



DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

September 1984

Volume VII, Bulletin No. 9

1. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people adopts its report to the General Assembly
2. Proposals by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on a Middle East settlement
3. Non-governmental organizations activity and information

1. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People adopts its report to the General Assembly

On 18 September 1984, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People adopted its report to the General Assembly (A/39/35). In its report the Committee recommended that it was increasingly convinced that positive action by the Security Council to act on the Committee's recommendations would advance prospects for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. It recalled that those recommendations were solidly founded on fundamental and internationally recognized principles relating to the problem of Palestine, the core of the conflict.

The Committee once again unanimously reiterated the validity of its recommendations and recommended that the General Assembly should again renew its urging for the Security Council to take positive and overdue action on those recommendations.

The Committee also reaffirmed the validity of the recommendations adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held at Geneva in August 1983.

The Committee believed that it should consolidate its efforts to increase awareness and understanding of its recommendations, which were specifically designed to enable the Palestinian people to attain its inalienable rights, as well as to achieve peace in the Middle East, with due regard for the concerns of all the parties to the conflict in the region. In this connection, it was encouraged by the better understanding of those recommendations which was now increasingly evident in all regions of the world.

The Committee felt that, at this critical juncture, a concentrated effort to find a just solution to the question of Palestine and to end the unacceptable plight of the Palestinian people was long overdue.

The Committee was convinced that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, recommended by the Geneva Conference and endorsed in General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, would provide an opportunity for all parties concerned to participate in negotiations which should lead to a just solution of the problem. The Committee therefore strongly recommended that international action should henceforth concentrate on the preparations necessary for the convening of this Conference and contribute to its successful and peaceful outcome.

2. Proposals by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on a Middle East settlement

On 29 July 1984, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presented the following proposals for a Middle East settlement contained in document A/39/368-S/16685:

"The Soviet Union, concerned over the still explosive situation in the Middle East, is profoundly convinced that the vital interests of the peoples of that region, and likewise the interests of international security as a whole, urgently dictate the need for the speediest attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict.

"It is equally firmly convinced that such a comprehensive, truly just and really lasting settlement can be drawn up and implemented only through collective efforts with the participation of all parties concerned.

"Accordingly, and wishing to contribute to the establishment of peace in the Middle East, it puts forward the following proposals on the principles of a Middle East settlement and ways of reaching it.

"Principles of a Middle East settlement

"1. The principle of the inadmissibility of the capture of foreign lands through aggression should be strictly complied with. Accordingly, all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 - the Golan Heights, the West Bank of the River Jordan and the Gaza Strip and the Lebanese lands - should be returned to the Arabs. The settlements established by Israel in the Arab territories after 1967 should be dismantled. The borders between Israel and its Arab neighbours should be declared inviolable.

"2. Action must be taken to guarantee in practice the inalienable right of the Palestinian people, whose sole legitimate representative is the Palestine Liberation Organization, to self-determination and to establish its own independent State on the Palestinian lands which will be freed from Israeli occupation on the West Bank of the River Jordan and in the Gaza Strip. As envisaged by the decision of the Arab Summit Conference held at Fez, and with the consent of the Palestinians themselves, the West Bank of the River Jordan and the Gaza Strip can be placed by Israel under the control of the United Nations for a short transitional period, not exceeding a few months.

"Following the creation of an independent Palestinian State, it will, naturally, by virtue of the sovereign rights inherent in every State, itself determine the nature of its relations with neighbouring countries, including the possibility of forming a confederation.

"The Palestinian refugees should be given the opportunity envisaged by United Nations decisions to return to their homes or receive appropriate compensation for the property left behind by them.

"3. East Jerusalem, which was occupied by Israel in 1967 and which is the site of one of the main Muslim shrines, should be returned to the Arabs and become an inalienable part of the Palestinian State. Freedom of access of believers to the Holy Places of the three religions should be ensured throughout Jerusalem.

"4. The right of all States in the region to secure and independent existence and development should be effectively guaranteed, with, of course, full reciprocity, as the genuine security of some cannot be ensured by violating the security of others.

"5. An end should be put to the state of war, and peace should be established between the Arab States and Israel. This means that all the parties to the conflict, including Israel and the Palestinian State, should commit themselves to honour each other's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, and to resolve by peaceful means, through talks, the disputes that have arisen.

"6. International guarantees of the settlement should be drawn up and adopted; the role of guarantor could be assumed, for example, by the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council or by the Security Council as a whole. The Soviet Union is ready to participate in such guarantees.

" Ways of reaching a settlement

" Experience has most convincingly demonstrated the futility and at the same time the danger of attempts to solve the Middle East problem by forcing on the Arabs various kinds of separate deals with Israel.

" The only right and effective way of ensuring a radical solution to the Middle East problem is through collective efforts with the participation of all parties concerned, in other words, through talks within the framework of an international conference on the Middle East specially convened for the purpose.

" In the opinion of the Soviet Union, in convening such a conference the following provisions must be taken as a guide.

" Aims of the conference. The objective of the conference should be to find solutions to all aspects of a comprehensive Middle East settlement.

" The outcome of the conference's work should be the signing of a treaty or treaties embracing the following organically interlinked components of a settlement: withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967; implementation of the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to the creation of its own State; establishment of a state of peace and ensuring security and independent development of all the States parties to the conflict. Simultaneously, international guarantees of compliance with the terms of such a settlement should be drawn up and adopted. All the understandings reached at the conference should constitute an integral whole approved by all of its participants.

" Participants. All the Arab States having a common border with Israel, i.e. Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon, and Israel itself, should have the right to participate in the conference.

" The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) should be an equal participant in the conference, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This is a matter of principle as a Middle East settlement cannot be attained unless the Palestinian problem is solved, and it cannot be solved without the participation of the PLO.

" The USSR and the United States of America should also participate in the conference, as States which play, by force of circumstances, an important role in the Middle East affairs and were co-chairmen of the preceding conference on the Middle East.

" The participants in the conference might also, subject to general consent, include certain other States of the Middle East and adjacent regions which are capable of making a positive contribution to the settlement of the Middle East problem.

" Organization of the work of the conference

" Like its predecessor, the new conference on the Middle East should be held under the auspices of the United Nations.

" The conference's main working procedure could be working groups (commissions) established, with a membership comprising representatives of all the participants in the conference, to examine key issues of a settlement (withdrawal of Israeli troops and the course of the frontiers; the Palestinian problem and the question of Jerusalem; an end to the state of war and the establishment of peace; the problem of the security of those States which participated in the conflict; international guarantees of compliance with the understandings, etc.).

" If necessary, bilateral groups could also be set up to work out the details of understandings affecting only the two countries concerned.

" To examine the results of the working groups' (commissions) activities, and when necessary in other cases, plenary meetings would be held at which, with the common consent of all the participants in the conference, its decisions would be endorsed.

" In the initial stage of the conference's work, the States participating in it could be represented by ministers for foreign affairs, and subsequently by specially designated representatives; when necessary the ministers could periodically take part also in the further work of the conference.

" Guided by the aim of establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and eliminating the explosive situation in the region, the Soviet Union appeals to all parties to the conflict to act on the basis of a sober assessment of each other's legitimate rights and interests, and to all other States not to hamper, but to contribute to, the quest for such a settlement.

3. Non-governmental organizations activity and information

A.

The Third National Convention of the Palestine Aid Society of America was held in Washington D.C. from 7 to 9 September. The aims of this organization are both to alleviate human suffering and to contribute to the maintenance of the independent Palestinian nationality and culture.

The Convention was opened with a rally addressed by the Rev. Jesse Jackson. The programme for the two days included vivid presentations by Leila Zakharia of Association Najdeh (Lebanon) and Farid Salah, Women's Work Committees in the West Bank and Gaza. Both of these organizations are recipients of funds from the Palestine Aid Society.

Among other groups represented at the Convention were Women for Women in Lebanon, the Women's Collective on the Middle East, United Holy Land Fund, El-Bireh Society and the Ramallah Federation. All stressed the need for collaboration in rendering material support and influencing of American public opinion regarding the situation in Palestine.

The meeting was highlighted by addresses given by the Honourable James Abourezk and Israeli attorney Lea Tzemel who is active in the defence of Palestinian prisoners.

B.

The Palestine Human Rights Campaign National Conference was held from 28 to 30 September 1984 in Chicago, Illinois. The theme, "Scars of occupation", included presentations on the international context of Israeli policy, the conditions in Lebanon and the occupied territories and the situation of prisoners. Palestinian rights were dealt with from the perspective of religion/ethics, women, labour and international law.

Among the speakers were Princess Dina Abdul Hamid of Jordan, a leader in the struggle for the rights of Palestinian refugees, Marie Christine Aulas, noted French journalist, Salah Tamari, President of the Prisoner's Association of Ansar, and Albert Aghazarian, in charge of public relations for Bir-Zeit University.

An organizers' conference on the final day of the meeting brought together activists to discuss strategies, organizing techniques and networking in defence of Palestinian rights.

C.

The International Centre for Information on Palestinian and Lebanese Prisoners, Deportees and Missing Persons has organized an international conference scheduled to be held in Paris from 6 to 7 October at the Foyer International d'Accueil. The purpose is to determine the scope and forms of the extension of its activities in order to undertake broader action and information sharing.

This organization has endeavoured to act as a connection with national and international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental. It welcomes requests for their various publications.

