



DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

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I. CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE AT THE FORTIETH
SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The question of Palestine was considered at the fortieth session of the General Assembly between 2 and 4 December 1985. The debate began with a statement by the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

The Rapporteur of the Committee introduced the Committee's report. 1/

The full text of the Chairman's and Rapporteur's statements are reproduced below. 2/

Chairman's statement:

"Last year, in its resolution 39/49 D, the General Assembly reaffirmed its endorsement of the call for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in conformity with the guiding principles recommended by the International Conference held in Geneva in 1983. The Assembly urged all Governments to make additional constructive efforts and to strengthen their political will in order to convene the Conference without delay and for the achievement of its peaceful objectives.

"During the past year, the concept of such a Conference has gained growing acceptance, both at the level of Governments and at the level of world public opinion. Indeed, the Conference, which would be held under the auspices of the United Nations, would provide a legal and political framework accepted by the vast majority of the international community for the carrying out of negotiations in a spirit of respect for internationally recognized principles and on a footing of equality of all the parties concerned. Hence, it would make it possible to go beyond the narrow strategic interests and the purely domestic concerns of the various States and to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. And, better still, the agreements that would be reached by such a Conference would be universally recognized as legitimate and could be guaranteed and applied equitably and in a way accepted by all the parties.

"Based on those considerations and on the mandate given it in General Assembly resolutions 39/49 A and B, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People decided, in its programme of work for 1985, to continue as a matter of priority to exert all efforts to promote the early convening of the Conference. To that end, we set our course in two directions. The first was to send delegations to selected capitals to discuss the best ways of promoting this aim. The second was to intensify efforts to alert public opinion, through the organization of seminars, symposia of non-governmental organizations and meetings with journalists. Finally, the Committee decided that the emphasis in its activities would constantly be placed on

the need to promote the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

"In accordance with that programme of work, the Committee sent delegations to a certain number of Governments members of the Security Council. The details of those missions are set forth in the Committee's report and I shall not go into them here. Nevertheless, I would emphasize that the Governments concerned had a very positive response to the Committee's recommendations and understood the need, indeed the urgency, of taking agreed, specific measures to make a better contribution to the efforts of the United Nations to ensure a just and lasting settlement to the Palestinian question.

"Encouraged by that response to its initiatives, the Committee had expressed its intention to complete its contacts with other States members of the Security Council next year.

"We also noted with satisfaction the positive replies of the majority of Security Council members and other parties concerned to the contacts made by the United Nations Secretary-General, to whom we should like to pay tribute for his tireless efforts in the cause of the Palestinian people.

"We were also greatly encouraged by the growing understanding and acceptance of the concept of the conference which resulted from the seminars, symposiums and meetings which were held in 1985 and by the efforts made in that respect by many non-governmental organizations in various countries.

"As will be seen from the report submitted to this Assembly, three regional seminars were organized this year in China, Guyana, and in the city of New York. These seminars were attended by parliamentarians, university professors and experts, which made possible an examination in depth of the question of an international conference on peace in the Middle East, and the consensus reached was that a conference constitutes a valid basis for first, the establishment of just and lasting peace in the region; secondly, achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people; thirdly, the guarantee of the right to existence and security of all the States in the region; fourthly, the elimination of the constant threat to international peace and security.

"Those attending the seminars urged States that have not yet accepted the idea of a conference to reconsider their attitude to the peace process under way within the United Nations system.

"The Committee also intensified its co-operation with non-governmental organizations by organizing three regional symposiums, in India, in Senegal and in New York, and an international meeting held in Geneva. These symposiums were attended by a large number of non-governmental organizations from the various regions, including - and I stress this - some from Israel and the occupied Palestinian

territories. They made considerable efforts to establish means of co-ordination both at the international and regional level, and in the instances of the Geneva and New York meetings these efforts were successful.

"These non-governmental organization meetings also enabled important declarations to be adopted, in which those organizations supported not only the idea of a peace conference on the Middle East, but they also undertook to step up their action towards their Governments and public opinion in regard to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as defined by the General Assembly.

"Convinced of the fundamental role to be played by these non-governmental organizations in alerting and mobilizing public opinion, the Committee decided to annex these important declarations to its report, in so far as they make it possible for the public at large to acquire a better understanding of the question of Palestine. It also intends further to extend its programme of action and co-operation with non-governmental organizations in the year to come. It should be emphasized that at a critical stage in international efforts to enhance the chances of a negotiated settlement under United Nations auspices, the contribution of parliamentary experts and other organizations might conduce to a happy outcome to the question of Palestine and the Middle East.

"I have merely given a general overview here of some of the most impressive activities undertaken by the Committee this year, to which should be added other activities such as those undertaken by the Division for Palestinian Rights, the Department of Public Information and the representatives of the Committee at various international meetings. I shall not go into those in detail, because they are clearly set out in the report.

"Today, the international community has come to recognize that the question of Palestine lies at the heart of the conflict of the Middle East, and that there can be no lasting solution to that conflict without the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. These rights have been reaffirmed on many occasions by the General Assembly and include - if there were any need to be reminded of them - the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference; their right to independence and national sovereignty, including the right to establish their own State in Palestine and ~~the~~ right to return to their homes and their belongings, or to obtain compensation if they do not wish to return. In a spirit of objective realism, the Committee also recognized the right to existence of all States in the region.

"At the request of the General Assembly, the Committee laid down a programme which would give effect to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, and that programme has been approved at each General

Assembly session by a great majority of Members. As is known, the opposition of a permanent member of the Security Council prevented the Council from following up those recommendations. I have had an opportunity to repeat on many occasions - and I can never repeat it sufficiently - that the recommendations of the Committee are based solidly on fundamental principles recognized internationally and in the Charter of the United Nations. Any proposal purporting to resolve the question of Palestine without taking into account the essential elements of these recommendations would be doomed to failure.

"In its report the Committee therefore reaffirmed once again the validity of its recommendations and those of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine which was held in Geneva in 1983.

"The Committee believes that it is now up to the Security Council to give effect to those recommendations and that is why, throughout the year, we have continued to make strong appeals to the Security Council to take positive measures to give effect to these recommendations, with a view to enhancing the possibility of establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

"The Committee would like to emphasize that the question of Palestine has reached a critical stage, making it imperative that collective efforts be increased so as finally to bring about a just solution to the intolerable fate of the Palestinian people.

"The present situation in the occupied territories shows how necessary that is, and it is reflected in the Committee's report to the General Assembly. Indeed the Committee noted with growing concern that the situation continued to worsen because of the policy of establishing and expanding settlements in the occupied territories, the violation of human rights, such as the right to freedom of movement, freedom of speech or freedom of association, with all their concomitant consequences on economic and social development in these territories.

"The Committee would like to express its deep concern at the Israeli practices and policies in the occupied Palestinian territories. It would like to draw the attention of the General Assembly and the Security Council to these facts, given that they are clearly contrary to the Fourth Geneva Convention and have serious consequences on peace and security in the region. In the light of these acts of violence, which are intensifying in the region, we would like to emphasize that as long as the Palestinian people are unable to exercise their inalienable rights the conflict and tension will only become worse.

"It is both the duty and the responsibility of the United Nations to restore peace, security and stability in the Middle East while there is still time. The objective criteria have been laid down, as have the means. At the present stage, I think there is only one element - and it is a formidable one - which is missing, and that is political will. If

we are able to overcome our emotion and put ourselves outside our immediate interests, we shall find that political will easily. Therefore, let us harness our efforts and imagination to reach a just and lasting settlement of this crisis, which it should be noted is a threat to international peace and security."

Rapporteur's statement

"It is an honour for me to present the 1985 report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/40/35), on behalf of the Committee, which during the last 12 months has once again striven hard to achieve something which has eluded all of us for so many years - the exercise of the legitimate and inalienable right of the Palestinian people to return to their homes and property and to achieve self-determination, national independence and sovereignty.

"It is said that time heals wounds, but we know that in the past 40 years many opportunities have been lost; the wounds are still sore and do not seem to heal. The report before us clearly shows that the Committee has dutifully discharged its role in bringing to the attention of the international community the plight of the Palestinian people in their struggle for an independent homeland.

"The tragic events covered in paragraphs 16 to 32 of the report are an affront to the efforts of the United Nations, which should be met with a redoubling of our efforts, by putting strong and convincing arguments to those that have so far supported the efforts of the Committee and by stepping up our efforts to persuade those countries that still need to be convinced to join in the United Nations approach in favour of a just solution to the question of Palestine.

"The measures affecting the rights of the Palestinian people, including those Palestinians in the refugee camps in southern Lebanon, reflected in paragraphs 33 to 57 have been the subject of lengthy discussions by the Committee and have subsequently been brought to the attention of the Member States on no less than 13 occasions. Certain issues, in particular the illegal settlements in the occupied territories and the displacement of a great number of families in order that their land might be converted into a military training zone, are two negative measures taken by the Israeli authorities which have aggravated threats to peace and security in the region.

"~~This year~~ the Security Council has on three occasions been seized of the Palestinian question and has twice been called upon to take action on the grave situation afflicting the civilian population in the occupied Palestinian territories. The consensus reached by the Council in the adoption of resolution 564 (1985) last May was marred and proved to be short-lived when, three months later, a permanent member of the Security Council vetoed a draft resolution submitted by the non-aligned members of the Council - action which was as regrettable as it was unfortunate.

"Paragraphs 67 to 85 of the report demonstrate the efforts being made by the Palestine Committee to promote the convening of the proposed international conference on peace in the Middle East - an event which the majority of Member States believe could turn the tide of instability in the region and pave the way for a lasting solution. They believe that it is the only door left open for bringing about reconciliation among opposing parties.

"The contacts carried out with members of the Security Council should instil a sense of pride and achievement in the members of the Committee, and indeed in the United Nations as a whole. In all the capitals visited strong support and encouragement were given to the Committee to press on with its search for a solution through an international peace conference. Indeed, the role of the Committee and the proposed international peace conference were seen as indispensable to progress. Other approaches were considered unrealistic, and the efforts of the Secretary-General were welcomed wherever the Committee went.

"The energetic efforts of the Committee did not stop there. By actively participating in 15 international conferences and meetings the Committee has during the past year carried the voice of the Palestinians to the four corners of the globe. The Committee grasped each opportunity to tell the world that there are people who, despite 40 years of United Nations involvement, are still without their homeland.

"The Committee also notes with extreme encouragement the declarations made in support of the holding of an international conference on peace in the Middle East. From the Mediterranean context to the non-aligned Movement, from the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the Organization of African Unity, from the European Council to the Commission on Human Rights, from Bandung to Nairobi, from the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) to the Arab States, there is no dissenting opinion as to the urgency of seeking an early solution to the question of Palestine through the holding of an international peace conference. Everywhere there is a common denominator, there is a conviction that an international conference on peace in the Middle East offers the only realistic and practical way towards a solution of the problem of Palestine and the establishment of a Palestinian State.

"During the past year no less than 17 gatherings have addressed this question. Paragraphs 87 to 134 are a recorded reaffirmation of the special attention which the United Nations, the non-aligned countries and non-governmental organizations are giving to this important subject. With so many declarations and statements of unanimous support by the majority of Member States of the United Nations, it passes our understanding how a solution to the Palestine question cannot be attained.

"The call for direct negotiations among the parties themselves, including the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), has been resounding. There is also broad agreement that the Palestine question is

the key to the Arab-Israeli crisis and that Palestinian leaders should be involved in a negotiated solution.

"Once again the role of non-governmental organizations on the question of Palestine has been outstanding. Ten years ago the Committee recognized the paramount importance of non-governmental organizations in enhancing objective public awareness of the Palestinian cause and in encouraging public opinion in favour of a speedy, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. That recognition has been vindicated. Their involvement has brought about a better understanding of the problem of Palestine and the influence it is having in the Middle East.

"In 1985, New Delhi, New York, Dakar and Geneva have been the venues of important symposiums at which non-governmental organizations have made a unique and valid contribution in reaffirming the rights of the Palestinian people. Suffice it to state that the members of the Committee who attended those symposiums were impressed by the quality of participation by non-governmental organizations.

"The Asian Symposium, in New Delhi, the North American Symposium, in New York, and the first African Regional NGO Symposium, in Dakar, have drawn valuable conclusions for the future and expanded co-operation in and co-ordination of activities. Furthermore, the declarations adopted by the symposiums reflect the basis on which non-governmental organizations intend to play their important role in promoting a just solution of the question of Palestine. There is no doubt whatsoever that these gatherings constitute a pool of experience and information pertaining to the question.

"All this is an added asset to the endeavours of the Committee to bring about an early and comprehensive solution to the problem of Palestine. Non-governmental organizations need all the support from the Committee that it can give. I am sure that this will be amply forthcoming in the years to come.

"Other very important contributions to the work of the Committee were the seminars held in Asia, Latin America and North America. The reports of those seminars clearly indicate the intensive and in-depth approach of participants to the Palestine question. The Committee itself is encouraged to note significant changes in public opinion in many important countries which hitherto had not been as forthcoming as others as regards the voting record in the United Nations. The Georgetown, New York and Beijing experiences have confirmed those changes. A feature of the seminars was the emphasis given to the diplomatic effort as opposed to the armed struggle.

"This year two studies have been published by the Secretariat's Division for Palestinian Rights. These studies, together with the 20 or so objective and factual studies published by the Committee, continue to

keep the problem of Palestine fresh in the minds of the international community. This is a case where the pen is mightier than the sword; it is truly an activity which we cannot ignore.

"We are all aware of the power of the media in moulding public opinion. The Committee has recognized that the press, radio and television media are crucial in analysing and assessing the complexity of the problem of Palestine and the challenges which it poses. The Committee therefore strongly commends the Department of Public Information for its activities during 1985 in disseminating information on the question of Palestine through articles in the UN Chronicle and the Development Forum, press releases and special publications.

"The holding of journalists' encounters in the North Caribbean and Asian regions and national encounters in African and European countries have also given an impetus to governmental action in solving this 40-year-old problem.

"The forward-looking recommendations of the Committee, in paragraphs 163 to 172, are a mixture of past and new recommendations, but in essence they are a reaffirmation of the Committee's recommendations on the question of Palestine as defined in the Geneva International Conference, recommendations which constitute a truly representative international consensus. It should be emphasized that the recommendations were drawn up by consensus as a result of an impartial study solidly based on previous decisions of the United Nations and on the principles of the Charter. They have international backing, which no other approach can claim. It is an approach which, as I have already described, is supported in meetings, conferences, seminars, symposiums, colloquiums, solidarity events, journalistic encounters and other gatherings organized throughout the world in support of the Palestinian people. Furthermore, a number of elements and proposals from all the other approaches advanced are contained in the Committee's recommendations. In the final analysis, no other approach is as detailed, comprehensive and widely supported as the recommendations of the Committee.

"The Committee strongly believes in what it is doing; its duty is to bring unity and to strengthen our efforts for the future. In its recommendations, the Committee

'strongly points out that the question of Palestine has reached a critical phase and urges a renewed, concentrated and collective effort to find a just solution under United Nations auspices and on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions to end the unacceptable plight of the Palestinian people'. (A/40/35, para. 167)

That statement is based on the evolving situation and the state of international awareness of the question of Palestine.

"We have to build on what has been achieved so far. Many of us

discern some progress. To mention only a few of the more important elements, there has been progress through the publishing of 20 or so studies which are a response to and a rectification of the distorted information surrounding the Palestinian people; progress in the voting record at the United Nations - 90 positive votes in 1976 to about 130 in 1984, or about a 50 per cent increase, while the negative votes and abstentions have decreased from 30 in 1976 to only three in 1984, or a 1,000 per cent decrease; and progress in agreement on what are generally described to as the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination, and concerning the role of the PLO. The Committee intends to follow up these positive trends and ensure that they prevail over scepticism, despair and misconceptions.

"In the past 12 months the Committee has given priority to the urgent need to convene the proposed international conference on peace in the Middle East. In the year ahead the Committee intends to step up its activities in this regard through the Security Council and through the completion of the process of sending delegations to the capitals of Council members. The role of the Secretary-General is not to be downgraded. Rather, it is for us to strengthen the Secretary-General's hand in dealing with the Palestine question.

"In concluding my statement, I should like to stress that there is much solid common ground for us to build on. We detect a change of attitudes. During the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations we heard important statements on this important problem. The experience gained from the many gatherings held in the past year should be to our benefit. It may be the time to get down to the specifics of a solution, rather than engage in rhetorical, confrontational and aggressive talk.

"Whilst it can be said that not all developments in the past have been positive, we cannot forget the progress achieved, slow though it may be, particularly in the significant changes in public opinion in many important countries.

"We know where we still have to make progress. We need continued help in those remaining efforts. The Committee welcomes what has been done. Although faced with adverse circumstances, the Committee has continued to contribute actively to the final solution of the problem of Palestine.

"We all recognize that what the United Nations is proposing is based on justice, reality and peace - peace for the region, dignity and honour for the Palestinian people and a peaceful lasting solution to one of the most complex, most long-standing and most dangerous problems with which the world is faced. The world literally cannot afford a failure on this question, and the procedure envisaged by the United Nations is the only viable course of action to solve the question once and for all."

The following resolutions on the question of Palestine were adopted in the fortieth session of the General Assembly:

40/96. Question of Palestine

A

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, 31/20 of 24 November 1976, 32/40 of 2 December 1977, 33/28 of 7 December 1978, 34/65 A and B of 29 November 1979 and 34/65 C and D of 12 December 1979, ES-7/2 of 29 July 1980, 35/169 of 15 December 1980, 36/120 of 10 December 1981, ES-7/4 of 28 April 1982, ES-7/5 of 26 June 1982, ES-7/9 of 24 September 1982, 37/86 A of 10 December 1982, 38/58 A of 13 December 1983 and 39/49 A of 11 December 1984,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, 1/

1. Expresses its appreciation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its efforts in performing the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly;
2. Endorses the recommendations of the Committee contained in paragraphs 163 to 172 of its report and draws the attention of the Security Council to the fact that action on the Committee's recommendations, as repeatedly endorsed by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session and subsequently, is still awaited;
3. Requests the Committee to continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine as well as the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights 3/ adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and to report and make suggestions to the General Assembly or the Security Council, as appropriate;
4. Authorizes the Committee to continue to exert all efforts to promote the implementation of its recommendations, including representation at conferences and meetings and the sending of delegations where such activities would be considered by it to be appropriate, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-first session and thereafter;
5. Requests the Committee to continue to extend its co-operation to non-governmental organizations in their contribution towards heightening international awareness of the facts relating to the question of Palestine and in creating a more favourable atmosphere for the full implementation of the Committee's recommendations, and to take the necessary steps to expand its contacts with those organizations;
6. Requests the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, established under General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, as well as other United Nations bodies associated with the question of Palestine, to co-operate fully with the Committee and to make available to it, at its request, the relevant information and documentation which they have at their disposal;

7. Decides to circulate the report of the Committee to all the competent bodies of the United Nations and urges them to take the necessary action, as appropriate, in accordance with the Committee's programme of implementation;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Committee with all the necessary facilities for the performance of its tasks.

The General Assembly,

B

114th plenary meeting
12 December 1985

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, 1/

Noting the particularly relevant information contained in paragraphs 135 to 150 of that report,

Recalling its resolutions 32/40 B of 2 December 1977, 33/28 C of 7 December 1978, 34/65 D of 12 December 1979, 35/169 D of 15 December 1980, 36/120 B of 10 December 1981, 37/86 B of 10 December 1982, 38/58 B of 13 December 1983 and 39/49 B of 11 December 1984,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the action taken by the Secretary-General in compliance with General Assembly resolution 39/49 B;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat continues to discharge the tasks detailed in paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 32/40 B, paragraph 2 (b) of resolution 34/65 D, paragraph 3 of resolution 36/120 B and paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution 38/58 B, in consultation with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and under its guidance;

3. Also requests the Secretary-General to provide the Division for Palestinian Rights with the necessary resources to accomplish its tasks and to expand its work programme, particularly through additional meetings for non-governmental organizations, in order to heighten awareness of the facts relating to the question of Palestine and to create a more favourable atmosphere for the full implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People;

4. Further requests the Secretary-General to ensure the continued co-operation of the Department of Public Information and other units of the Secretariat in enabling the Division for Palestinian Rights to perform its tasks and in covering adequately the various aspects of the question of Palestine;

5. Invites all Governments and organizations to lend their co-operation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights in the performance of their tasks;

6. Takes note with appreciation of the action taken by Member States to observe annually on 29 November the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People and the issuance by them of special postage stamps for the occasion.

114th plenary meeting
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C

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,^{1/}

Noting, in particular, the information contained in paragraphs 151 to 162 of that report,

Recalling its resolutions 38/58 E of 13 December 1983 and 39/49 C of 11 December 1984,

Convinced that the world-wide dissemination of accurate and comprehensive information and the role of non-governmental organizations and institutions remain of vital importance in heightening awareness of and support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian State,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the action taken by the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat in compliance with General Assembly resolutions 38/58 E and 39/49 C;
2. Requests the Department of Public Information, in full co-operation and co-ordination with the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to continue its special information programme on the question of Palestine for the biennium 1986-1987 and, in particular:
 - (a) To disseminate information on all the activities of the United Nations system relating to the question of Palestine;
 - (b) To continue to update publications on the facts and developments pertaining to the question of Palestine;
 - (c) To publish brochures and booklets on the various aspects of the question of Palestine, including Israeli violations of the human rights of the Arab inhabitants of the occupied territories;
 - (d) To expand its audio-visual material on the question of Palestine, including the production of a new film, special series of radio programmes and television broadcast;
 - (e) To organize fact-finding news missions to the area for journalists;
 - (f) To organize regional and national encounters for journalists.

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D

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 38/58 C of 13 December 1983 and 39/49 D of 11 December 1984, in which it, inter alia, endorsed the convening of an International Peace Conference on the Middle East,

Reaffirming its resolution 39/49 D, in which it, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Security Council, to continue his efforts with a view to convening the Conference,

Having considered the reply of the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General, dated 26 February 1985, in which he, inter alia, stated on the subject of the Conference: "in this context, members of the Council invite the Secretary-General to continue consultations on the subject in any manner he deems appropriate in the light of General Assembly resolution 39/49 D", 4/

Having considered again the reports of the Secretary-General of 13 March 1984 5/ and 13 September 1984, 6/ in which he stated, inter alia, that "it was clear from the replies of the Governments of Israel and the United States of America that they were not prepared to participate in the proposed Conference", and regretting the continued negative response of these two Governments and the lack of willingness to reconsider their position towards the Conference,

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General of 11 March 1985 7/ and 22 October 1985, 8/ in which he, inter alia, referred to the difficulties experienced in his efforts made the previous year with a view to convening the Conference,

Having heard the constructive statements made by numerous representatives, including that of the Palestine Liberation Organization,

Taking note of the positive positions of the concerned parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, and of other States on the convening of the Conference, 6/

Taking note also of the position of the Palestine Liberation Organization which condemns all acts of terrorism, whether committed by States or individuals, including acts of terrorism committed by Israel against the Palestinian people and the Arab nation,

Reiterating once again its conviction that the convening of the Conference would constitute a major contribution by the United Nations towards the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the reports of the Secretary-General;

2. Reaffirms again its endorsement of the call for convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in conformity with the provisions of its resolution 38/58 C;
3. Stresses the urgent need for additional constructive efforts by all Governments in order to convene the Conference without further delay and for the achievement of its peaceful objectives;
4. Determines that the question of Palestine is the root-cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East;
5. Calls upon the Governments of Israel and the United States of America to reconsider their positions towards the attainment of peace in the Middle East through the convening of the Conference;
6. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Security Council, to continue his efforts with a view to convening the Conference and to report thereon to the General Assembly not later than 15 March 1986;
7. Decides to consider at its forty-first session the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the present resolution.

114th plenary meeting
12 December 1985

II. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITY AND INFORMATION

1. The Church of Humanism sponsored a special meeting on 23 November on the theme: "The Middle East - the Nuclear Danger". Dr. Taysir Nashif was the featured speaker.
2. The 1985 report of Amnesty International includes a section on practices in Israel and the occupied territories which include "imprisonment of prisoners of conscience, the use of continued administrative measures, with no judicial involvement, to physically restrict individuals without charge or trial; arbitrary arrest and short-term detention without charge or trial; and the denial of internationally accepted rights to prisoners captured by the Israeli Defense Force in south Lebanon".
3. The French NGO Committee for co-ordination for Palestine held an event on 30 November 1985 at UNESCO. It centered on the problem of Palestinian youth as refugees, prisoners, exiles, workers and students. At that time, the campaign for signatures for the Peace Conference on the Middle East was reinforced.
4. L'Association Médicale Franco-Palestine celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. It was the first mass organization in France committed to solidarity with the Palestinian people in both the physical and moral sense.

5. The most recent Newsletter of the Centre international d'information sur les prisonniers, déportés et disparus palestiniens et libanais focuses on the present situation of civilian populations in the area of south Lebanon still subjected to Israeli occupation and called "security strip".

6. On 17 December 1985, a delegation sponsored by the November 29 Committee for Palestine met with the President of the United Nations General Assembly, the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and with representatives of the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Centre for Human Rights.

The delegation presented a petition asking the Israeli Government to refrain from the deportation orders of Dr. Azmi Shuabi, elected member of the City Council of Al-Birah; Mr. Ali Abu Hilla, a founder and current secretary of a federation of 52 legal trade unions; Mr. Hassan Abdul Jawad Fararga, a well-known Palestinian journalist, owner of the Bethlehem Press Service and a leader in the Dheishieh refugee camp where he resides and Zaki Abu Steti, the recently amnestied prisoner, residing in the Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

It also held a press conference to report on a recent fact-finding mission to Israel and the occupied territories. The delegation had earlier testified on human rights violations observed in the course of their trip before another United Nations body, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/40/35).

2/ A/40/PV.98.

3/ Report of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, Geneva, 29 August-7 September 1983 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.83.I.21), chap. I, sect. B.

4/ See A/40/168-S/17014, para. 3.

5/ A/39/130-S/16409. For the printed text, see Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-ninth Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1984, document S/16409.

6/ A/39/130/Add.1-S/16409/Add.1. For the printed text, see Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-ninth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1984, document S/16409/Add.1.

7/ See A/40/168-S/17014, para. 2.

8/ A/40/779-S/17581 and Corr.1.