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LETTER DATED 11 APRIL 1966 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 4 April 1966, addressed to you by the Permanent Representatives of the Arab States to the United Nations and circulated as document A/6298.

According to reports, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA has obtained additional voluntary contributions sufficient to cover current budgetary needs, and has informed the agency's Advisory Committee accordingly. The impression given in the letter from the Arab Representatives to the effect that the agency faces an immediate financial crisis would therefore appear to be unwarranted.

The essence of the matter is that the problem was created by the Arab resort to force of arms, in an attempt to prevent the emergence of Israel, as endorsed by the overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations.

Today, the Arab refugee problem is being perpetuated by Arab Governments for political ends. These Governments have refused to settle their differences with Israel by peaceful negotiation, in defiance of numerous resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. They maintain policies of warlike threats and preparations, and encourage the refugees themselves to expect a military solution of their problem.

The future of the Arab refugees lies in their absorption amongst their brethren in the Arab world, just as Israel has absorbed about the same number of Jews from the Arab countries. Israel is willing to play its part in a negotiated and agreed programme for settling the problem in a constructive and peaceful manner, including the settlement of compensation claims.

I should also like to observe that the tone and contents of the Arab letter suggest that it was submitted and circulated mainly for propaganda reasons. It contains a number of shopworn political slogans and factual mis-statements about the nature and origin of the Arab refugee problem. These assertions have been made and refuted countless times, in the General Assembly's annual debates on the reports of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, and there is no need to deal with them in detail in this letter. (It may be noted that the last debate, at the twentieth session of the General Assembly, was spread over two months, took up twenty-eight meetings of the Special Political Committee, and was marked by a rhetorical flood of over 140 statements and interventions by Arab representatives.)

I would appreciate it if this letter could also be circulated as a General Assembly document.

(Signed) Michael COMAY
Permanent Representative
