two draft resolutions—A/SPC/L.165 and A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1—to be put to the vote at the present meeting.

17. Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq) said that he had no objection to that suggestion.

18. Mr. COMAY (Israel) regretted, with reference to draft resolution A/SPC/L.165, that it had been deemed necessary to include a reference to paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) in paragraph 4. At the fourteenth session, at the 171st meeting of the Committee, during the vote on the draft resolution which had become General Assembly resolution 1456 (XIV), Israel voted against that provision, on the grounds that it was not realistic to try to settle the refugee problem in a vacuum. Nor could his delegation accept

paragraph 1 of the draft; consequently, although it endorsed paragraphs 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8, it could not vote in favour of the draft.

19. In connexion with draft resolution A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1, he recalled that his delegation had voted for General Assembly resolutions 2252 (ES-V) and 2341 B (XXII) adopted during the preceding year. As the present text was in conformity with the previous humanitarian resolutions adopted on that matter, his delegation would be in a position to support it. His Government would continue to be guided by the provisions laid down in those comprehensive resolutions which dealt in particular with the treatment of minorities, and thus of Jews, in certain countries.

20. He once again stressed that the refugee question could not be considered out of context. It should be considered in the light of the general situation in the region, taking into account the prevailing security problems there. That did not mean that, prior to an over-all final settlement, Israel would not do all within its power to improve the lot of the refugees. The Committee had been informed of the steps which his Government had taken or intended to take in that regard, and knew that tens of thousands of refugees would shortly be allowed to return to their homes.

21. Lastly, in connexion with draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1, he protested against the peremptory tone of the text, which was controversial and unnecessary. As a result, his delegation would be obliged to vote against the draft, which did not mean that it was unmoved by the humanitarian issues it dealt with. In that regard, it would be guided by the resolutions which had been reaffirmed in draft resolution A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1.

22. Mr. TOMEH (Syria) said that, in view of the controversy surrounding paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), the only possible answer was to consult impartial and objective documents. Such texts did exist and a noteworthy example was the study entitled "Historical survey of the efforts of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine to secure the implementation of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III)".^{1/} That most interesting document contained, in particular, six annexes relating to the restitution of property or payment of compensation to refugees and the global evaluation of abandoned Arab property in Israel.

23. Mr. COMAY (Israel) speaking on a point of order, said that the Syrian representative's remarks were not relevant to the discussion since the question of refugees' property was the subject of a draft resolution which had not yet been submitted officially.

24. Mr. TOMEH (Syria) said he was in fact referring to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) which was mentioned in draft resolution A/SPC/L.165. He requested that the study which he had referred to earlier should be made available to members of the Committee.

25. Mr. NGUZA (Democratic Republic of the Congo) expressed his delegation's gratitude to the Agency and the Commissioner-General for their efforts to relieve

^{1/} A/AC.25/W.81/Rev.2 (mimeographed).

the hardship of the Palestine refugees. His delegation supported the Agency's activities and contributed financially to its work, as testified by the letter dated 30 June 1967 from the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the Secretary-General.^{2/} His delegation was also in favour of extending the Agency's mandate.

26. His country recognized, however, that any solution to the problem should apply to the Middle East as a whole. Relief for the refugees was only a palliative measure and, as the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had said at the present session of the General Assembly (1703rd plenary meeting), military confrontations between the opposing forces and the hostile atmosphere prevailing in the area were liable to spoil the prospects for a peaceful settlement. In that connexion, he drew attention to the resolution adopted at the fifth session by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity held at Algiers in September 1968.

27. His country hoped that all States would co-operate with the special representative, Mr. Jarring, and pledged its support, as in the past, to any draft resolution of a humanitarian nature.

28. His delegation felt that draft resolution A/SPC/L.165 would achieve an acceptable balance, especially in paragraph 1 in which reference was made to the re-integration of refugees.

29. Mr. MENDELEVICH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 faithfully reflected the grave concern of its sponsors with the important political aspects of the question of newly displaced persons. The draft resolution put forward a practical political solution, proposing effective and immediate steps for the return without delay of those inhabitants who had fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities of June 1967. Indeed, that was only one aspect of the problem, but it was an important aspect and the most urgent at the present time. Without doubt, the speedy return of the new refugees would help to bring about more favourable political attitudes which would help Mr. Jarring in the discharge of his duties.

30. Israel had said that the return of the new refugees was linked to questions of security in the area. Such a statement could only put the Committee on its guard, since it amounted to an attempt to bargain with Jordan and the other interested countries on the return of the refugees. The problem was not one to be bargained about, since the fate of several thousand people who had been driven from their homeland as a result of an act of aggression, was at stake. It was unthinkable to annex the territory of another country and to drive out its inhabitants by force.

31. The United Nations were within their rights in asking for the return without delay of the refugees. His delegation felt that Israel's reaction to draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 would show whether it was really prepared to create conditions which would be more conducive to the settlement of the question and whether it would allow Mr. Jarring to bring his

task to a successful conclusion. His delegation hoped that draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 would be adopted.

32. As far as draft resolution A/SPC/L.165 was concerned, his country's position with regard to the Agency was well known. His country had frequently emphasized that the refugee question needed a political solution and that the elements of such a solution lay in the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council. Obviously, the humanitarian aspects of the question could not be neglected, but the examination of those aspects would not in itself lead to a political solution of the problem.

33. His delegation understood the ideas which had motivated the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1 and congratulated them on their good intentions. There was however, some difference in the ideas behind draft resolutions A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 and A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1. Draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 envisaged the speedy return of the new refugees, while draft resolution A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1 seemed to be based on the hypothesis that the situation of the newly displaced persons was a more or less stable one and that they needed special assistance. Indeed such assistance should be provided, but the idea of the permanence of the refugee problem was not acceptable.

34. The CHAIRMAN put draft resolution A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1 to the vote.

At the request of the Nigerian representative, a vote was taken by roll-call.

Equatorial Guinea, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Ethiopia, Finland, France, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives Islands, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Southern Yemen, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, China, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Democratic Republic of), Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, El Salvador.

Against: Israel.

Abstaining: Jamaica, Rwanda, Togo, Uruguay, Venezuela, Botswana, Colombia, Dahomey, Dominican Republic.

The draft resolution was adopted by 91 votes to 1, with 9 abstentions.

35. The CHAIRMAN put draft resolution A/SPC/L.165 to the vote.

^{2/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Emergency Special Session, Annexes, agenda item 5, document A/6739.

At the request of the Nigerian representative, a vote was taken by roll-call.

Lebanon, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives Islands, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Southern Yemen, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Democratic Republic of), Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Israel.

The draft resolution was adopted by 101 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

36. Mr. MENDELEVICH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on a point of order, asked whether the meeting could be suspended for about ten minutes so that the socialist countries could reach an agreement with regard to draft resolution A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1 which they had not yet had time to study.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with rule 121 of the rules of procedure, the voting on draft resolution A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1 could take place at the next meeting. He would, however, leave it to the Committee to decide whether it wished to vote at the present or at the next meeting.

38. Mr. MENDELEVICH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and Mr. HAGGLOF (Sweden) said they would be prepared to accept either alternative.

39. The CHAIRMAN said that in the circumstances it would be better if draft resolution A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1 were put to the vote at the Committee's next meeting.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.