



DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

July 1988

Volume XI, Bulletin No. 7

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I. THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE BIDS FAREWELL TO ITS
CHAIRMAN, MASSAMBA SARRÉ OF SENEGAL

At its 154th meeting, on 26 July 1988, the Committee heard a farewell statement by its Chairman, Massamba Sarré, who is departing the United Nations to take up another assignment for his country.

In his final statement to the Committee, the Chairman stressed that although its principal objectives had not yet been achieved, great progress had been made, above all through the commitment of all the members and observers. The Committee must persist, he said, in its task of working for a return to peace in the Middle East and the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Senegal, for its part, would maintain and strengthen such a commitment. With perseverance, the Committee's objectives would be reached, just as solutions were now being found to other seemingly intractable problems.

Many representatives paid tribute to the Chairman for his leadership of the Committee since 1981. At the meeting, the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization read out a message addressed to the Chairman by Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

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

On 22 July 1988, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (A/43/477-S/20052), the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People expressed the Committee's most serious concern at the continued grave situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the intensification of policies of repression by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people. The full text of the letter is as follows:

"In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I wish to express the Committee's most serious concern at the continued grave situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the intensification of policies of repression by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people. Live ammunition, rubber bullets and severe beatings continue to be used widely in an effort to suppress the uprising. The number of Palestinians killed by Israeli gunfire since the beginning of the uprising in early December has now reached at least 230. According to the Israeli Defence Minister, the number of Palestinians detained by Israel at the end of June was 9,000. Reports on the inhuman conditions under which they are held have aroused widespread international protest.

"Despite growing condemnation of the use of live ammunition by Israeli troops, the Israeli Defence Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, told the Cabinet on 12 June 1988, according to Ha'aretz, that Israeli civilians were "free to shoot Palestinians seen with firebombs". The increasing involvement of Israeli settlers in violent attacks against Palestinians is a cause of great concern. Moreover, measures of collective punishment continue to be imposed. On 4 July 1988, Brig. General Gabi Ofir told Reuters that the army would continue its harsh collective punishment measures of demolishing houses. It is to be noted that in the months of May and June, more than 40 Palestinian houses were demolished by the Israeli army. On 5 July 1988, according to a Reuters dispatch, all 1,200 schools in the West Bank were again closed. Extended curfews continued to be imposed, and telephone lines to be cut in many areas.

"According to The New York Times of 9 July 1988, the Israeli authorities also announced that they would expel 10 Palestinians accused of being "active in various terrorist organizations which played a central role in planning and implementing" the Palestinian uprising. Six of the ten Palestinians are from the West Bank and four from Gaza, and include two doctors and two journalists.

"Several new measures have also been announced designed to tighten control by the occupation authorities over the Palestinian population, in further efforts to quell the uprising. According to Ha'aretz of 13 July 1988, Israeli security authorities have decided to step up "supervision and surveillance" of the activities of the Supreme Moslem Council on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem, including the heads of the waqf (Islamic trust). This followed a mass protest, on 4 July 1988, by Palestinians against Israeli archaeological digging near the Via Dolorosa, feared by waqf officials to be undermining the stability of historic Moslem buildings. Twenty-five Palestinians and an Israeli policeman were injured in the protest and, although the excavation was suspended, Israeli officials have stated that the work will eventually be completed.

"On 14 July 1988, Al-Fajr reported that the Military Commander of the Central Region announced that the establishment of Palestinian popular committees in the occupied territories "is against the law". The popular committees were formed during the first week of the uprising in order to cope with the economic, educational, security, relief and other needs of the Palestinian community. This followed the closing, at the end of June, of In'ash El-Usra, a self-help women's organization serving the needs of some 15,000 Palestinian women and children.

"In addition, according to Al-Fajr of 26 June 1988, the Israeli authorities have started new aggressive measures of collecting taxes and have introduced new tax laws in an effort to counter boycotts by Palestinians. Similarly, Agence France Presse reported on 19 July 1988 that military authorities had begun changing the licence plates on all automobiles owned by Palestinians in Gaza.

"In view of the gravity of these developments, the Committee wishes to express its serious concern at these repressive policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, which are in contravention of the fourth Geneva Convention, international human rights instruments and United Nations resolutions. These repressive policies and practices are aimed at preventing the Palestinian people from exercising its inalienable rights in accordance with internationally recognized principles and United Nations resolutions, and pose grave obstacles to the attainment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

"The Committee reiterates its appeal to you to take all possible measures to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians under occupation and to intensify your efforts towards the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58 C.

"I should be grateful if you would arrange for the text of this letter to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 37 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council."

III. EXCERPT FROM COMMUNIQUE OF THE NINTH MEETING OF
THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE
CARRIBEAN COMMUNITY, HELD AT DEEP BAY, ANTIGUA
AND BARBUDA, FROM 4 TO 8 JULY 1988

"The Middle East

"The Heads of Government noted that, since their last meeting, the situation in the Middle East had deteriorated. They regretted the abuse of human rights and the loss of life associated with the upheavals in the occupied territories.

"This emphasizes the need for a conference for peace, as called for by the United Nations, for finding a just and lasting settlement to the Middle East question guaranteeing the right of all States and peoples in the region to exist in peace within recognized and secure borders." (see A/43/480, p. 13)

IV. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL AT SECOND REGULAR SESSION
OF 1988 ADOPTS TWO RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

At its second regular session of 1988, the Economic and Social Council adopted the following resolutions relating to the Question of Palestine:

"1988/54. Assistance to the Palestinian people

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Recalling General Assembly resolution 42/166 of 11 December 1987,

"Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/77 of 8 July 1987,

"Bearing in mind the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, 8/

"Recalling the Programme of Action for the Achievement of Palestinian Rights, adopted by the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, 9/

8/ General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

9/ 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.

"Taking into account the uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories against the Israeli occupation, including its economic and social policies and practices,

"Affirming that the Palestinian people cannot develop their national economy as long as the Israeli occupation persists,

"Aware of the increasing need to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people; 10/

"2. Regrets that the programme of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people has not been developed as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/166;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to charge the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) with supervising the development of the programme and to provide it with the funds needed to engage twenty experts to prepare an adequate programme, in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, taking into account the uprising of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories and its implications;

"4. Expresses its appreciation to those States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that have provided assistance to the Palestinian people;

"5. Urges the international community, the organizations of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to disburse their aid or any other forms of assistance to the occupied Palestinian territories solely for the benefit of the Palestinian people and in a manner that will not serve to prolong the Israeli occupation;

"6. Calls for the provision of emergency assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including the dispatch of teams of orthopaedic surgeons;

"7. Requests the international community, the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization;

10/ A/43/367-E/1988/82 and Corr.1.

"8. Decides to extend to the occupied Palestinian territories the same preferential treatment accorded to the least developed countries, pending the elimination of the Israeli occupation and the assumption of full control by the Palestinian people over their national economy without external interference;

"9. Calls for the treatment on a transit basis of Palestinian exports and imports passing through neighbouring ports and points of exit and entry;

"10. Also calls for the granting of trade concessions and concrete preferential measures for Palestinian exports;

"11. Further calls for the implementation of development projects in the occupied Palestinian territories, including the cement plant referred to in General Assembly resolution 39/223 of 18 December 1984;

"12. Condemns the occupying Power, Israel, for its brutal economic and social policies and practices against the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

"13. Requests United Nations bodies not to extend any form of assistance to the occupying Power, Israel;

"14. Stresses that aid is not and cannot be a substitute for a genuine and just solution to the question of Palestine;

"15. Requests the Secretary-General to issue immediately a corrigendum to his report on assistance to the Palestinian people, bringing the language strictly into line with General Assembly resolution 42/166 and the present resolution;

"16. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution."

38th plenary meeting
26 July 1988

"1988/65. Israeli economic practices in the occupied
Palestinian and other Arab territories

"The Economic and Social Council,

"Recalling General Assembly decision 40/432 of 17 December 1985, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the financial and trade practices of the Israeli occupation authorities in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories,

"Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/87 of 8 July 1987 and General Assembly decision 42/449 of 17 December 1987,

"1. Takes note of the note by the Secretary-General 25/ concerning progress in the implementation of General Assembly decision 40/432 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/87;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to speed up the preparation of the required report on the trade practices of the Israeli occupation authorities in the occupied Palestinian territories and on the financial and trade practices of the Israeli occupation authorities in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution;

"3. Also requests the Secretary-General to use the terminology decided upon in the relevant General Assembly resolutions."

40th plenary meeting
28 July 1988

25/ A/43/432-E/1988/68.

V. EXCERPT FROM JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF THE TWENTY-FIRST
ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING, HELD AT BANGKOK ON
4 AND 5 JULY 1988

"West Asia

"The Foreign Ministers viewed with concern the unresolved Arab-Israeli conflict. They reiterated their full support for the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination, and the restoration of Arab sovereignty over their occupied territories. The Foreign Ministers called for renewed efforts to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement by negotiations. Towards this end, they expressed support for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. The uprising in the occupied territory underlined the need for the achievement of the settlement." (see A/43/510-S/20091, para. 60)

VI. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITY AND INFORMATION

Palestine Focus, the National Newspaper of the Palestine Solidarity Committee (formerly November 29th Committee for Palestine), in its July/August issue contains an editorial viewpoint on the Intifadah and an interview with Jack O'Dell, Director of International Relations for the Rainbow Coalition. Several other articles deal with the current situation. Authors include Barbara Lubin, former president of the Berkeley Board of Education and Felicia Langer, an Israeli attorney dedicated to defending Palestinians in the Israeli courts. An article by Steve Goldfield reports that developments in the United States demonstrate a significant shift in public opinion and in the willingness of a very broad range of activists and organizations to address the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. Solidarity activities were reported from numerous American cities. It was also reported that the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) had become the first international union to pass a resolution supporting the International Peace Conference and condemning Israel for its repression of the uprising. In addition, seven Democratic Party state conventions had endorsed Palestinian self-determination, five of them also calling for a Palestinian State. The issue was debated for the first time at conventions in still more states and at the national platform meetings. The publication is available from P.O. Box 27462, San Francisco, CA 94127.

The Newsletter of NAJDA, Women Concerned about the Middle East: has published a special May-June UN Symposium issue. The newsletter comments on the report dated 12 May of the observer team of the North American Co-ordinating Committee for Non-Governmental Organizations working on the Question of Palestine which visited the occupied territories. Among other matters covered are the recent findings of the Data Base Project on Palestinian Human Rights which has its international office in Chicago. The newsletter also contains information on the organization's fund-raising efforts to provide scholarships for Palestinian women university students and for a kindergarten project in the occupied territories. Further information about NAJDA, and copies of its publications may be obtained from P.O. Box 7152, Berkeley, CA 94707.

The British Refugee Council, (Bondway House, 3/9 Bondway, London SW81SJ) on 29 July 1988, issued its fourth West Bank and Gaza Project bulletin, which contains a briefing paper on Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. The paper reports on the following: history; international law; methods of land acquisition; distribution of water; separate legal and administrative systems; East Jerusalem; and the uprising and the settlers. The bulletin also contains information on recent deportations, house demolitions and sealings and calls for international action against such policies and practices.

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