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Fifth session
Agenda item 20 (b)

PALESTINE

ASSISTANCE TO PALESTINE REFUGEES

Seventeenth report of 1950 of the Advisory Committee
on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. At its 36th meeting on 7 November 1950, the Ad Hoc Political Committee, in considering a draft resolution concerning assistance to Palestine refugees (A/AC.38/L.28/Rev.1), agreed that, before taking a vote, it should request the advice of the Fifth Committee in regard to the method of financing the proposed relief and reintegration programme (paragraphs 8 and 9).
2. In accordance with a decision taken by the Fifth Committee at its 262nd meeting on 9 November 1950, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the above-mentioned paragraphs.
3. In addition to the text of the draft resolution, the Advisory Committee had before it the records of the relevant discussions in the Ad Hoc Political Committee (A/AC.38/SR.35 and 36), as well as reports submitted respectively by the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency on the subject of assistance to Palestine Refugees (A/1451) and by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the subject of United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees (A/1452). Consideration has also been given to the financial reports and accounts of UNRPR for the period 1 December 1948 to 30 April 1950 and report of the Board of Auditors thereon (A/1354).
4. The Advisory Committee submits in paragraphs 5 to 9 below a brief survey of the various measures adopted since July 1948 for the relief of Palestine refugees. Paragraphs 10 to 14 contain certain recommendations concerning the specific question referred to the Committee.

/5. In his
A/1516

5. In his progress report of 18 September 1948 to the General Assembly (A/648, part three)* the United Nations Mediator on Palestine, dealing with the relief of Palestine refugees, drew attention to the urgency of the problem and expressed the hope that the international community would give all necessary support to the relief measures he had proposed. On 18 October 1948, the Acting Mediator on Palestine stated (A/689, paragraphs 3 and 4)** that the urgency of the problem had been accentuated and that, unless adequate and effective aid came quickly, the position of the refugees would become desperate. In view of these circumstances, the General Assembly, by resolution 212(III) of 19 November 1948, authorized the Secretary-General to establish a Special Fund [Palestine Refugee Fund] and to take all necessary steps to extend aid to Palestine refugees. UNRPR operated from 1 December 1948 until 30 April 1950, on which date its responsibilities, assets and liabilities were transferred to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (established by General Assembly resolution 302(IV) of 8 December 1949). For the period 1 January 1950 to 30 April 1950 UNRPR acted as the agent of UNRWAPRNE.

6. The Secretary-General, reporting on the operations of UNRPR from 1 December 1948 to 30 April 1950, (A/1452, paragraph 5), stated that approximately one million refugees had been fed; medical reports showed no starvation, epidemics or inflated death rate. Food, clothing, shelter and medical care, together with other amenities such as the commencement of educational facilities and minor employment projects, had been provided at an approximate cost of \$3 per capita per month, including all expenditures of UNRPR and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

7. The Advisory Committee considers it important to analyse the experience of UNRPR in the matter of contributions received and expenditure during the period of its operations:

* See Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Supplement No. 11.

** Ibid., Supplement No. 11A.

Contributions: 1 December 1948 - 30 April 1950

Recorded value in dollars (US)				
	Cash	Kind	Direct supplies and services	Total
(a) <u>Member States</u>				
Twelve Member States	23,129,270			
Sixteen Member States		2,856,403		
Total of contributions of Member States				25,985,673
(b) <u>Non-member States</u>				
Four non-member States	508,469			
Three non-member States		142,931		
Total of contributions of non-member States				651,400
(c) <u>Specialized agencies and other contributors</u>				
Total of contributions of specialized agencies and other contributors	342,379	1,097,584		1,439,963
(d) <u>Direct contributions (supplies and services) by Governments in the Near East</u>				
Five Member States			7,458,313	
One non-member State			933,481	8,391,794
	23,980,118	4,096,918	8,391,794	
GRAND TOTAL				36,468,830

It may further be noted that certain Member States, while not contributing to UNRPR, had responded to the earlier appeal made by the United Nations Mediator on behalf of the Disaster Relief Project (see A/689/Add.1, appendices D and E).

/Expenditure

Expenditure during the same period amounted to \$39,115,975, the excess of expenditure over income - \$2,644,081,* representing the cost of the operations of UNRPR while acting as the agent of UNRWAPRNE - being financed from the Working Capital Fund of the United Nations against the funds contributed to UNRWAPRNE.

The above expenditure figure excludes supplies to a value of approximately \$9,000,000, which were furnished by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and distributed by the operating agencies.

8. At its fourth session, the General Assembly, by resolution 302(IV) of 8 December 1949, decided to establish, in the place of UNRPR, a United Nations Relief and Works Agency, for the purpose of carrying out the direct relief and works programmes recommended by the United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East, and to approve the following estimate of expenditure for the period 1 January 1950 - 30 June 1951:

	<u>Direct relief</u> <u>Dollars (US)</u>	<u>Works programmes</u> <u>Dollars (US)</u>
1 January 1950 - 31 December 1950	20,200,000	13,500,000
1 January 1951 - 30 June 1951	-	21,200,000

* Apart from the contributions listed above, miscellaneous income to an amount of \$3,064 was received.

9. The situation at 1 November 1950 may be summarized as follows:

		<u>Dollars (US)</u>
(i) Estimated requirements for direct relief:		
1 January 1950 - 31 December 1950		20,187,000
1 January 1950 - 30 June 1951*		<u>9,167,000</u>
		29,354,000
(ii) Contributions promised for the period 1 January to 30 June 1951:		
Cash	38,041,000	
Kind	<u>1,027,000</u>	<u>39,068,000</u>
Balance available for works programmes (\$34,700,000)		<u>9,714,000</u>
(iii) Direct aid and services anticipated from five Near East Governments for the period 1 May 1950 to 30 June 1951:		
		<u>1,127,876</u>

Attention is drawn to the fact that the above cash contributions comprise \$37,582,000 promised by nine Member States in the proportions indicated below:

	<u>Percentages</u>
Bolivia	.0133
Canada	1.8360
Dominican Republic	.0133
Egypt	.9685
France	7.5994
Israel	.1330
Luxembourg	.0053
United Kingdom	16.3908
United States of America	73.0404

The balance of \$459,000 has been promised by two non-member States, specialized agencies and other contributors.

* The General Assembly contemplated the termination of direct relief by 31 December 1950. However, UNRWAPRNE has recommended its continuance beyond that date (A/1451, paragraph 65), and this recommendation is the subject of paragraph 2 of the draft resolution (A/AC.38/L.28/Rev.1). /10. It is

10. It is clear that there is a two-fold problem: (a) to meet the anticipated deficit for the period ending 30 June 1951; and (b) to provide for the period 1 July 1951 - 30 June 1952 the necessary funds for direct relief (\$20,000,000) and for the reintegration fund (\$30,000,000), as contemplated in the proposed draft resolution (A/AC.38/L.28/Rev.1, paragraphs 3, 5 and 6).

11. The Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director of UNRWAPRNE have made repeated appeals, on the basis of General Assembly resolution 302(IV), for contributions to the above programmes. The response has so far not proved adequate, and the Advisory Committee considers that active steps must be taken to increase the number of participating States. Furthermore, the Committee firmly believes that, having regard to the various forms in which contributions may usefully be made, every Member of the United Nations will be willing to participate, within the limits of its financial or material resources, in programmes of relief and reintegration, and thus bring about a more equitable distribution of the burden. The urgency of the problem is clearly demonstrated in the joint report by the Advisory Commission and the Director of UNRWAPRNE, which states that contributions received to date are below the amount necessary to cover the cost of immediate relief needs (A/1451, paragraph 75). The Advisory Committee is fully conscious of the difficulties confronting an agency which has to depend on donations provided in unknown amounts at unknown times, and sometimes in commodities which are difficult to fit into the programme.

12. In this connexion, special attention is directed to the following considerations:

- (i) As regards financial contributions: While it is not possible accurately to forecast the various currencies required by UNRWAPRNE, experience indicates that, over and above the amounts required to repay advances from the Working Capital Fund of the United Nations, the Agency has been able to utilize the following currencies, among others:

Pounds sterling, Egyptian pounds, Israeli pounds, Syrian pounds, Lebanese pounds, Jordanian dinars.

- (ii) As regards contributions in kind: A wide range of supplies and services is required both for the programme of relief and for that of reintegration.

13. After a careful review of the circumstances, including many alternative methods of financing, the Advisory Committee, while proposing a voluntary basis for United Nations contributions, recommends the very early appointment of a negotiating /committee

committee composed of seven members for the purpose of negotiating as soon as possible, during the current session of the General Assembly, with Member and non-member States the amounts which Governments may be willing to contribute to:

(i) The current programme for relief and works for the period ending 30 June 1951, bearing in mind the need for securing contributions from Member States which have not yet contributed; and

(ii) The programme of relief and reintegration projects envisaged in the draft resolution (A/AC.38/L.28/Rev.1) for the year ending 30 June 1952. The negotiating committee should be free to adopt procedures best suited to the accomplishment of its task, but it will no doubt have regard to:

- (a) The need for securing the maximum contributions in cash;
- (b) The desirability of ensuring that any contributions in kind should be of a nature which will meet the requirements of the contemplated programmes;
- (c) The importance of enabling UNRWAPRNE to plan its programmes in advance and to carry them out with funds regularly contributed; and
- (d) The degree of assistance which can continue to be rendered by specialized agencies, non-member States and other contributors.

The Advisory Committee further suggests that, as soon as the negotiating committee has ascertained the extent to which Member States are willing to make contributions, all delegations should be notified. After delegations have consulted their Governments, an appropriate meeting of Member States should be convened during the current session of the General Assembly at which Members may commit themselves to their national contributions, and the contributions of non-members be announced. Non-members of the United Nations would be invited to consult with the negotiating committee and to participate in the special meeting.

14. As regards paragraph 9 of the proposed draft resolution (A/AC.38/L.28/Rev.1), the Advisory Committee was informed that, as far as can be foreseen at the present time, the maximum sum likely to be available from the Working Capital Fund during July and August 1951 is estimated at \$2,500,000. The Committee trusts that the funds now available or to be made available to UNRWAPRNE will be so managed that demands upon the Working Capital Fund may be limited to a maximum of \$2,500,000, instead of the amount envisaged in paragraph 9 of the draft resolution.

15. The Advisory Committee was informed that advances made to UNRPR from the Working Capital Fund during 1950, to a total of \$4,500,000, have now been repaid.