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PROPOSED MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997*

MAJOR PROGRAMME I. MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND SECURITY,
DISARMAMENT AND DECOLONIZATION

Programme 5. Question of Palestine

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* The present document contains programme 5 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. The complete medium-term plan will subsequently be issued in final printed form as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/45/6/Rev.1).

PROGRAMME 5. QUESTION OF PALESTINE

A. Programme

1. General orientation

5.1 The question of Palestine is one of the most difficult and persistent issues facing the United Nations, having been first considered by the General Assembly at its second session in 1947. Since that time, the question of Palestine has been identified as the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East, which has periodically resulted in armed hostilities in the region, thereby imperilling international peace and security. Despite intensive efforts over the years, the conflict in the Middle East remains a serious threat to international peace and security.

5.2 In its resolution 38/58 C of 13 December 1983, the General Assembly endorsed the Geneva Declaration on Palestine of 7 September 1983 and the call for convening an International Peace Conference on the Middle East, and requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Security Council, urgently to undertake preparatory measures to convene the Conference. The call for convening the proposed Conference was reaffirmed by the Assembly at subsequent sessions. Most recently, in its resolution 44/42 of 6 December 1989, the Assembly called once again for the convening of the Conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, on an equal footing, and the five permanent members of the Security Council, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination, reaffirmed principles for the achievement of comprehensive peace, and requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts with the parties concerned, and in consultation with the Security Council, to facilitate the convening of the Conference, and to submit progress reports on developments in that matter. The Secretary-General's efforts in this regard are covered under programme 1, "Good offices, special missions and peace-keeping operations", of the present medium-term plan.

5.3 By its resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, the General Assembly, recalling its relevant resolutions which affirmed the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, including the right to self-determination without external interference and the right to national independence and sovereignty. It also reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property, emphasized that full respect for and the realization of those inalienable rights were indispensable for the solution of the question of Palestine, and recognized that the Palestinian people was a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. By its resolution 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, the Assembly decided to establish a Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and requested the Committee to consider and recommend to it a programme of implementation designed to enable the

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Palestinian people to exercise its rights. Subsequently, by its resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish within the Secretariat of the United Nations a Special Unit on Palestinian Rights, which would, under the guidance of the Committee, prepare studies and publications on the subject, promote maximum publicity for those studies and publications and organize in consultation with the Committee, commencing in 1978, the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Those resolutions constitute the initial mandate for the programme of activities that has evolved since.

5.4 A major factor in the evolution of the programme is the continuing lack of progress towards a just solution of the question of Palestine, for which the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people has been recognized as a condition sine qua non. Although regularly endorsed since 1976 by the General Assembly, the relevant recommendations of the Committee to promote the realization of those rights have neither been acted upon by the Security Council nor otherwise implemented.

5.5 The Palestinian people remains committed to the exercise of its legitimate national and political rights, including self-determination in Palestine. The uprising in the occupied Palestinian territory, the intifadah, which started in December 1987, has continued and intensified as an expression of the determination of the Palestinian people under occupation to reject and bring to an end the Israeli occupation. The General Assembly and the Security Council have repeatedly expressed concern at the resulting tragic loss of life and the widespread violations of human rights of the Palestinian people. The situation brought about by the intifadah and the subsequent political developments have made it imperative to renew efforts to break out of the prevailing impasse and to make concrete progress towards a peaceful, negotiated settlement.

2. Overall strategy

5.6 The major responsibility for the programme rests with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The Committee's basic mandate, as set out in General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX), is to consider and recommend to the Assembly a programme of implementation designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights. In subsequent resolutions the Assembly has authorized the Committee to promote implementation of its recommendations and to disseminate, to the greatest extent possible, information on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and on its programme, through non-governmental organizations and other appropriate means. More recently, the Committee has also been guided by the Geneva Declaration on Palestine adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held in 1983, and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 38/58 C, and by the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights also adopted by the Conference.

5.7 As requested by the Assembly in its resolution 32/40 B, the Secretary-General established, in 1978, a Special Unit on Palestinian Rights. Pursuant to Assembly resolutions 34/65 D of 12 December 1979 and 36/120 B of 10 December 1981, the

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Secretary-General in 1982 redesignated the Special Unit as the Division for Palestinian Rights. The Division, which forms part of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs and Secretariat Services, is charged with dissemination of information on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and on the efforts of the United Nations to promote the attainment of those rights, heightening awareness of the facts relating to the question of Palestine and creation of a favourable atmosphere for the full implementation of the recommendations of the Committee.

5.8 In successive resolutions the Assembly has elaborated a strategy for promoting the goals of the Committee through the continued monitoring of the situation on the ground and recommendations for action accordingly, provision of the necessary substantive support to the Committee, preparation of studies and publications, organization of a programme of meetings with experts, parliamentarians, government representatives, non-governmental organizations and others, and implementation of a public information programme on the subject.

5.9 In the implementation of the programme, close co-ordination is required, within the United Nations, with the Department of Public Information, the Centre on Human Rights, the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. Substantive co-operation, within the United Nations system, will also be required with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the World Health Organization, each of which has a mandate to carry out activities related to the question of Palestine within its sphere of competence. Co-ordination and co-operation will further be sought with other units of the Secretariat and bodies of the United Nations system in appropriate activities relating to the question of Palestine.

3. Subprogramme structure and priorities

5.10 The activities of the Committee and the Division in this area are included under programme 5 in a single subprogramme, "Question of Palestine: exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights". Consequently, no priorities can be assigned.

B. Subprogramme

SUBPROGRAMME. QUESTION OF PALESTINE: EXERCISE BY THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE
OF ITS INALIENABLE RIGHTS

(a) Objectives

5.11 The legislative authority for this subprogramme is spelled out in the initial mandates cited in paragraph 5.3 above and in General Assembly resolutions 34/65 D, 36/120 B, 38/58 B and C and 40/96 B, and the other annual resolutions of the Assembly on the question of Palestine, most recently resolutions 44/41 A to C and 44/42.

5.12 The programme will aim to provide effective support for the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in reviewing the situation in order to promote a just solution of the question of Palestine. In that context, it will seek to disseminate information on the situation of the Palestinian people and of proposals to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

5.13 In the course of the medium-term plan period, the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs and Secretariat Services will undertake the following functions:

(a) To continue to assist the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in its efforts to promote the implementation of its recommendations, of the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in 1983, of General Assembly resolution 44/42 regarding the convening of the proposed International Peace Conference on the Middle East and of other activities mandated by the Assembly, including representation by the Committee at conferences and meetings on the question of Palestine and the sending of Committee delegations as considered appropriate;

(b) To monitor political and other developments affecting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, to follow relevant activities of the organs and organizations of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, and to prepare documentation, reports and bulletins on such developments;

(c) To organize, co-ordinate and provide substantive services for regional symposia, international meetings and preparatory meetings of non-governmental organizations, with the participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations and Governments, experts, Committee members and observers, and representatives of United Nations bodies and of intergovernmental organizations in their efforts to increase international awareness of the question of Palestine;

(d) To organize, co-ordinate and provide substantive services for regional seminars with the participation of experts, parliamentarians, government representatives, Committee members and observers, and representatives of United Nations bodies and of intergovernmental organizations;

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(e) To prepare studies, information notes and other publications relating to the different aspects of the question of Palestine and to make efforts to achieve their widest dissemination;

(f) To organize at Headquarters the annual commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November.
