



UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE
SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on
Monday, 24 April 1950, at 11 a.m.

Present:

Mr. PALMER	(United States)	Chairman
Mr. de BOISANGER	(France)	
Mr. ERALP*	(Turkey)	
Mr. de AZCARATE		Principal Secretary

* Alternate

Reply by the parties to the Commission's proposals

In response to a request by the Chairman, the PRINCIPAL SECRETARY recalled that the reply of the Arab States to the Commission's proposals had been handed to Mr. de Boisanger by the Egyptian minister for Foreign Affairs at Cairo during a meeting at the Ministry. The Secretariat had prepared minutes of that meeting and reproduced them as an annex to the report drawn on the subject of the retiring Chairman's mission. The Egyptian Ministry for its part was to have drawn up an official report.

The Principal Secretary had been able to note, on reading a draft shown him by Mr. Mostapha, that the text of the Egyptian report, barring certain formal changes which were to be made, tallied in substance with the Secretariat minutes. The statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Mr. de Boisanger were recapitulated in terms corresponding — apart from several slight turns of expression — to those used by the Secretariat.

It had been categorically stated at the Cairo meeting — and the draft official report included that statement — that the reply in question had been made on behalf of all the Arab States. However, Mr. Abdulhadi, who was at that moment making a short stay in Geneva, had just informed the Secretariat that he was unaware of the terms of the Arab reply, and did not know whether it committed Jordan. The Jordan representative had stated that he proposed to mention in a message to his Government that the Commission regarded the reply submitted at Cairo as also expressing the viewpoint of the Government of Jordan.

Mr. de BOISANGER said that he had likewise informed Mr. Abdulhadi that the reply given at Cairo had been submitted on behalf of all the Arab States, while adding that the Commission would be sure to examine any communication which the Jordan Government might wish to send it.

The CHAIRMAN recounted a conversation which he had had with Mr. Rafael, in the presence of Mr. Barco. The Israeli representative had seemed to imply that his Government was considering sending the Commission a reply containing certain conditions not altogether unconnected with those laid down by the Arabs. He (Mr. Rafael) had explained that the Israeli authorities were closely studying the terms of the Commission's proposals in order to satisfy themselves that they did not lend themselves to dissimilar interpretations by each of the parties. Mr. Rafael having voiced doubts as to the meaning which the Arab States attached to the word "mediation", he (the Chairman) had reminded him of the definition of that term which he had already given on several occasions to Mr. Eban.

He had then drawn Mr. Rafael's attention to the error which the Israeli Government would be committing were it to give other than an unconditional reply to the Commission's proposals.

Mr. Rafael, who had shown a disposition to discuss that assertion, had finally admitted that in view of the general situation and the state of public opinion in Israel, his Government had had to be wary of seeming to call too insistently for immediate negotiations lest it give an impression of weakness;

He had explained to Mr. Rafael that an unconditional reply by the Israeli Government would help the Commission in its efforts to persuade the Arabs to withdraw all or some of their conditions. Any mention by the Israeli Government in its reply of the conditions laid down by the Arabs would, on the other hand, only invite renewed dissuasion.

The Israeli representative had suggested that his Government might be induced to make a rejoinder to the Arab reply through the medium of the press. He (the Chairman) had pointed out that rejoinders of that kind were undesirable, but that the main essential was that the reply to the Commission should include no mention of the Arabs' conditions. Mr. Rafael had seemed to appreciate, if not accept, the viewpoint advanced, and had shown readiness to refer the matter to his Government. Since the time of that discussion, the State Department had intimated that an approach had been made to the Israeli Embassy in Washington to stress the importance of an unconditional reply on the part of Israel, thereby enabling the Conciliation Commission to concentrate on persuading the Arabs to abandon their stipulated conditions — a step which would likewise be in Israel's interests.

A similar approach was to have been made in Tel-Aviv by the United States representative.

His conversation with Mr. Rafael and the action taken in Washington, he felt, gave grounds for hoping that the Israeli reply would neither stipulate conditions nor refer directly to those stipulated by the Arabs. Mr. Rafael had made it clear that it would be some time before the reply was transmitted, and that the Israeli Government was awaiting the meeting of the Jordan Parliament at which the annexation of Arab Palestine by Jordan would probably be announced, and the possible resumption of negotiations between Jordan and Israel. He had added that even in the event of direct negotiations between the two countries, certain formal discussions could continue to take place at Geneva so as to make it possible, once agreement in principle had been achieved in the Near East, for the negotiations to be transferred to Geneva in order that the final conclusion of the agreement could take place under the Conciliation Commission's auspices.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) announced that the French Government, after confirming that action on similar lines had actually been taken by the United States Government, had given its representative at Tel-Aviv instructions to approach the Israeli Government with a request that an unconditional reply be given to the Commission's proposals.

Mr. ERALP (Turkey) cited Mr. Rafael as having voiced the opinion that the Arab reply was in bad faith and contained conditions which were unacceptable.

The CHAIRMAN observed that Mr. Rafael had spoken to him in similar terms. He had stressed to him, in reply, the importance of an unconditional reply on the part of the Israeli Government, thereby enabling the Commission to urge the Arabs to withdraw their own conditions.

Compensation (W/43)

The CHAIRMAN contended that no approach should be made to the Israeli Government on that matter pending the receipt of its reply to the general proposals. If the Commission received a favourable reply to its proposals, it would be in a stronger position to tackle the question of compensation.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) while sharing the Chairman's view, suggested that the Commission might prepare the text of a note to the Israeli Government, to be transmitted only after receipt of the latter's reply to the Commission's general proposals.

Next periodic progress report

The CHAIRMAN suggested that despatch of the next [periodic progress report](#) might well be held over until the Israeli Government's reply was known.

In the meantime, the Secretariat could prepare and the Commission approve the other sections of the report.

Presence at Geneva of certain Arab representatives

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the fact that Egypt was represented with the Commission, Jordan being similarly represented, but only for the matter of a few days. The Lebanese representative was that country's Minister at Berne. Syria was not represented with the Commission. In those circumstances, the Commission should not take too serious a view of any impatience shown by the delegations.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) observed that during his conversations in Cairo he had given it to be understood that the discussions between the Commission and the Arab delegations would not be resumed until the end of April or the beginning of May. Furthermore, those delegations were aware that the Commission needed to know the Israeli reply before it could continue the discussions.

Next meeting

The next meeting was fixed for Wednesday, 26 April 1950, at 11 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

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