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REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS
RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE
NEAR EAST

Report of the Special Political Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Hermod LANNUNG (Denmark)

1. On 15 September 1968, in accordance with the request made by the General Assembly in paragraph 21 of resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 and paragraph 8 of resolution 1315 (XIII) of 12 December 1958, the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) submitted to the General Assembly his report for the year ending 30 June 1968.^{1/}
2. At its 1676th plenary meeting on 27 September 1968, the General Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in its agenda the item entitled "Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East" and to allocate it to the Special Political Committee for consideration and report.
3. The Special Political Committee considered the question at its 612th and its 616th to 635th meetings, held on 11 November and from 18 November to 13 December 1968.
4. At the 612th meeting on 11 November, the Secretary-General made a statement and the Commissioner-General of UNRWA introduced his report to the General Assembly.^{1/}

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session,
Supplement No. 13 (A/7213).

5. In a letter dated 11 November 1968 to the Chairman of the Special Political Committee (A/SPC/126), the representatives of Afghanistan, Indonesia, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia requested that "the Palestine Arab delegation be heard by the Committee during its deliberation of the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East". In a letter dated 18 November 1968 (A/SPC/127), the representatives of Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Southern Yemen, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Republic and Yemen requested that "the delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, representing the Arab People of Palestine, the principal party to the Palestine Question, be heard by the Committee during its deliberation of item 33". At the 616th and 617th meetings, on 18 and 19 November, respectively, the Committee decided, in regard to each request for participation, to authorize, in accordance with the practice established at the previous three sessions, the persons constituting each delegation to speak in the Committee, without such authorization implying recognition of the above-mentioned organizations. In accordance with this decision, statements were made on behalf of both delegations in the course of the Committee's debate on this item.

6. On 20 November, the United States of America submitted a draft resolution (A/SPC/L.165), the operative part of which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. Notes with deep regret that repatriation or compensation of the refugees as provided for in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) has not been effected, that no substantial progress has been made in the programme endorsed in paragraph 2 of resolution 513 (VI) for the reintegration of refugees either by repatriation or resettlement and that, therefore, the situation of the refugees continues to be a matter of serious concern;

"2. Expresses its thanks to the Commissioner-General and the staff of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for their continued faithful efforts to provide essential services for the Palestine refugees, and to the specialized agencies and private organizations for their valuable work in assisting the refugees;

/...

"3. Directs the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to continue his efforts in taking such measures, including rectification of the relief rolls, as to assure, in co-operation with the Governments concerned, the most equitable distribution of relief based on need;

"4. Notes with regret that the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine was unable to find a means to achieve progress in the implementation of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), and requests the Commission to exert continued efforts towards the implementation thereof;

"5. Directs attention to the continuing critical financial position of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, as outlined in the Commissioner-General's report;

"6. Notes with concern that, despite the commendable and successful efforts of the Commissioner-General to collect additional contributions to help relieve the serious budget deficit of the past year, contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East continue to fall short of the funds needed to cover essential budget requirements;

"7. Calls upon all Governments as a matter of urgency to make the most generous efforts possible to meet the anticipated needs of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, particularly in light of the budgetary deficit projected in the Commissioner-General's report, and, therefore, urges non-contributing Governments to contribute and contributing Governments to consider increasing their contributions;

"8. Decides to extend until 30 June 1972, without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East."

7. On 9 December, Iran, Pakistan, Senegal and Turkey submitted a draft resolution (A/SPC/L.166) of which Argentina and Yugoslavia subsequently became co-sponsors (A/SEC/L.166/Add.1). The operative part of the draft resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. Calls upon the Government of Israel to take effective and immediate steps for the return without delay of those inhabitants who fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities;

/...

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to follow the effective implementation of this resolution and to report to the General Assembly."

8. On 10 December, Afghanistan, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, India, Iran, Italy, Norway and Sweden submitted another draft resolution (A/SPC/L.167) of which subsequently Argentina, Ireland, Nigeria, Turkey and Yugoslavia became co-sponsors (A/SPC/L.167/Add.1). The operative part of the draft resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. Reaffirms its resolutions 2252 (ES-V) of 4 July 1967 and 2341 B (XXII) of 19 December 1967;

"2. Endorses, bearing in mind the objectives of these resolutions, the efforts of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to continue to provide humanitarian assistance, as far as practicable, on an emergency basis and as a temporary measure, to other persons in the area who are at present displaced and are in serious need of continued assistance as a result of the June 1967 hostilities;

"3. Strongly appeals to all Governments and to organizations and individuals to contribute generously for the above purposes to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and to the other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned."

9. On 11 December, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan and Somalia submitted a fourth draft resolution (A/SPC/L.168) which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Considering that the Palestine Arab refugees are entitled to their property and to the income derived from their property in conformity with the principles of justice and equity,

"Recalling its resolution 394 (V) of 14 December 1950, which directed the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine in consultation with the parties concerned to prescribe measures for the protection of the rights, property and interests of the Palestine Arab refugees,

"1. Requests the Secretary-General to take all appropriate steps to have a Custodian appointed to protect and administer Arab property, assets and property rights in Israel and to receive income derived therefrom on behalf of the rightful owners;

/...

"2. Calls upon the Governments concerned to render all facilities and assistance to the Secretary-General to render the task and functioning of the Custodian effective;

"3. Requests the Custodian to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session on the fulfilment of his tasks."

10. At the 633rd meeting, on 11 December, the Committee decided to give priority to the six-Power draft resolution and proceeded to vote on that resolution and the United States draft resolution.

11. The six-Power draft resolution (A/SPC/L.166 and Add.1) was adopted by a roll-call vote of 91 to 1, with 9 abstentions (see paragraph 17 below, draft resolution A). The voting was as follows:

In favour: 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, 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.

Against: Israel.

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

12. The United States draft resolution (A/SPC/L.165) was adopted by a roll-call vote of 101 to none, with 1 abstention (see paragraph 17 below, draft resolution B). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, 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, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldive 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.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Israel.

13. At the 634th meeting, on 12 December, the seventeen-Power draft resolution (A/SPC/L.167 and Add.1) was adopted by a roll-call vote of 88 to none (see paragraph 17 below, draft resolution C). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldive Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, 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 States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against: None.

/...

14. After the vote, the representatives of Botswana, Ceylon, Guinea, Iraq, Mali, Niger, Pakistan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen stated that they would have voted in favour of the draft resolution had they been present during the voting.

15. Before the Committee voted at the 635th meeting, on 13 December, on the five-Power draft resolution (A/SPC/L.168), it had taken note of the statement (A/SPC/L.169) submitted by the Secretary-General on 11 December on its administrative and financial implications. The draft resolution was then rejected by a roll-call vote of 44 to 42, with 27 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bulgaria, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Ceylon, China, Congo (Brazzaville), Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives Islands, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Pakistan, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Southern Yemen, Spain, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, Yemen, Yugoslavia.

Against: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Dahomey, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Lesotho, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Rwanda, Swaziland, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Abstaining: Cameroon, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Ghana, Greece, Honduras, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Zambia.

16. After the vote the representative of Haiti stated that, had his delegation been present, it would have voted against the draft resolution.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

17. The Special Political Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

/...

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF
AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

A

The General Assembly,

Recalling Security Council resolution 237 (1967) of 14 June 1967,

Reaffirming its resolution 2252 (ES-V) of 4 July 1967,

Taking note of the appeal made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the Special Political Committee on 11 November 1968,^{2/}

Convinced that the plight of the displaced persons could best be relieved by their speedy return to their homes and to the camps which they formerly occupied,

Emphasizing, consequently, the requirement for their speedy return,

1. Calls upon the Government of Israel to take effective and immediate steps for the return without delay of those inhabitants who fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to follow the effective implementation of the present resolution and to report thereon to the General Assembly.

B

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949, 393 (V) and 394 (V) of 2 and 14 December 1950, 512 (VI) and 513 (VI) of 26 January 1952, 614 (VII) of 6 November 1952, 720 (VIII) of 27 November 1953, 818 (IX) of 4 December 1954, 916 (X) of 3 December 1955, 1018 (XI) of 28 February 1957, 1191 (XII) of 12 December 1957, 1315 (XIII) of 12 December 1958, 1456 (XIV) of 9 December 1959, 1604 (XV) of 21 April 1961, 1725 (XVI) of 20 December 1961, 1856 (XVII) of 20 December 1962, 1912 (XVIII) of 3 December 1963, 2002 (XIX) of 10 February 1965, 2052 (XX) of 15 December 1965, 2154 (XXI) of 17 November 1966, and 2341 (XXII) of 19 December 1967,

Noting the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, covering the period from 1 July 1967 to 30 June 1968,^{3/}

^{2/} See A/SPC/SR.612.

^{3/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Supplement No. 13 (7213).

1. Notes with deep regret that repatriation or compensation of the refugees as provided for in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) has not been effected, that no substantial progress has been made in the programme endorsed in paragraph 2 of resolution 513 (VI) for the reintegration of refugees either by repatriation or resettlement and that, therefore, the situation of the refugees continues to be a matter of serious concern;

2. Expresses its thanks to the Commissioner-General and the staff of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for their continued faithful efforts to provide essential services for the Palestine refugees, and to the specialized agencies and private organizations for their valuable work in assisting the refugees;

3. Directs the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to continue his efforts in taking such measures, including rectification of the relief rolls, as to assure, in co-operation with the Governments concerned, the most equitable distribution of relief based on need;

4. Notes with regret that the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine was unable to find a means to achieve progress in the implementation of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), and requests the Commission to exert continued efforts towards the implementation thereof;

5. Directs attention to the continuing critical financial position of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, as outlined in the Commissioner-General's report;

6. Notes with concern that, despite the commendable and successful efforts of the Commissioner-General to collect additional contributions to help relieve the serious budget deficit of the past year, contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East continue to fall short of the funds needed to cover essential budget requirements;

7. Calls upon all Governments as a matter of urgency to make the most generous efforts possible to meet the anticipated needs of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, particularly in the light of the budgetary deficit projected in the Commissioner-General's report, and therefore urges non-contributing Governments to contribute and contributing Governments to consider increasing their contributions;

8. Decides to extend until 30 June 1972, without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

C

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2252 (ES-V) of 4 July 1967 and 2341 B (XXII) of 19 December 1967,

Taking note of the report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, covering the period from 1 July 1967 to 30 June 1968,^{4/}

Taking note also of the appeal made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the Special Political Committee on 11 November 1968,^{5/}

Concerned about the continued human suffering as a result of the June 1967 hostilities in the Middle East,

1. Reaffirms its resolutions 2252 (ES-V) and 2341 B (XXII);

2. Endorses, bearing in mind the objectives of these resolutions, the efforts of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to continue to provide humanitarian assistance, as far as practicable, on an emergency basis and as a temporary measure, to other persons in the area who are at present displaced and are in serious need of continued assistance as a result of the June 1967 hostilities;

3. Strongly appeals to all Governments and to organizations and individuals to contribute generously for the above purposes to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and to the other inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned.

^{4/} Ibid.

^{5/} See A/SPC/SR.612.