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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/Rev.1) (concluded):

- (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. EINAAR (Netherlands) said that he had serious misgivings regarding operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution before the Committee (A/SPC/L.38/Rev.1). The aim of that paragraph was to re-activate the Conciliation Commission so that it might once again attempt to reconcile the two parties to the dispute despite the fact that one of the parties concerned would agree neither to that procedure nor to the terms of reference given to the Commission. However, as a number of delegations, including that of the United States, considered that the Conciliation Commission might be able to help in finding a solution to the problem, his delegation would not actively oppose the paragraph in question but would ask for a separate vote on it. He would abstain from voting on that paragraph and would vote in favour of the draft resolution as a whole.

2. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) said that he would vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Committee because he believed that UNRWA should be continued in order to enable it to pursue its humanitarian work. His vote would not, however, commit his Government in respect of operative paragraphs 5 and 6. In addition, his delegation believed that a conciliation body could obtain practical results only if its terms of reference were acceptable to the parties to the dispute. Accordingly, his vote on operative paragraph 4 would be guided by the attitude of the parties directly concerned.

3. Mr. YOSANO (Japan) congratulated the sponsors of the draft resolution on their efforts to reconcile different points of view and bring about an agreement. The Japanese delegation had only in recent years been taking part in discussions of the Palestine refu-

gee question, but even before its admission to the United Nations Japan had been making a contribution to UNRWA which, although modest, had shown its sincere sympathy for the Palestine refugees. The Japanese delegation was aware that the refugee problem could not be solved overnight, but hoped that the draft resolution which the Committee was about to adopt would be a first step towards a final settlement.

4. Mr. BEELEY (United Kingdom) said that his delegation's attitude to the draft resolution was dictated by the agreement reached in that connexion between the host countries and the United States of America, which was the principal contributor to the Agency's budget. His delegation would have wished that the mandate of UNRWA could have been extended for a longer period, but he was in broad agreement with the proposed text and would vote for it as a whole and for any parts of it which were made the object of a separate vote. He hoped that the Committee and then the General Assembly would adopt the draft resolution and thereby demonstrate the continuing concern of the United Nations for the future of the Palestine Arab refugees.

5. Mr. URRUTIA APARICIO (Guatemala) said that his Government and the Guatemalan people as a whole sympathized with the sufferings of the Palestine Arab refugees, who were the innocent victims of a conflict of international interests. His delegation had taken an active part in the discussions in the General Assembly in 1947 and 1948 which had resulted in the partition of Palestine and the establishment of the State of Israel. He was convinced that the measures taken at that time by the General Assembly had been equitable and even constituted the only viable solution to a complex problem of long standing. He agreed with other delegations that the situation of the Palestine refugees depended upon geographical, political, social and economic conditions in the Near East and that the question of their repatriation and compensation was closely linked with the very existence of Israel and its internal security. For humanitarian reasons, his delegation considered it necessary to continue UNRWA as recommended by the Secretary-General. He endorsed the draft resolution before the Committee and paid a tribute to its sponsors for their constructive efforts. He was particularly impressed by the wording of the fourth preambular paragraph, and although he had some misgivings regarding the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 5 he would vote in favour of them. He would, however, abstain from voting on operative paragraph 4. Although that paragraph was a natural consequence of the fourth preambular paragraph, which mentioned paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) and paragraph 2 of resolution 513 (VI), it referred only to the implementation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) and thereby limited the Conciliation Commission's terms of reference. His delegation

would, however, vote in favour of the draft resolution as a whole, even if that paragraph was adopted.

6. Mr. EASTMAN (Liberia) said that he wished to express his appreciation to the sponsors of the draft resolution, which he hoped would contribute to improving the tragic plight of the Palestine refugees. He would accordingly vote in favour of the draft resolution; in so voting, however, he could not commit his Government with regard to the provisions of operative paragraph 5. The contribution which his Government intended to make to UNRWA would be announced later.

7. Mr. SMITH (Canada) said that he would vote for the draft resolution, which in his view represented a reasonable compromise. He would, however, abstain from voting on operative paragraph 4, as he had some reservations about its wording. He would have preferred the language used in the corresponding clause of resolution 1315 (XIII) adopted by the General Assembly at its preceding session. The method proposed in operative paragraph 4 was but one of the possible lines of approach and related only to one of the fundamental difficulties.

8. Mr. SYLLA (Guinea) wished to repeat that, in his delegation's view, the problem of the Palestine refugees was, above all, a political problem. A political solution must therefore be sought, as had been recognized by several delegations and by the Director of UNRWA in his report (A/4213). Operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution recalled that it was necessary to secure the implementation of resolution 194 (III), and was therefore entirely satisfactory to his delegation. He would accordingly vote for the draft resolution as a whole but would abstain from voting on operative paragraph 5, because the Government of the Republic of Guinea had thus far taken no decision regarding its contribution to the relief programme. He would therefore request a separate roll-call vote on operative paragraph 5.

9. Mr. DZIRASA (Ghana) said that there was no question that peace in the Middle East and even, to some extent, in the world as a whole depended upon a satisfactory solution of the problem of the Palestine refugees. Such a solution would also facilitate the economic and social development of the region. It would, however, be unrealistic to envisage, in a single draft resolution, a general solution to all the unsolved problems in the Middle East. The draft resolution before the Committee dealt only with the refugee problem, and was, so far as that problem was concerned, a step in the right direction. The basic question was what action the United Nations should take after the expiration of the mandate of UNRWA in June 1960. Not a single delegation had refused to recognize that that mandate should be extended. His delegation, for one, had no hesitation in endorsing operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution (A/SPC/L.38/Rev.1), which provided for a three-year extension and for a review of the Agency's mandate after two years.

10. It was inevitable that a task as vast as that of caring for the refugees should involve political and administrative difficulties. His delegation, being convinced that those difficulties could be overcome only with the co-operation of the host countries, had no objection to operative paragraphs 2 and 3, which implicitly recognized that principle. His delegation

was also convinced that there should be conciliation between the Arab States and Israel, and hoped that all Member States would use their good offices to that end.

11. Mr. CRUISE O'BRIEN (Ireland) said that he would vote in favour of the draft resolution (A/SPC/L.38/Rev.1). He would vote for operative paragraph 4 in the hope that the Palestine Conciliation Commission would be able usefully to explore the possibilities of an application, by phases, of the principle of free choice, while taking care to safeguard the national security of Israel. He recalled the suggestions to that effect which his delegation had made during the general debate (159th meeting). The Conciliation Commission should also give consideration to the Secretary-General's proposals (A/4121). Since the Commission's task was both difficult and delicate, spectacular results could not be expected. Nevertheless, his delegation cherished the hope that some degree of progress, however limited it might be, would be achieved at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly.

12. Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon) recalled that his country's representative had stated, in the debate (153rd meeting), that it was impossible to put an end to the work of UNRWA. In the same statement, he had suggested that the Palestine Conciliation Commission should be reactivated; but—contrary to the impression of certain delegations—he had not intended to attribute to anyone the blame for that body's lack of success. The revised draft resolution (A/SPC/L.38/Rev.1) provided first of all for a three-year extension of the mandate of UNRWA, with a review at the end of two years. He was happy that that compromise formula was generally accepted.

13. His delegation would support the draft resolution in its entirety, including operative paragraph 4, which, going beyond the limits of financial assistance, envisaged a method for solving the problem as a whole—a problem which endangered peace and progress not only in the Middle East, but throughout the world. While rightly referring to the implementation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), operative paragraph 4 did not exclude the possibility of seeking other methods of settlement. His delegation continued to support the repatriation of the Palestine refugees, which could be achieved by means of a plan to be carried out by phases such as had been suggested by the Irish representative (159th meeting) or in any other way which was in accordance with justice. However, the door should not be closed to any other methods which would permit an equitable solution to the problem, nor should the possibility of resettling some refugees by means other than repatriation be ruled out.

14. Mr. VELAZQUEZ (Uruguay) said that his delegation approved of the draft resolution in so far as it extended the mandate of UNRWA. However, it had one reservation. If a separate vote was taken, it would abstain from voting on operative paragraph 4. The excessively rigid wording of that paragraph was not sufficiently imbued with the spirit of the fourth paragraph of the preamble, which was its logical basis, and would not facilitate the harmonious solution desired by all.

15. Mr. URRUTIA APARICIO (Guatemala) recalled that the Netherlands delegation had requested a sepa-

rate vote on operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution. He asked for a vote by roll-call on that paragraph.

16. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution (A/SPC/L.38/Rev.1).

A vote was taken by roll-call.

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

In favour: Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Ceylon, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Federation of Malaya, France, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Haiti.

Against: Israel.

Abstentions: Iceland, Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Sweden, Thailand, Union of South Africa, Uruguay, Burma, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland, Guatemala.

The paragraph was adopted by 54 votes to 1, with 17 abstentions.

17. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution (A/SPC/L.38/Rev.1).

A vote was taken by roll-call.

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

In favour: Canada, Ceylon, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ethiopia, Federation of Malaya, Finland, France, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia.

Against: None.

Abstentions: Dominican Republic, Guinea, Liberia, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Union of South Africa.

The paragraph was adopted by 64 votes to none, with 7 abstentions.

18. The CHAIRMAN put the draft resolution (A/SPC/L.38/Rev.1) to the vote as a whole.

The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 71 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

19. Mr. COMAY (Israel) said that his delegation supported the provisions of the draft resolution concerning the mandate of UNRWA; and its vote did not

imply any reservation regarding those provisions. His delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution as a whole for other reasons. While no substantial progress had so far been made towards solving the problem, international experience had shown that the only basis for a solution was the integration of the refugees into the economic life of the Arab world and negotiations between Israel and the Arab States to resolve existing differences. It was encouraging to note that those two basic tenets had been further reinforced by the Secretary-General's proposals (A/4121) and by the statements made by a number of delegations.

20. His Government had taken a number of measures and made certain undertakings which collectively defined its share in solving a problem for the creation of which it bore no responsibility. His country had absorbed the 50,000 refugees who had been under the care of UNRWA in Israel territory. It had also absorbed over 30,000 refugees who had returned to Israel, some of them under the family reunion scheme initiated by his country; and within the framework of a solution by integration in the Arab lands, Israel did not rule out an extension of the family reunion scheme. Israel had released frozen bank accounts to the value of approximately \$8 million and it had agreed to release all remaining accounts. It had also handed over all valuables and securities left behind in safe-deposit boxes. It had, furthermore, offered to pay compensation for abandoned properties, even before the achievement of a final peaceful settlement on other problems. For a number of years, his country had co-operated with the Conciliation Commission for Palestine in the monumental task of making an inventory of those properties and of valuing them. Lastly, his Government was willing at any time to negotiate a full and final settlement of all issues outstanding between Israel and the Arab States. His Government was, furthermore, ready to deal with the refugee problem separately and to negotiate, directly or indirectly, on that problem alone.

21. Turning to operative paragraph 4 of the resolution, he observed that any further reference to the Conciliation Commission in the year 1959 must take account of the evolution of United Nations policy in the matter since 1948, when the Commission had been established; of current international thinking on the problem; of the contemporary realities in the area and of Israel's own record and undertakings. By any of those tests, paragraph 4 was devoid of realism. It looked backward instead of forward and might well impede a solution. Nor was its inclusion justified by the fact that it was coupled with provisions about UNRWA arrived at in an understanding reached with the host Governments. It must be repeated that Israel was not a party to that understanding. His delegation had therefore voted against paragraph 4 and abstained on the draft resolution as a whole. In doing so, it fully maintained its position regarding the meaning of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) as stated in the analysis which it had made in its earlier statements. It regarded it as significant that a large number of delegations had expressed their misgivings about paragraph 4 and had abstained in the vote on that paragraph.

22. Mr. PETROS (Ethiopia) said that his delegation had voted for the resolution as a whole because of the humanitarian principles embodied in it. Had he been

present during the vote on operative paragraph 4, he would have abstained, not because his delegation had no interest in the plight of the refugees but for reasons of principle held by his Government.

23. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) said that he had voted for the draft resolution, despite its limitations, because its adoption offered the only possible solution. He hoped that before the next session the parties concerned would make every effort to settle their differences. The earlier resolutions of the General Assembly should undoubtedly be used for guidance in seeking a solution to the problem, but his delegation was convinced that it would be possible for both parties, while observing the spirit and letter of those resolutions, to display greater flexibility so as to reach a constructive and acceptable solution. His delegation had made the same observations at the twelfth session when explaining its vote (78th meeting). The fact that those observations were still valid was more than adequate evidence of the lack of progress made towards a solution.

24. With respect to paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, he felt that it placed particular emphasis on paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), which was of fundamental importance. Nevertheless, that provision should not be understood as precluding the possibility of applying other clauses of the numerous resolutions referred to in the preamble, in cases where any of those clauses was likely to facilitate an agreement between the parties and lead to a solution of the problem.

25. Mr. SUAREZ (Chile) expressed the hope that the parties concerned would succeed in settling a problem which affected the lives of more than a million people and which constituted a threat to the peace not only in the Near East but in the entire world. His delegation wished to commend the delegations of Indonesia and Pakistan for their efforts, and to pay a tribute to UNRWA. It had voted in favour of the preamble and operative part of the draft resolution, with the exception of paragraph 4, on which it had abstained. It considered that paragraph 4 was re-

strictive, in that it did not refer explicitly to paragraph 2 of resolution 513 (VI), in regard to the recommendation to the Conciliation Commission for Palestine.

26. Mr. ESCOBAR (Colombia) said that after considering all the views that had been expressed, his delegation had decided to vote for a resolution the main purpose of which was to extend the mandate of UNRWA, thus enabling the United Nations to maintain its interest in the grievous problem before it. His delegation hoped that the divergent views would soon be reconciled, so that peace might be re-established in the area in question.

27. Mr. GOHAR (United Arab Republic) said that although his delegation had voted for the draft resolution, it believed that the Agency's mandate should have been extended for more than three years. That would have given the refugees greater security and enabled UNRWA to carry out its programme more effectively.

28. Mr. TREJOS (Costa Rica) said that if his delegation had been present during the vote it would have voted for the draft resolution as a whole, but would have abstained on paragraph 4.

29. Mr. DAVIS (Director, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) wished, on behalf of UNRWA and its staff, to thank the many members of the Committee who had spoken words of commendation. He was grateful to the Committee, also, for its expressions of sympathy on the occasion of the death of the Deputy Director, Mr. Carver, and he thanked the Committee on behalf of Mrs. Carver.

30. The CHAIRMAN extended to the Director and the staff of UNRWA the Committee's deep appreciation of the work they had done. The Committee was certain that under Mr. Davis' capable direction further efforts would be made to carry out the important mission that had been entrusted to them.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.