



DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

July 1985

Volume VIII, Bulletin No. 7

CONTENTS

| | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| I. ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE | 1 |
| II. REPORT OF THE TWELFTH UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE HELD AT UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK, 8-9 JULY 1985 | 4 |
| III. DECLARATION ADOPTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE HELD AT UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, 10-12 JULY 1985 | 12 |
| IV. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS | 15 |

I. ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE
INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On 12 July 1985, the Acting Chairman of the Committee, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General, expressed the Committee's concern at recent reports of renewed acts of aggression by the Israeli authorities against the Palestinians in the occupied territories. The full text of the letter is as follows: 1/

"In my capacity as Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, it is my duty to inform you of the Committee's concern at recent reports of renewed acts of aggression against Palestinians by Israeli forces of occupation in the West Bank as well as a proposed drafting of new laws that would affect Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza.

"The source of this information, which has been brought to the attention of the Committee, is news reports that appeared in Al-Fajr on 21 June and Ha'aretz on 25 June 1985.

"Al-Fajr reported that occupying Israeli military forces had demolished seven villages in the area of Hebron on 18 June, thereby displacing some 200 families in order to convert their land into a military training zone. According to residents of the town of Yatta in the area, the Israelis are now levelling the seized land and are reportedly preparing to build a military airport and other facilities. Houses have been demolished, grain storage and water wells destroyed, and villagers have been forced off their lands.

"Regarding the proposed drafting of new laws, it was reported in Ha'aretz and Al-Fajr that the Israeli Defence Minister, Yitzhak Rabin had assured Jewish settler leaders in the West Bank and Gaza on 23 June that his ministry is considering deporting Palestinian residents of the occupied territories who take part in what is termed 'anti-Israel activity'. He said that existing Israeli laws are not sufficient to allow for the implementation of rapid deportation in such instances and, in consequence, new laws should be drafted.

1/ A/40/480-S/17340.

"Mr. Rabin proposed further that more town arrests be made of anti-Israel activists and that formerly applied methods of punishment be revived, that is to say, imprisonment without trial or charges for an unlimited period. Such proposed action is of course in direct contravention of principles affecting basic human rights.

"I bring these matters to your attention since such repressive measures on the part of the Israeli authorities cannot but aggravate tensions and amplify threats to peace and security in the region, if not the world.

"As you are aware, the Committee remains convinced that positive action by the Security Council on its recommendations and on the proposed international peace conference on the Middle East would advance prospects for a just and lasting peace in the region. Such action would help avoid, if not preclude, the recurrences of such inequities as are detailed in this letter.

"In consequence, I should be most grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 33 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council."

In a letter dated 18 July 1985, the Acting Chairman of the Committee informed the Secretary-General of recent action taken by the Israeli authorities that **would** lead to the closing of Hospice Hospital in occupied East Jerusalem. The full text of the letter is as follows: 2/

"In my capacity as Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, it is my responsibility to inform you of recent action taken by the Israeli authorities that will lead to the closing of the Hospice Hospital in occupied East Jerusalem.

"The source of this information is news reports that appeared in Al-Fajr on 17 May and 12 July 1985 and in Ha'aretz on 9 July 1985.

"According to Al-Fajr, the Hospice is the only government hospital in the Arab part of Jerusalem and has traditionally cared for the poor. It has been under threat of closure by the Israeli Health Ministry for many years but such attempts were thwarted by local and international pressure. Although the Israeli Government claims, according to Al-Fajr, that the closure is intended to reduce government expenses, it rejected offers by Hospice administrators and benefactors to turn the institution into a private hospital with its own budget.

"At a press conference held on 14 May 1985, speakers, including the Hospital Director and other Israeli and Arab physicians, agreed that the Israeli health officials had no valid grounds to close the Hospice, since its staff is professionally qualified and is rendering a much needed service to the Arab residents of the Old City.

"Ha'aretz and Al-Fajr have reported that the Hospice Hospital will be officially closed as at the end of July 1985. The decision was made by the Health Ministry of Israel after consultations with the State Employee Commission. After the closure, Arab patients from East Jerusalem in need of hospitalization will be referred to government hospitals in West Jerusalem.

"It is the understanding of the Committee that this is but a further instance of the way in which the Israeli authorities are failing to provide medical services in a manner that is acceptable to the local population. It has been reported that the Israeli authorities have taken over a building in Sheikh Jarrah intended to house a central hospital and have prevented the Red Crescent Hospital in Jerusalem from expanding. The Secretary of the Pharmaceutical Union in the West Bank and Chairman of the Friends of the Hospice Committee has said that Israeli officials have refused to allow a children's hospital or a health centre to be built in Muslim waqf land to serve the poor population of Jerusalem.

"I bring these matters to your attention since it is the considered view of the Committee that they represent still further evidence of the way in which the Government of Israel is failing to abide by international agreements regarding the status of citizens under occupation.

"As has been expressed in previous communications, the Committee remains convinced that a concentrated international effort to find a just solution to the question of Palestine and to help avoid such inequities as are described in this letter must be given a new momentum.

"In conclusion, I would like to request that this letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 33 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council."

II. REPORT OF THE TWELFTH UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR
ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE HELD AT UNITED NATIONS
HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK, 8-9 JULY 1985

1. The Twelfth United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine, with its central theme "The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people", was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 8 and 9 July 1985 in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 38/58 B. Four meetings were held at which five panelists presented papers on different aspects of the question of Palestine.

2. His Excellency Mr. Oscar Oramas-Oliva (Cuba), Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, was Chairman of the Seminar and Mr. Boris Tarasyuk (Ukrainian SSR) Rapporteur of the Seminar. In the absence of the Chairman, H.E. Mr. Farid Zarif (Afghanistan), Vice-Chairman of the Committee, acted as Chairman of the Seminar.

Opening statements

3. The opening session of the Seminar on 8 July 1985 was addressed by Mr. Willian B. Buffum, Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs of the United Nations. In welcoming the participants on behalf of the Secretary-General, Mr. Buffum stated that the convening of the Seminar underscored the importance that the international community attached to solving the question of Palestine, which was at the very heart of the Middle East conflict. It was moreover a reflection of the realization that to permit a situation to remain critical to the point of endangering international peace and security had adverse effects not only on the States and peoples of the region but also on the entire international community.

4. The persistent efforts of the United Nations had over the years produced at least a consensus on the fundamental elements required for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem. The call for an international peace conference on the Middle East and the continued efforts for its convening could not but be viewed as a recognition of the fact that a comprehensive settlement would have to be reached through a process of negotiations with the participation of the parties concerned under the auspices of the United Nations. Any solution would have to take into consideration the interests and concerns of all States and peoples in the region, including those of the Palestinian people.

5. H.E. Mr. Oscar Oramas-Oliva, welcoming the participants, recalled the importance the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People attached to the question of Palestine and its commitment to finding a solution to the problem.

He gave a brief account of the Committee's work and highlighted the significance of ensuring that all facts surrounding the question of Palestine reached the public so that a proper understanding of the issues could be achieved.

6. The Committee also, along with the majority of States, fully endorsed the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East as a valuable step forward in the search for peace, security and stability in the region. Consequently, it had made this the focus of its work in 1985. It was for this reason that one of the panels of the Seminar was devoted exclusively to the International Peace Conference. It was the Committee's hope that the views expressed at the Seminar would help to promote the convening of such an important conference.

7. Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi, Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations, conveyed a message from H.E. Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and Commander-in-Chief of the Forces of the Palestine Revolution. In his message, Chairman Arafat thanked the participants in the Seminar for their continued efforts in defence of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

8. Israel's aggressive policies, supported by successive American Administrations, had resulted in the Palestinian cause entering a dangerous phase. However, in spite of enormous challenges the Palestinians continued their struggle and resistance. The ordeals and hardships they had to undergo did not impair their resolve to continue this struggle, which met with the support of the peoples of the world.

9. The Palestine Liberation Organization had availed itself of every opportunity in the search for peace and would continue its efforts to achieve a joint Arab political plan which aimed to contribute to the attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict.

10. It was significant that the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was organizing two distinct activities - the Seminar and a symposium. The message carried by the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) of Canada and the United States of America would focus on the negative attitude of those two States to the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, with the hope that it would result in a positive response in those States.

11. Chairman Arafat extended to the representatives of NGOs his great appreciation for their unrelenting efforts to mobilize public opinion in support of the peace process as particularly manifested in their signature campaign launched internationally on 29 November 1984.

12. The opening session was also addressed by H.E. Mr. Natarajan Krishnan on behalf of the non-aligned Movement; Mr. Jonathan Mataa Sibitwa Lichilana on behalf of the United Nations Council for Namibia; H.E. Mr. Gennady Oudovenko on behalf of the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid; Mr. Ahmad Farouk Arnouss on behalf of the United Nations Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples; H.E. Dr. Clovis Maksoud on behalf of the League of Arab States; Mr. Mamoudou Kane on behalf of the Organization of African Unity and H.E. Mr. Youssouf Sylla on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. At the fourth meeting, the Seminar was addressed by Mr. Ben Mokwena on behalf of the African National Congress of South Africa.

13. Two panels were established at the Seminar. These, and the panelists who presented papers on these aspects on the question of Palestine were as follows:

(a) The role of the Palestine Liberation Organization;
Prof. Ibrahim Abu-Lughod (Palestinian);

(b) The International Peace Conference on the Middle East, the need for such a conference; efforts and prospects to promote a successful outcome and benefits thereof;
Prof. Naseer Aruri, H.E. Mr. Victor J. Gauci, Prof. W. Thomas Mallison, Dr. Igor Petrovich Belyaev.

14. In view of the well researched and in depth analysis contained in the papers presented at the Seminar and in accordance with established practice, the papers will be published in full, together with the report of the Seminar, as a contribution to a wider understanding of the question of Palestine. The report of the Seminar should reflect only the main points that emerged during the discussions.

The role of the Palestine Liberation Organization

15. The Seminar heard an analysis of the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization. It was noted that the Palestinians today neither enjoyed nor exercised political rights as Palestinians anywhere in the world. Nevertheless their determination, despite many adversities, to normalize their political status was reflected in their struggle to retrieve their national rights, including their right to independence and sovereignty in Palestine, to recovery of their national identity and representation by their own chosen representatives, namely, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

16. The Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian people were not two distinct entities, nor was it possible to deal with the Palestinian people without dealing with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The development of the Palestine Liberation Organization was nothing but the result of the development of the social, economic and political institutions of the Palestinian people and, particularly, their social and political conscience. Consequently, the Palestine Liberation Organization had assumed the responsibility for the cultural, economic, social and political development of the Palestinian people.

17. The Palestine Liberation Organization viewed the struggle of the Palestinian people as a struggle of a colonial population against a form of colonialism described as settler colonialism. In that sense Israel was viewed as a colonial settler State that was implanted on part of an Arab national homeland with the active support and sustenance of the European/American system of power. To attain justice, the Palestinians would have to obtain the support of States that reject colonialism ideologically, structurally and culturally.

18. The Palestine Liberation Organization had defined the nature of Palestinian rights. It had articulated these national rights in the broad terms of self-determination. It was this articulation of Palestinian national rights that was essentially affirmed by the United Nations when it supported the Palestinian rights to independence and of return.

19. The Palestine Liberation Organization had struggled since 1968 for a democratic non-sectarian State. While conceiving of coexistence with the Jewish people in peace within the framework of a unitary State, the Organization recognized the difficulties in the way of the acceptance of such a solution, not only by Israel but by other States as well. The Palestine Liberation Organization had therefore elaborated its provisional solution, which conceived of the possibility of a de facto coexistence of two States in Palestine, one principally Jewish-Israeli and the other Palestinian Arab. By this it had placed itself in a position of antagonism, both in relation to Israel and zionism as well as to United States interests. It had also become a kind of vanguard of the anti-imperialist struggle in the Arab world. Moreover, its structure had proved that it was capable of not only resisting political pressure, but also, and most importantly, military aggression.

20. In the 21 years since the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization, it had experienced various tests and hardships and become overwhelmingly recognized as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and as an active force to be reckoned with in the Middle Eastern political arena. In that regard, it had had a decisive influence in the search for a solution of the Palestine question, as well as the problem of the Middle East as a whole.

The International Peace Conference on the Middle East

21. The Seminar concluded its deliberations by discussing in depth the question of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. It was noted that, although almost 40 years had passed since the United Nations General Assembly had adopted resolution 181 (II), which recommended the creation of two States - an Arab State and a Jewish State - so far it had been implemented only to the extent of the creation of the State of Israel. One of the foremost commitments of the international community was to ensure the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination and creation of its own independent State in Palestine. It was felt that the principles enunciated by the United Nations commanded universal adherence and should be supported accordingly, within the framework of a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The question of Palestine represented a continuing responsibility of the United Nations and of all its members who cherished the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and who respected the very decisions taken in the United Nations to which they had subscribed.

22. In that connection, it was strongly reaffirmed that the question of Palestine was at the core of that conflict, which itself was a multi-faceted problem. Over the years, a broad international consensus had been achieved on the necessity of a comprehensive, just and durable solution. This consensus was defined in the Geneva Declaration adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in 1983, and also stressed in United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/58 C, which called for the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East. It was noted that the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held in Geneva from 29 August to 7 September 1983, which had adopted the Geneva Declaration, was the first occasion at which so broad an international forum had met to consider the Palestinian question. No less than 117 States had participated fully in the Conference while 20 others had taken part as observers; in addition, for the first time ever, approximately 100 non-governmental organizations and several eminent personalities had been invited for that occasion. Amongst the NGOs several came from Israel, thus demonstrating by their presence that there existed within Israel a group of peace-loving persons who also strove for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

23. The Geneva Declaration adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine envisioned that the Peace Conference would be convened under the auspices of the United Nations. The United Nations, in addition to bearing a sacred trust and responsibility to the Palestinian people, constituted the only forum for negotiation to facilitate the meeting of all the parties to the conflict. The existing procedures at the United Nations made possible the participation of all parties concerned.

24. The Geneva Declaration had also called for the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organization as well as the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and other concerned States on a equal footing and would take as its guidelines the various proposals consistent with the principles of international law.

25. The guidelines adopted by acclamation by the Conference and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly were:

(a) The attainment by the Palestinian people of its legitimate inalienable rights, including the right to return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine;

(b) The right of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate on an equal footing with other parties in all efforts, deliberations and conferences on the Middle East;

(c) The need to put an end to Israel's occupation of the Arab territories, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and, consequently, the need to secure Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem;

(d) The need to oppose and reject such Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and any de facto situations created by Israel as are contrary to international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly the establishment of settlements, as these policies and practices constitute major obstacles to the achievement of peace in the Middle East;

(e) The need to reaffirm as null and void all legislative and administrative measures and decisions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purported to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, including the appropriation of land and property situated thereon, and in particular the so-called "Basic Law" on Jerusalem and the proclamation of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel;

(f) The right of all States in the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, with justice and security for all the people, the sine qua non of which is the recognition and attainment of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as stated in subparagraph (a) above.

26. These guidelines were important and relevant for the focus on the central issues while fully acknowledging that the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people remained fundamental to any solution.

They were based on a recognition of the indispensable role of law in achieving the greatest possible measure of justice and security for both Israelis and Palestinians. Law was not only the basis of a just solution, but provided the only practical solution. It was maintained that justice and coercion were required in peace settlements and where justice was used less, coercion needed to be used more.

27. An international peace conference on the Middle East could lead to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region and to the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and guarantee the existence and the security of all States in the region, including Israel; lead to the development of economic ties between all nations of the world with the Arab States and with Israel; and lead to agreements which would satisfy all the parties concerned, put an end to the recurring Israeli-Arab wars and thus remove a constant threat to international peace and security. It would furthermore restore the authority of the United Nations and make it once more a potent force in the maintenance of peace.

28. The Seminar regarded the fact that the majority of States in the international community as well as several major intergovernmental organizations had expressed their strong support for the holding of the Conference to be a significant factor and testimony to the vital importance of such a conference. Its central task would be to implement the existing legal right of Palestinian self-determination. The Seminar urged the Governments of the United States of America and Israel to reconsider their negative attitude to the ongoing peace process within the United Nations system.

29. It also hoped that all those in support of the Conference, and this was the overwhelming majority of the international community, would unite to overcome the obstacles posed by the refusal of Israel and the United States of America to agree to participate in such a Conference. It was the refusal of those two States alone that obstructed the progress desired by the international community. When the other States Members of the United Nations acted without hesitancy to assert leadership in achieving a peaceful settlement under law, that would have a significant effect upon the United States of America and bring it back to its principled advocacy and practical support for the self-determination of the Palestinian people, which it had recognized at the time of the adoption of the Partition resolution (General Assembly resolution 181 (II)).

30. In that same connection, the Seminar appreciated the consistency and continuity of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics policy towards the Middle East settlement, as reiterated in its latest proposals of 29 July 1984, entitled "The proposals of the Soviet Union on the Middle East settlement", which took into account the basic interests of all sides involved in the conflict, including PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and suggested the convocation of an international conference on the Middle East as an instrument for such a settlement.

31. In confirmation of its efforts to bring about progress and to maintain the momentum of hope, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People had decided to exert every effort towards the early convening of the proposed Conference. The Committee therefore had made this aspect the main focus of its work programme in 1985. Consequently, in all the seminars and symposia organized this year, one panel would exclusively deal with the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. Furthermore, the Committee had decided to send a delegation of its members to a selected number of countries and, in particular, those who were members of the Security Council, with a view to promoting the early convening of the International Peace Conference.

32. The Seminar therefore considered that it was of paramount importance that the international community should intensify and unite its efforts to ensure the convening without delay of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, as an instrument to ensure the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace and of security and stability in the Middle East, while at the same time ensuring the attainment and exercise, long overdue, of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

33. The Seminar conveyed to Chairman Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization its thanks for his message to the Seminar and expressed its support for the just cause of the Palestinian people. It also conveyed its strong support for the early convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of the permanent members of the Security Council, as well as of the parties most directly involved in the conflict, particularly the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as a positive and constructive step in the search for a solution to the question of Palestine.

* * *

A full report of the Seminar together with the papers of the experts will be published at a later date.

III. DECLARATION ADOPTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL
NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE HELD AT UNITED NATIONS
HEADQUARTERS, 10-12 JULY 1985

1. We wish to thank the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights for making this Symposium possible.
2. We also wish to sincerely voice our appreciation to the distinguished expert panelists, workshop organizers and resource persons who spoke here and offered valuable insights into the question of Palestine as well as the potential central role to be played by NGOs. These practical suggestions assisted us in formulating future plans for effective collaboration in North America and in linking our efforts to a broader, global network.
3. We, the representatives of non-governmental organizations present at the North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, 10-12 July 1985, at United Nations Headquarters in New York, call upon the peoples and Governments of the United States and Canada to take all possible steps to secure a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the core of which is the question of Palestine.
4. We resolutely reaffirm the international consensus that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We affirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference, and to establish an independent Palestinian State on its own national territory under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions.
5. It is our belief that all the parties to the conflict should come together in an international peace conference on the Middle East as called for at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, August 1983, and as adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 38/58 C. It is essential that the conference be inclusive of and be attended by representatives of both Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, those Arab States party to the conflict, the United States and the Soviet Union.
6. We strongly encourage all regional NGOs to work diligently with the general public to develop public awareness and support for the Conference. We applaud the United Nations for this recommendation and request the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights to assist North American NGOs by producing a concise publication in mass quantity that clearly explains the objectives and advantages of such a Conference.
7. We strongly support the global signature campaign launched on 29 November 1984 by the Interim Co-ordinating Committee (ICC) for NGOs on the Question of Palestine on behalf of convening the International Conference. We are committed to develop creative ways of enlisting organizational support during the coming months. We will co-ordinate our efforts with ICC on this important project.

8. This Symposium has reminded us of the powerful and decisive role played by the media, especially television, in shaping North American public opinion on the question of Palestine. We are determined to seek more effective ways and means of utilizing this media potential in order to accurately inform the public of the actual facts pertaining to this issue with the expressed intention of positively impacting on United States and Canadian Middle East policies.

9. We hereby establish a North American Interim Co-ordinating Committee (NAICC) on the question of Palestine as a mechanism to enhance our collective effectiveness and to organize our relationship with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights. The initial member organizations are listed on the attached sheet.

10. We define the initial responsibilities of NAICC to include:

(a) Co-operating closely with the United Nations in the planning of the 1986 North American Symposium;

(b) Recruiting other NGOs for participation in the 1986 Symposium;

(c) Serving as a channel of information among NGOs in North America;

(d) Circulating the minutes of the Co-ordinating Committee meetings;

(e) Building a vibrant, broadly based coalition of groups in North America in order to better inform the public and to influence public policy on the question of Palestine;

(f) Co-ordinating relations with the International Co-ordinating Committee and other international NGOs.

11. NAICC members should attend Committee meetings when possible and build a close working relationship with the Committee. The Division could assist NAICC in contacting ICC and NGOs both in North America and other regions for the purpose of strengthening the global network supporting the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

12. We urge the Committee to fund the participation of four North American delegates present for this Symposium in the NGO International Meeting to be convened in Geneva in September 1985. We believe that such an initiative by the United Nations will ensure balanced, effective representation at the International Meeting.

13. We believe that the effectiveness of United Nations NGO meetings will be significantly enhanced by the participation as resource persons, representatives of Israeli peace groups and of Palestinian groups inside Israel and the occupied territories (West Bank and Gaza). We note with satisfaction that some such groups did actively participate in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine (1983) and the International NGO Meeting on the Question of Palestine (1984), and we call for invitations to be extended to them for regional symposia as well, in order that the discussions may focus on solutions to the question of Palestine that include relevant perspectives.

NAICC should make a special effort to expand contacts with Palestinian organizations in North America, as well as North American Jewish and Arab organizations, to explain North American NGO work and to involve them in co-operative activities.

14. We NGOs intend to develop additional effective educational resource materials on the question of Palestine, including teaching aids and relevant bibliographies. Specific details are to be found in the appended workshop report.* We hereby ask the CEIRPP and the Division for technical and financial assistance in the final production of these materials.

15. We are distressed by the decline in international financial support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency as noted in the workshop report on religious institutions. We call on all NGOs to encourage both the United States and Canadian governments to give top priority to funding UNRWA at its full budgeted level.

16. We gratefully note the emphasis by the many resource centres of the Presbyterian Church (USA) on the question of Palestine (see appended workshop report)* We request that the Division provide copies of its publications and other relevant United Nations documents in quantity for their effective utilisation by the resource centres.

17. We urge the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division to continue to emphasize and work on the integral issue of women under Israeli occupation. While clearly not separate from the whole situation, women's lives are beset with particular problems that must be addressed by all North American NGOs. The full report of the women's workshop outlines our recommendations for co-ordinating activities in the coming years.

18. We urge the Committee and the Division to extend their outreach into the region in every possible way. We specifically request that the Division NGO Liaison and Information officers, as well as Department of Public Information officers, be encouraged to attend the conferences and activities of NGOs, trade unions, ethnic and other minority groups, peace and disarmament groups and others to demonstrate the linkage between their various areas of concern and the question of Palestine and to recruit their active participation in future United Nations sponsored NGO symposia, conferences and meetings. The process of achieving peaceful co-existence and justice in the region is essential to the success of the global struggle for disarmament, peaceful co-existence and justice.

19. We urge the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to convey this Declaration and the appended workshop reports to the General Assembly at its fortieth session as part of the Committee's report.

* The appended workshop report will be included in the report that will be published shortly in its final form.

IV. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. L' Association Médicale Franco-Palestinienne reports intensive activity in recent months. In addition to their ongoing projects serving the Palestinian Community in the medical field, the Association is sponsoring volunteer summer projects in Beir-Zeit, Nazareth, Hebron and Jaffa.

Their other activities include radio broadcasts and newspapers articles explaining the goals of their Centre de Mar Elias in the heart of Beirut, film showings, information evenings and cultural programmes concerning the life of the Palestinian people and a conference on human rights in the occupied territories and Lebanon.

2. The National Founding Convention for the newly transformed November 29th Committee for Palestine will be held from 16 to 18 August at San Francisco State University. The Convention will ratify internal structures and their programme of work as well as elect a National Executive Committee.

The Committee intends to bring together activists from across the United States to discuss a common strategy for building the Palestine Solidarity Movement and to deepen understanding of political developments in the Middle East region.

3. The Palestine Human Rights Campaign has just issued an investigative report entitled "Israeli settler violence in the occupied territories: 1980-1984".

4. The International Centre for Information on Palestinian and Lebanese Prisoners, Deportees and Missing Persons has reproduced and circulated "A Defense of Children", which is a report by Lydia Kuttub on the situation of Palestinian children.

5. The American Friends Service Committee's Institute for International Understanding sponsored a residential conference from 29 June to 3 July at Whittier College in California. It dealt with such Middle East focused topics as: obstacles and opportunities for dialogue, personal dimensions of understanding, religious dimension of conflicts, US interests and policy, the US Peace movement, effective education and organizing.

Key speakers included Charles Kimball, Director, Middle East Office, National Council of Churches, Inge Lederen of the American Jewish Committee and Ghada Tallami, Palestinian scholar.

6. The Signature Campaign for the International Peace Conference on the Middle East has led to the formation of a Swedish Co-ordinating Committee. The Parliamentary Association for Euro/Arab Co-operation has reproduced the text of the petition in a convenient format for widespread circulation. The Church of Humanism has begun a "street collection" of signatures in such locales as the cultural and financial districts of New York City.

The Interim Co-ordinating Committee of NGOs is intensifying its efforts to involve more organizations in the Campaign which shall reach its climax on 29 November 1985.

7. The Mahrashta unit of the All India Indo-Arab Friendship Association has announced the publication of a bulletin Al Sadaaga wa Al Taswon. The purpose of this periodical will be to cover cultural economic and social aspects of developments in the Arab world.

The Association believes that such information will mobilize public opinion concerning the Arab situation and enhance friendly relations with the Arab people.

The first issue, devoted to the question of Palestine, contains a statement by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and the text of the speech delivered by Shafiq Al-Hout, Palestine National council member, at the United Nations NGO Symposium held in New Delhi from 1 to 3 May 1985.
