



DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

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

In a letter dated 1 June 1989, addressed to the Secretary-General (A/43/1009-S/20668), the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People drew urgent attention to the further escalation of repression by Israel, the occupying Power, against Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory. 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 draw your most urgent attention to the further escalation of repression by Israel, the occupying Power, against Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory.

"According to a report by Agence France-Pressé dated 31 May, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, Defence Minister of Israel, has reported to the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee of the Knesset that 472 Palestinians were killed since the beginning of the intifadah, 10,000 wounded and 35,000 imprisoned, of whom 7,000 are still in gaol or detention camps. However, according to figures published by the Data Base Project on Palestinian Human Rights, violent actions by the Israeli armed forces and armed Israeli settlers have brought the casualty toll since the beginning of the intifadah to 611 Palestinians dead, of whom at least 118 were children under 15. Further, Amnesty International has reported that since the beginning of the intifadah 5,000 Palestinians have been the victims of the Israeli practice of "administrative detention" and that 1,100 Palestinians are still under such detention at present.

"Since my last letter to you dated 9 May 1989 (A/43/1008-S/20623), numerous grave incidents have taken place, as briefly described below.

"On 10 May, The New York Times reported that the day before Israeli troops had shot at a crowd of protesters in Salfit, near Nablus, during a strike marking the start of the eighteenth month of the intifadah, killing one youth and wounding another two. Agence France-Pressé reported on the same date that 15 Palestinians had been shot and wounded in clashes with the Israeli forces, primarily in Gaza. A total curfew was still in effect in Gaza and parts of the West Bank, and all communications between the occupied territory and the outside world were cut off.

"On 11 May, according to The New York Times, Israeli troops shot and killed two Palestinian teenagers, one in Gaza and one in Hebron. On 14 May, Reuters reported that at least 21 Palestinians, mostly teenagers, had been shot and wounded in clashes throughout the Gaza Strip. On 15 May, according to Agence France-Pressé, one Palestinian was killed and eight injured in Kha Yunis, while the curfew was reimposed on the Gaza Strip until further notice.

"The New York Times reported on 16 May that Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, Defence Minister of Israel, had announced further repressive measures unless Palestinians in the occupied territory accepted Israel's "offer of elections". Such measures would include steps to reduce Israel's dependence on Palestinian labour, restrictions on freedom of movement between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, and suspension of the right of appeal by Palestinians to the Supreme Court against military orders. Subsequently, on 17 May, The Washington Post reported that the army had ordered the estimated 50,000 Gazans who work daily in Israel to return home immediately or face arrest.

"On 17 and 19 May, The New York Times and Agence France-Pressé reported that Israeli soldiers had shot and killed a 13-year-old boy at Jabaliya refugee camp and another five young Palestinians in Nablus, Jenin, Jamain, Deheishe refugee camp, and Nuseirat refugee camp. A number of persons were also injured by the troops. Another Palestinian had died in prison at Megiddo after a long hunger strike to protest prison conditions.

"On 20 May, The Washington Post reported that eight Palestinians had been shot dead by Israeli troops the day before, one of the highest casualty tolls of the entire uprising. Despite the continuing curfew in the Gaza Strip, a crowd had surrounded an army patrol as soldiers tried to arrest a man at Rafah refugee camp, and four Palestinians had been killed, including a 50-year-old woman. A fifth Palestinian had been shot dead at Jabaliya refugee camp. Another three Palestinians had been killed during a gun battle in the West Bank, in which an Israeli soldier had also died and a senior officer had been critically wounded.

"On 24 and 25 May, further violent incidents were reported by Reuters and Agence France-Pressé. Israeli troops had killed one Palestinian, wounded three and arrested dozens of others in Al-Amari refugee camp and Husan village in the West Bank; they had also killed an 11-year-old Palestinian boy and two teenagers at Jabaliya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

"In the latest incidents, as reported by The New York Times and Agence France-Pressé of 30 and 31 May, Israeli settlers firing a submachine gun shot and killed a 14-year-old Palestinian girl at Kifl Harith in the West Bank, and Israeli soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian teenage boy at Nuseirat refugee camp, and a young Palestinian at Khan Yunis refugee camp, where four Palestinians were also wounded, one of them gravely.

"In light of the extreme gravity of these incidents and the growing loss of life, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People wishes to protest once again in the strongest terms the repressive policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, which are completely contrary to its obligations under the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 and to numerous resolutions of the Security Council. The Committee considers that the adoption of urgent measures by the

Security Council to provide international protection to the Palestinian civilians, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 43/233 of 20 April 1989, is imperative. The Committee would also greatly appreciate appropriate action to alleviate the sufferings of the unarmed civilians under occupation, especially women and children, by the Secretary-General and by organizations of the United Nations system.

"The Committee wishes to stress once again the urgent necessity to advance towards a comprehensive and just settlement of the Palestine question in accordance with the principles contained in General Assembly resolution 43/176 of 15 December 1988, which have received the near-unanimous support of the United Nations membership, and reiterates its appeal to you and to all concerned to intensify all efforts to attain this essential objective."

II. SECRETARY-GENERAL EXPRESSES DISMAY AT EXPULSION BY ISRAEL OF EIGHT PALESTINIANS FROM WEST BANK AND GAZA

The following statement attributable to the Secretary-General was made by his spokeswoman on 29 June 1989:

"The Secretary-General is greatly dismayed by the expulsion today of eight Palestinians from the Israeli occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to south Lebanon. This action is a clear violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and of Lebanese sovereignty. He appeals to Israel, as the occupying Power, to abide by its obligations under this Convention and to rescind the deportation orders. He earnestly hopes that the Palestinians who have been deported will promptly be allowed to return to their homes and families.

"The Secretary-General is deeply concerned by the action that was taken today as this can only further aggravate an already volatile situation." (See SG/SM/4305.)

III. THE SECURITY COUNCIL CONSIDERS THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

On 6 June 1989, the Security Council met to discuss the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. The request for the "urgent meeting" was contained in a letter dated 31 May from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the President of the Security Council, acting in his capacity as Chairman of the Arab Group (see S/20662).

The Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People took part in the debate in her dual capacity as Chairman of that Committee and representative of Senegal, at which time she made the following statement (see S/PV. 2863):

"Once again the Security Council is meeting at the request of the Arab Group to discuss the disturbing situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. We have before us an urgent appeal because of the concern that has gripped the international community in the face of Israel's intransigent insistence on its policy of occupation, domination and repression, the near-paralysis of the Security Council and the numerous delays holding up the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

"My delegation and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People are particularly concerned at the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. In the statements of the representatives of Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic, the Council was reminded of the tragedy of that people.

"Today's meeting is of particular importance to us since it is taking place when the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories is deteriorating despite the international community's indignant protests. Repression by the occupation forces has grown increasingly brutal, with its daily succession of death, serious injury, massive destruction, all manner of humiliation, oppression and other serious violations of human rights, all in an atmosphere of increasing provocation by wild Israeli settlers.

"In my most recent letter to the Secretary-General, dated 1 June 1989, I again drew attention to the tragic nature of the situation. Yet the Security Council cannot even agree on effective measures to protect the Palestinian people and guarantee its security in conformity with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

"We have already stated that it is high time for the Security Council, responsible for the maintenance of international peace, to increase its involvement by making a positive contribution to international efforts to bring about a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

"Appropriate action by the Security Council could do much to relieve the suffering of Palestinian civilians, including women and children, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 43/233 of 20 April 1989.

"In that connection, I wish to recall the 21 January 1988 report prepared by the Secretary-General in conformity with Security Council resolution 605 (1987); and I pay a tribute to the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts. His report contains recommendations and observations concerning protecting the Palestinians through legal means, general assistance, and information. That document deserves special attention from members of the Security Council.

"We can never repeat too much that only political action can meet in a just and lasting manner the legitimate aspirations of a people whose rights have been stripped away and whose dignity has been violated, but a people convinced of the justice of its cause.

"Of course, obstacles remain to the solution of the complex problem of the Middle East. These are due in large part to differences within the international community, to Israel's intransigence and to a lack of political will on the part of some States that could have acted to create conditions conducive to a joint search for a comprehensive solution.

"But however complex the question is, the ideals of peace, justice and freedom that form the basis of the United Nations Charter should cause the Security Council right now to support the solidarity that is growing daily in favour of the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in conformity with the wish of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Organization of African Unity.

"Among other measures, the Security Council could take action on decisions and recommendations of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine with respect to the establishment of a just and lasting peace. The guiding principles for such a peace are set out in General Assembly resolution 43/176 of 15 December 1988. They were recently reaffirmed at the special Arab summit held at Casablanca from 23 to 26 May 1989 and at the Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, held at Harare from 17 to 19 May 1989.

"The Security Council's role is to realize the hopes aroused by the first moves towards a settlement of the question of Palestine. These include the acceptance by the Palestine Liberation Organization of resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), bearing in mind the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination, and its full participation in any talks and negotiations on such a settlement. In this time of trial for the Palestinian people, its leaders have resolutely adopted a courageous policy of openness, and have done their part; the international community has the duty to prevail upon Israel to respond in a positive way, for no repression can overcome the intifadah.

"That is why we hope our deliberations will lead to greater participation by the Council in the peace effort, which alone can put an end to passion and violence and bring about a just and lasting settlement of the question of the Middle East.

"It is urgent that the Council should focus its energy and efforts, and lend to the process the sense of realism and spirit of compromise so well known in its members.

"My delegation and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People assure you, Mr. President, of our full co-operation in continued efforts in that direction."

Debate continued on 7, 8 and 9 June 1989. On 9 June 1989, the Security Council voted on a draft resolution submitted by Algeria, Colombia, Ethiopia, Malaysia, Nepal, Senegal and Yugoslavia (see S/20677). The draft resolution received 14 votes in favour to one against (the United States of America) with no abstentions. It was not adopted owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Security Council.

The full text of the draft resolution read as follows:

"The Security Council,

"Having considered the letter dated 31 May 1989 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Arab States at the United Nations for the month of May,

"Bearing in mind the inalienable rights of all peoples recognized by the Charter of the United Nations and proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

"Recalling that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, is applicable to the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem,

"Recalling its relevant resolutions on the situation in the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, and in particular its resolutions 446 (1979), 465 (1980), 607 (1988) and 608 (1988),

"Recalling the Secretary-General's report of 21 January 1988 pursuant to resolution 605 (1987), and in particular the recommendations contained therein (S/19443),

"Expressing its grave concern and alarm over the increasing sufferings of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory,

"Having been apprised of the recent violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem,

"1. Strongly deplores those policies and practices of Israel, the Occupying Power, which violate the human rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied territory as well as vigilante attacks against Palestinian towns and villages and desecration of the Holy Koran;

"2. Calls upon Israel, as the Occupying Power and as a High Contracting Party to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to accept the de jure applicability of the Convention to the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and fully to comply with its obligations under that Convention and in particular its "responsibility for the treatment accorded to the protected persons by its agents";

"3. Recalls the obligations of all the High Contracting Parties, under article 1 of the Convention, to ensure respect for the Convention in all circumstances;

"4. Demands that Israel desist forthwith from deporting Palestinian civilians from the occupied territory and ensure the safe and immediate return of those already deported;

"5. Expresses great concern about the prolonged closure of schools in parts of the occupied territory, with all its adverse consequences for the education of Palestinian children, and calls upon Israel to permit the immediate reopening of those schools;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory by all means available to him, to make timely reports to the Council, including recommendations on ways and means to ensure respect for the Convention and protection of Palestinian civilians in the occupied territory, including Jerusalem;

"7. Requests the Secretary-General to submit the first such report no later than 23 June 1989;

"8. Decides to keep the situation in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, under review."

IV. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES CONCLUDES FIELD MISSION

GENEVA, 7 June -- The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories concluded today a two-week field mission to Damascus, Amman and Cairo during which it reviewed the latest developments relating to the human rights situation in the territories occupied by Israel.

The mission began work on 22 May in Geneva and proceeded on 24 May to the Middle East. It held hearings in Damascus on 25 and 26 May, Amman from 28 May to 1 June, and Cairo from 3 to 7 June.

The Special Committee, composed of the representatives of Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia and Senegal, was established by the General Assembly in December 1968 and is the principal organ of the United Nations dealing with investigating Israeli practices as they affect the human rights situation in the occupied territories and monitoring information relating to the territories.

Since 1969, the Committee has prepared and submitted 20 reports to the General Assembly through the Secretary-General. It has been denied access to the territories occupied by Israel and, therefore, relies on reports appearing in the Israeli press, as well as in Arab language newspapers published in the occupied territories, and on oral presentations from persons deemed to have first-hand knowledge of the situation in the territories.

The Special Committee has stated that the constant refusal by Israel to apply the relevant provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to the territories occupied in 1967 has led to serious violations of the human rights of the civilian population. The Committee has denounced the Israeli settlement policy and the various violations resulting therefrom as well as the recourse, on a wide scale, to collective punishment, such as the demolition of houses, the imposition of curfews or harsh economic sanctions.

The Committee has also expressed concern over the detention of Palestinians inside Israel itself, the administrative detention of thousands of persons for extended periods and the expulsion of Palestinians from the occupied territories.

On the last leg of its trip to the Middle East, the Special Committee was received in Cairo by the Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Boutros Ghali, and high officials of the Egyptian Government. Mr. Ghali expressed his appreciation for the Special Committee's continuing efforts to mobilize world public opinion in favour of respect for the human rights of the population of the occupied territories which, together with recent endeavours for the convening of an international conference, constituted an important element in the Middle East peace process.

The Special Committee also met the Chairman of the Palestinian Red Crescent, Dr. Fathi Arafat, and visited the Organization's hospital in Cairo. During its stay in Cairo the Special Committee received testimony from persons residing in the occupied territories, in particular with regard to the situation in the Gaza Strip.

The hearings in Cairo completed previous testimony received by the Special Committee in Damascus and Amman. According to all witnesses interviewed, there continued to be a high number of casualties among civilians resulting from the harsh methods used in trying to quell the uprising of the Palestinian population. Serious clashes were reported to occur practically every day, often resulting in deaths or severe injuries provoked by live, rubber or plastic bullets, various exploding objects, tear gas and beatings. Such incidents were said to affect all categories of civilians, including very young children. The exposure of children to violence and to the humiliation of their parents almost every day was considered to have particularly harmful long-term effects.

The Special Committee heard testimony denouncing inhuman treatment of Palestinians during detention and the denial of the fundamental right to a fair trial, in contrast to the relative leniency with which Israelis charged with mistreatment of Palestinians were said to have been prosecuted. Concern

was also expressed over the fact that universities, schools and even kindergartens had been closed for prolonged periods, as well as about the further deterioration of the economic situation of the population in the occupied territories as a result of various arbitrary and discriminatory measures adopted by the authorities.

The Special Committee will meet again at Geneva from 21 to 25 August to consider its report to the General Assembly. (See HR/3417)

V. TWENTY-SECOND UNITED NATIONS SEMINAR ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE
HELD AT NEW YORK ON 19 AND 20 JUNE 1989

The Twenty-Second United Nations Seminar on the Question of Palestine (Sixth North American Regional Seminar), entitled "The inalienable rights of the Palestinian People", was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 19 and 20 June 1989, in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 42/66 B of 2 December 1987.

Four meetings were held and twelve panelists presented papers on selected aspects on the Question of Palestine. In addition, representatives of 57 governments, Palestine, two non-member states, two United Nations organs, six United Nations specialized agencies and bodies, three intergovernmental organizations, as well as two national liberation movements attended the Seminar.

Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, was Chairman of the Seminar; Mr. Alexander Borg Olivier (Malta), Rapporteur of the Committee, acted as Vice-Chairman; and, Mr. Tom Obaleh Kargbo (Sierra Leone) was Rapporteur.

The opening session was addressed by: the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Naseem Mirza, Chief, Division for Palestinian Rights; Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo, Chairman of the Seminar; and, Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations who read out a message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO.

Other statements were made by: Mr. Tesfaye Tadesse, Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples; Mr. Guennadi Oudovenko, Acting Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid; Mr. Daya Perera, Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices in the Occupied Territories; Mr. Ahmet Egin Ansay, Observer for the Organization of the Islamic Conference; and, Mr. Tebogo Mafole, Observer of the African National Congress of South Africa.

On its own part, the Seminar adopted a message to Mr. Yasser Arafat.

The Seminar also unanimously adopted a resolution requesting the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council to join in an immediate communication to Israel, requesting that it should rescind the recent order for the deportation of Palestinians.

Two panels were established. The panels and their panelists were as follows:

1. (a) "The urgency of convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East"; (b) "the intifadah in the occupied Palestinian territory and its impact on the achievement of a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict";

Mr. Mordechai Bar-On (Israel), Rev. Elias Chacour (Palestinian living in Israel), H.E. Mr. Rafael Estrella (Spain), Mr. James Graff (Canada), Ms. Zahira Kamal (Palestinian), H.E. Mr. Latyr Kamara (Senegal), Mr. Paul McCloskey (United States), Ms. Margaret McCormack (United States), Mr. Jack O'Dell (United States), Mr. V.P. Vorobyov (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Mr. James Zogby (United States).

2. "The role of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the social, cultural, economic and political development of the Palestinian people";

Mr. Mohammad Abu Kosh (Palestinian).

The expert members of the panels agreed on the content of the conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar. The full text of the proceedings will be published in due course as a special bulletin of the United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. The participants in the Seminar expressed their conviction that recent developments regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict and its core, the question of Palestine, have created a new momentum for bringing about a solution to this complicated and dangerous conflict on the basis of resolutions of the United Nations and within its framework. These developments are mainly due to the courageous and determined struggle of the Palestinian people to attain and exercise its inalienable rights, primarily the right to self-determination, as dramatically manifested in the continuing Palestinian uprising, the intifadah, in the occupied Palestinian territory. The present international climate, which is characterized by increasing co-operation and the political will to solve regional conflicts in a peaceful way through negotiations, is specially conducive to the search for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine. It is important that this historic opportunity do not be missed.

2. The participants welcomed the results of the Nineteenth Extraordinary Session of the Palestine National Council held at Algiers in November 1988, and, in particular, the political statement as well as the proclamation of an independent Palestinian State as a positive contribution towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict in the region. The decision adopted by the PNC at Algiers and the position outlined by H.E. Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, in his address to the United Nations General Assembly in Geneva on 13 December 1988, as well as in other forums, are important landmarks in the international endeavours towards achieving a just settlement of the question of Palestine and have resulted in increased support by all sectors of the international community for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

3. The Seminar welcomed the initiation of a dialogue between the United States and the PLO as a positive measure which contributed to redressing the imbalance between the parties. It was hoped that the dialogue would lead to the removal of obstacles in the way of convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East which, among other things, should ensure the full exercise by the Palestinian people of its legitimate national rights in Palestine. The wish was expressed that such contacts would lead to concrete developments and to a comprehensive settlement of the conflict. The Seminar urged the Government of the United States to continue its contacts with the PLO and to broaden the political scope of this dialogue.

4. The participants stressed that the ongoing uprising of the Palestinian people, now in its nineteenth month, confirms, in no uncertain terms, that the Palestinians are determined to resist, reject and end Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory occupied since 1967. The peace initiatives taken by the Palestinian leadership as well as the proclamation of the independent State of Palestine by the PNC at its nineteenth extraordinary session, have received enthusiastic support from an overwhelming majority of States who have hailed it as a concrete contribution towards peace. Significantly, a large number of States (over 90) have already formally recognized the State of Palestine.

5. The participants agreed that it was incumbent upon the Government of Israel to respond positively to the stand taken by the representatives of the Palestinian people which has been welcomed and praised by the international community. Israel can no longer ignore the national aspirations of the Palestinians and deny them their political rights. The Seminar considered that the so-called peace initiative proposed by the Israeli authorities was inadequate. Under the Israeli plan, the only function of the elected delegates would seem to be to rubber stamp the policies of the occupying Power. Any viable peace proposal must include interim measures of protection for the Palestinian people and measures which would enable the Palestinians to exercise fully their rights to self-determination. The participants noted that as long as the Israeli election proposals remained separate from the final objective of the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination, they would be nothing but a device for perpetuating Israeli occupation.

6. The Seminar took note of and welcomed the resolutions on the question of Palestine, adopted by the forty-third session of the General Assembly on 15 December 1988 in Geneva. In particular, it stressed the significance and timeliness of resolution 43/176 of 15 December 1988 calling for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the PLO, on an equal footing, and the five permanent members of the Security Council, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, primarily the right to self-determination. It expressed its full support for the principles contained in operative paragraph 3 of resolution 43/176, as a basis for the achievement of a comprehensive peace. Cognizant of the role of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security, the participants in the Seminar urged the Council to expedite the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, and to adopt interim measures, including the deployment of a United Nations peace-keeping force to safeguard the physical security of the inhabitants of the occupied Palestinian territory, and to bring about stability in the region pending agreement on a final comprehensive settlement. The participants considered that it was incumbent upon Israel to terminate its occupation in compliance with resolution 242 (1967) and to accept the terms for a lasting and comprehensive settlement, as agreed by the international community as a whole, as stated above.

7. The participants regretted that one permanent member had prevented the Security Council from taking action on measures indispensable ensuring the safety and protection of Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory. They pointed out that taking into account the gravity of the acts of violence and repression by Israeli authorities against Palestinian civilians in the occupied territory, the Security Council should assume its responsibilities and to provide for the protection of the Palestinian people under occupation. They called on Israel as the occupying Power to respect the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, and accept the de jure applicability of the Convention to the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and fully comply with its obligations under that Convention.

8. The participants expressed serious concern at the continued grave violations of the human rights of the civilian population in the occupied territory. The entire international community, as represented at the United Nations and other forums, has repeatedly declared that the Israeli acts of violence against the Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory are blatant violations of the provision of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which is fully binding on Israel - a State Party to the Convention. The Israeli actions are also contrary to United Nations resolutions and to the generally accepted norms of international law. In Gaza especially, new measures to control the movement of individuals had produced tinder-box conditions which could ignite at any moment. In the West Bank, settler vigilantism threatened to degenerate into large-scale blood-letting. New extremist elements were taking over and had

begun killing women and children. The participants strongly opposed the presence of settlers in the occupied territories. They expressed the view that the Israeli policy of establishing settlements in the occupied territory was not only a usurpation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, but also an obstacle to the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

9. The participants drew particular attention to the damaging effects of the blanket closure of schools, including primary schools and kindergartens, as well as the barring of any alternative teaching in the West Bank, which had serious implications for the education and cognitive development of an entire generation of Palestinian children. The participants noted further that these massive violations of human rights had not succeeded in ending the intifadah and were bound to fail. Moreover, persistence by Israel in acts of aggression against neighbouring States, in particular Lebanon, endangered security in the region.

10. The participants expressed their concern of the repressive economic measures by Israel aimed at bringing about the economic strangulation of the occupied Palestinian territories. In particular, the participants expressed outrage at the policies of large scale, uprooting of trees, appropriation of water resources and wanton destruction of houses and buildings, which are causing irreparable damage to the environment and very serious social and economic consequences for the Palestinian people under occupation.

11. The Seminar appealed to the Security Council to take urgent measures to protect the Palestinian people under occupation, to guarantee the safety and security and the legal and human rights of the Palestinian refugees in all the territories under Israeli occupation. The United Nations system as well as international, regional and national organizations should continue and strengthen their humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians under occupation and to Palestinian refugees. In particular, the Seminar urges an expansion of the Refugee Affairs Officer Programme of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which provides some measures of protection by monitoring behaviour towards the Palestinians by Israel, the occupying Power. The Seminar believes that the number of Relief Agency Organizations (RAO) in the occupied Palestinian territory should be increased to provide 24 hours' monitoring services. The participants urged as well the establishment of staffed neuro-surgical facilities in suitable hospitals in Gaza and Nablus, to permit immediate treatment of the increasing number of Palestinian civilians suffering serious head wounds, to prevent death and permanent disability. At present, Maquassed Hospital is the only hospital in East Jerusalem which has such facilities. Palestinian suffering serious head wounds must be transported either to Tel Aviv or to Jerusalem for treatment, which results in delays threatening their lives or causing permanent handicaps.

12. The Seminar also urges United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other suitable United Nations agencies to establish programmes to address the special needs of Palestinian children psychologically and emotionally traumatized by Israeli Defense Force (IDF) and settler violence directed against them, their families, neighbours and peers. The Seminar supports as well the expansion of International Committee for the Red Cross's (ICRC) protective role and the extension of its activities to provide emergency

medical services at all levels. Participants believe that ICRC could be helpful in establishing the neuro-surgical facilities referred to above. Sustained and increased support should be channelled through all available means, including the agencies and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular through UNRWA, as well as through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working directly in the occupied territory. The Seminar considered that intensified efforts towards genuine development of the occupied territory, with the close involvement of the Palestinian people through its representative, the PLO, must be a necessary accompaniment of renewed efforts to achieve a political solution of the question.

13. The Seminar affirmed that the denial of the exercise of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people remains the core of the conflict in the Middle East and that a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region cannot be achieved without the full exercise of those rights, and without the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and other occupied Arab territories. It further affirmed that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and, as such, is an essential party to any negotiations aimed at resolving the conflict by peaceful means.

14. The Seminar appreciated the efforts of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to secure universal recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, and of its recommendations, made in its report in 1976, and repeatedly endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly since then, for ensuring the exercise by the Palestinian people of those rights. The Seminar also noted with satisfaction the increased support at the United Nations for the programme of action undertaken by the Committee. It urged the international community to sustain and strengthen its support for the Committee's activities and endeavours, in particular its efforts for facilitating the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

15. The Seminar stated that the international community was deeply and firmly convinced of the urgent need to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. There was a broad consensus regarding the need for convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East in accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/176. Movement towards peace in the region was facilitated by the carefully balanced Palestinian position. The continuing obstacle was the inflexible attitude of Israel. The participants called on Israel to abandon its negative position and to respond positively to international efforts to attain a just settlement.

16. The Seminar welcomed the positive results of the Arab Summit held at Casablanca, Morocco, in May 1989. The Arab States, once more, committed themselves to meaningful political and economic support to the Palestinian uprising. The Seminar welcomed, in particular, the unequivocal support of the Summit for the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. These actions taken unanimously by the Summit contributed to efforts for achieving a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its core, the question of Palestine.

17. The Seminar noted with satisfaction that the public opinion in North America was becoming increasingly aware of the plight of the Palestinians under occupation and the urgent need to find a just solution to the question of Palestine. The Seminar agreed that efforts should be continued and intensified to mobilize official and public opinion in North America, especially through the use of the media and activities of national and international NGOs. The United Nations should undertake additional efforts to disseminate factual and up-to-date information on the question of Palestine, the plight of Palestinians under occupation and the urgent need to provide international protection to the Arab civilians in the occupied territory, as well as the measures required to be taken for the achievement of a just solution to the question of Palestine on the basis of the attainment and exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division of Palestinian Rights have an important role in the dissemination of such information.

18. The Seminar considered that the media and public institutions, universities, colleges, research institutes, churches and other religious establishments, as well as national and international NGOs, have a crucial role to play in the formation of public opinion and in influencing official policy, particularly in the United States and Canada. Those institutions and the media should be urged to give wider coverage and more balanced treatment to the question of Palestine.

VI. SIXTH UNITED NATIONS NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE, HELD IN NEW YORK FROM 21 TO 23 JUNE 1989

The Sixth United Nations North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine on the theme "The inalienable rights of the Palestinian People", was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 21 to 23 June 1989.

The Symposium was attended by representatives of 106 NGOs from the United States and Canada, 71 as participants, and 35 such organizations as observers. Still other NGOs from several regions attended the Symposium as did a number of governmental and intergovernmental observers.

The Symposium received a message from H.E. Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

H.E. Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo (Senegal) opened the meeting on behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. Ms. Jeanne Butterfield, Vice-Chairperson of the North American Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (NACC), served as Chairperson of the Symposium, while H.E. Mrs. María de los Angeles Flores (Cuba), Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, presided over the closing session.

Two panels were established. The first considered the topic "The intifadah: creating a new context for peace". Under that topic, papers were presented by: Ms. Zahira Kamal (Chairperson, Palestine Federation of Women's Action Committees); Mr. Meir Amor (member of HILA, Israeli Committee on Education in Oriental Neighbourhoods and Development Towns); and Father Chacour (Melkite priest from Galilee).

The second panel was entitled "Convening the International Peace Conference in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 43/176, implications for Israel and the United States of the proclamation of the State of Palestine, the Palestinian peace initiative, and the intifadah". Papers on this topic were presented by: Mr. Mahdi Abdul-Hadi (President, Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, Jerusalem); Mr. Mattityahu Peled (visiting scholar in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University); and, Ms. Margaret McCormack (Political Consultant).

Eight workshops were set up under the general theme "Mobilizing public awareness in North America" to consider the following topics:

- (a) Mobilizing concerns and support for Palestinian children;
- (b) Mobilizing concerns and support for Palestinian medical and health services;
- (c) Mobilizing concern and support for the victims of punitive violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention (expulsions, house demolitions, detentions, summary punishments and killings);
- (d) Mobilizing concern and support for Palestinian workers and their conditions of labour;
- (e) People-to-People Campaigns (speaking tours, delegations, twinning projects);
- (f) Electoral initiatives and mobilizing public opinion (ballot initiatives, state party platform proposals and NGO petition campaign);
- (g) Humanitarian material aid projects;
- (h) Congressional and parliamentary strategies: human rights, foreign policy and foreign aid.

The declaration of the Symposium, which was adopted unanimously, is reproduced below. The full text of the report together with action-oriented proposals of the eight workshops will be issued in due course as a special bulletin of the United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights:

Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the
North American Regional NGO Symposium on the
Question of Palestine - 23 June 1989

"We, the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participating in the Sixth United Nations North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, wish to thank the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for making this Meeting possible. We are indeed honoured by the reception, and the presence of the members and observers of this distinguished United Nations body.

"We wish also to thank the Chief of the Division for Palestinian Rights and are especially grateful for his enthusiastic support throughout our deliberations. We wish to thank also the liaison officers, the staff of the Division and the Department of Conference Services for their invaluable assistance in the preparation and execution of this Meeting.

"We are encouraged that about 90 Member States of the United Nations have recognized the State of Palestine, and encourage our own governments to join this international consensus.

"We note with satisfaction the record attendance and participation in this year's Symposium, and the commitment to Palestinian rights and a just and lasting solution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict that such participation represents.

"We wish also to voice our appreciation to the distinguished expert panelists, workshop organizers, resource persons and facilitators who offered their invaluable insights into the question of Palestine and the potential central role to be played by NGOs in North America. The practical suggestions and strategies developed in the workshops assisted us in formulating future collaborative efforts in North America and in linking our efforts to a broader global network.

"We resolutely reaffirm the international consensus that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian People. We affirm the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in conformity with all relevant United Nations resolutions, including the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to establish an independent Palestinian State on its own national territory under the leadership of the PLO, and the right of return. We resolutely reaffirm the international consensus as expressed through General Assembly resolution 43/177 acknowledging the proclamation of the State of Palestine by the Palestine National Council and the recognition throughout the United Nations system of "Palestine" in place of the designation "Palestine Liberation Organization".

"We welcome the Palestinian peace initiative as a concrete contribution to the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region. We call upon the Governments of the United States and Israel to accept this initiative by supporting the immediate convening of the International Peace Conference in accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/176. We also call upon the Government of Canada to support unequivocally the International Peace Conference and to use its influence within the Security Council to secure unanimous support for that conference. We condemn the Shamir "election" proposal as a mere pretext and transparent public relations ploy to cover Israel's illegal occupation and intensified repression of the intifadah.

"We believe this Meeting contributed to the constructive interaction between the United Nations and the North American NGO community concerned to promote the implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/176 of 20 December 1988, calling for an international United Nations-sponsored peace conference in the Middle East.

"We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to support the Palestinian people and their struggle for self-determination. We call for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem and other occupied Arab territories.

"We honor the victims of Israel's brutal and senseless repression of the popular Palestinian uprising, including the many hundreds fatally shot, beaten, gassed and otherwise brutally murdered. We also honor the scores of thousands wounded and imprisoned under inhuman conditions in violation of international law.

"We undertake to intensify our efforts to alleviate the suffering of those who have been the targets of Israeli violence, especially the children, many thousands of whom have been maimed, permanently disabled and emotionally traumatized. We call upon United Nations agencies, especially UNICEF, UNRWA, WHO, UNCHS and UNDP, to intensify their efforts to address the educational, medical and general economic and social needs of the Palestinian people in co-operation with Palestinian grass-roots organizations. We call upon Member States of the United Nations to increase their contributions and support for such efforts.

"We further commit ourselves to provide moral, political, and material support for the intifadah. We recognize that independent statehood for Palestine, as demanded by the Palestinian people, led by the PLO, is the expression of Palestinian self-determination as well as a basic necessity for the preservation of the entire Palestinian people.

"We call upon the United Nations Security Council and the Secretary-General to seek to arrange an extraordinary session of the United Nations General Assembly to discuss the protection of the Palestinian people in the occupied territory. We further call upon this extraordinary session of the United Nations General Assembly to dispatch an interim international peace-keeping force to replace the Israeli occupying forces in order to provide protection and ensure respect for the

human and political rights of the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza. In case of an impossibility to obtain such a force, we call upon the United Nations General Assembly to request an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice on the applicability of the 1949 Geneva Convention and the obligation to pay compensation for violations of the Convention. In addition, we urge an expansion of UNRWAs Refugee Affairs Officer Programme which provides some measures of protection by monitoring behaviour towards the Palestinians by Israel, the occupying Power.

"We recognize and express our concern for the role that racism, both de facto and de jure plays in the situation and treatment of Palestinians inside and outside the 1967 occupied territory. State actions directed against Palestinians by the Israeli Government, supported by continued United States aid to Israel in violation of United States law, as made clear in the United States State Department human rights report on Israel and the occupied territories, shows clearly that racism serves as a buttress for denial of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. This is of growing immediate concern as the number of house demolitions, land and water confiscations are increasing, both within Israel and within the occupied territory, under the pretext of suppression of the intifadah.

"We are particularly alarmed at the recently uncovered Israeli Ministry of Interior document directing the implementation of the 1986 (Markowitz) government commission report which calls for the eradication of tens of so-called "unrecognized" Palestinian villages within the green line. We also support the urgent appeal from ICCP and will work with ICCP to protest the currently proposed amendment to the Israeli Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance which may become law by the end of June. By empowering the government to seize arbitrarily the property of, and shut down, community service organizations, on the pretext that the sources of their funding may be "tainted", this amendment threatens the ability of the Palestinian community to defend itself, among other things, against the final phase of the Judaization process. The amendment will also seriously threaten the existence of Palestinian social and national institutions in East Jerusalem and can threaten the rights of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well.

"We note with appreciation the increasing numbers of Israeli individuals and organizations who decry racism, support a political solution, and support the national and human rights of the Palestinian people. Actions such as resistance to military service in the occupied Palestinian territories, public demonstrations, peace caravans, visits to Palestinian towns and villages which have been attacked by soldiers and settlers, and the many other actions and initiatives of Israeli peace forces are essential elements in changing official Israeli policies and practices towards Palestine.

"We are encouraged by resolution 43/178 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly for its actions taken to empower the Commission on Human Settlements to engage a committee of experts in consultation with the Palestine Liberation Organization for the purpose of a comprehensive development plan in the occupied Palestinian territory. We welcome the

Commission's resolution condemning Israel's demolition of Palestinian homes and decrying Israel's alteration of the demographic character of the 1967 occupied territories.

"We are also encouraged that the Commission on Human Rights has actively taken up the issues of Palestinian rights in the occupied territory and would welcome the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to take up the issue of the inequality of Israeli citizenship that disadvantages the Palestinian Arab minority within Israel.

"We acknowledge Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/54, requesting the international community, organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs to sustain and increase their assistance to the Palestinian people in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

"The aim of this Meeting is to develop practical organizing strategies and support projects for concerted action by North American NGOs. Our primary work was conducted in workshops and we receive their recommendations as appended below, and commend them to all NGOs for their careful consideration and implementation."

VII. REPORT OF ILO CALLS FOR END TO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WORKERS OF OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

GENEVA, 16 May (ILO) — A call for the elimination of discrimination against workers of the occupied Arab territories and of inequalities of treatment they encounter in employment and social protection is made by the International Labour Office (ILO), in a report issued in Geneva today.

Considerations of State security, which are omnipresent in relations between the Israeli authorities and the Palestinian people and workers of the occupied territories, are likely to lead to discriminatory and arbitrary practices, the report states. Inequality of opportunity and treatment is evident in access to employment and conditions of employment. There is no doubt that this situation is largely to blame for building up the tensions which have led to violence; it offers virtually no prospects to young people, whatever their level of education.

The report on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories is contained in an appendix to the International Labour Organization Director-General's report to the seventy-sixth session of the International Labour Conference opening in Geneva on Wednesday, 7 June. It is based on recent ILO missions to the region, which specifically referred to international labour standards on discrimination in employment and occupation, as well as those on freedom of association and the right to organize in assessing the situation. Annexed to it are communications received from Arab countries and organizations and from the Government of Israel.

Freedom of association

The report expresses extreme concern at the trade union situation in the occupied Arab territories. It deplures violations of trade union rights, interference in trade union activities and repression against trade unionists, whose effect is to destroy the trade union movement and create an atmosphere of intimidation tending to draw workers away from trade unions.

Workers' and employers' organizations have their own duties to perform irrespective of the political problems surrounding them, the report points out. A distinction must be drawn between such problems and matters relating to the exercise of freedom of association.

Certain trade union rights may be temporarily restricted for serious reasons involving a country's security or in a state of emergency. "However", the report continues, "one cannot but note that in the occupied territories interference by the army in the exercise of trade union activities has often taken place in an indiscriminate and exaggerated manner without any account being taken of the genuine trade union activity that exists."

Employment, training

Ongoing aggravation of employment problems of the workers of the occupied territories, and differences in treatment to which they are exposed, should prompt the Israeli General Federation of Labour (Histadrut) to intensify its action on their behalf, the report says. Only vigorous trade union action can help eliminate inequalities and lead to the creation of a legal framework which will offer better protection to these workers.

Concerning education and training, the report proposes that the legislation should be amended to make it possible for university-trained or highly skilled Palestinians to obtain jobs in Israel which correspond to their qualifications and from which they are at present virtually excluded. In addition, the granting of work permits and their extension should be based on fair and objective criteria which offer all workers an opportunity to obtain jobs that are available and for which they are qualified, and to hold jobs without the fear that their work permits may be withdrawn arbitrarily and suddenly owing to an overly broad definition of State security.

Social insurance

The report again calls for the elimination of inequalities of treatment in social insurance between Palestinian workers from the occupied territories and Israeli workers. Palestinian workers continue to complain that they are treated equally as far as contributions are concerned, but are discriminated against as regards benefits.

The report suggests that a comprehensive study of social benefits just completed by the Ministry of Labour should be the starting point for an investigation aimed at improving an inequitable system that is a source of conflict and frustration. In the case of the benefits that are not paid to

Palestinians because they do not reside in Israel, for example, the funds accumulated out of their contributions should be used and be seen to be used for the benefit of the inhabitants of the territories.

The current system remains one of the fundamental problems besetting Arab workers from the occupied territories. It affects up to 109,000 workers, over half of whom are in an irregular employment situation and thus deprived of essential basic rights. The report pledges ILO technical assistance towards setting up an appropriate social security system in the occupied territories.

Development policy

Resolute measures should be taken as soon as possible to halt economic decline in the occupied Arab territories and to develop economic structures which, at the very least, will enable the Palestinian people to meet their basic needs, the report says.

Since the start of the intifadah, living standards have fallen by 50 per cent, according to some observers, and economic activity has dropped by 30 per cent, according to an official Israeli Government source. The population has organized a "resistance and survival economy" based on a return to family subsistence agriculture.

Calling for a genuine policy of development in the territories, the report warns that the continuing deterioration of the economic situation "can only increase tensions and harden positions". (See ILO/2324)

VIII. UNITED NATIONS SPONSORS FACT-FINDING NEWS MISSION FOR JOURNALISTS TO THE MIDDLE EAST

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/175 C of 15 December 1988, the Department of Public Information organized a Fact-Finding News Mission for Journalists to the Middle East, from 7 to 24 May 1989.

The purpose of the Mission was to enable journalists to gain first-hand knowledge of current aspects of the question of Palestine.

The Mission visited Tunisia from 7 to 11 May, the Syrian Arab Republic from 11 to 15 May, Jordan from 15 to 19 May, and Egypt from 19 to 24 May.

At Tunis, the Mission met: Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization; Mr. Chedhli Klibi, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States; and Mr. Habib Ben-Yehia, Deputy Foreign Minister of Tunisia.

In Syria, the Mission met with: Mr. Abdul Halim, Vice-President of the Syrian Arab Republic; Mr. Mohamed Salman, Minister of Information; and Mr.

Dia'ullah Al-Fattal, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The party visited the city of Quneitra on the ceasefire lines, the Directorate of Palestinian Refugees and the Garamana Palestinian refugee camp. Major-General Adolf Radaner, United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) Force Commander, briefed the journalists on the role of the United Nations peace-keeping force.

In Jordan, the Mission met with: Mr. Marwan Al-Kassem, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Gamal Al-Bedour, Minister of Labour; and Dr. Ahmed Al-Qatanani, Director of the Department of Palestinian Affairs. Interviews also took place with the chief editors of Jordanian daily newspapers. In addition, the party met: Sheikh Abdel-Hameed El-Sayeh, Chairman of the Palestinian National Council, and three of his deputies. UNRWA officials received the group and visits were made to UNRWA facilities, the Baqa'a refugee camp and the King Hussein bridge on the River Jordan.

In Egypt, the Mission was received by: Ambassador Youssef Sharara, Deputy Foreign Minister; Dr. Mohamed Abdellah, Chairman of the Parliamentary Foreign Relations Committee; and Dr. Ali E. Hillal Desouki, Professor and Director of the Centre for Political Studies, Cairo University.

A further interview took place with Mr. Moshe Amirav, Secretary-General of the Centre Party in Israel, who was invited to brief the group on the current Israeli political situation with regard to the question of Palestine. Dr. Nabil Sha'ath, Special Political Advisor to Mr. Arafat and to the Chairman of the Political Committee of PNC, also granted an interview. The Mission took the opportunity to visit the Canada camp in Rafah on the borders of the Gaza Strip.

It was generally held that the Mission was particularly successful in that it coincided not only with the continuing of the intifadah but also current political activity inside and outside the region aimed at achieving a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem.

The media in each country visited widely covered the Mission, and participating journalists expressed appreciation to the United Nations for providing them with the opportunity to advance their knowledge of the situation in the Middle East in general and the question of Palestine in particular. A compilation of the articles written by the participants as a result of the Mission is currently underway.

It should be noted that a formal request for inclusion in the Mission was also sent to the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations, but no reply was received.

IX. WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON HEALTH CONDITIONS
OF THE ARAB POPULATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

At its 12th plenary meeting, on 17 May 1989, the World Health Assembly adopted the following resolution:

"The Forty-second World Health Assembly,

"Aware of the basic principle established in the WHO Constitution, which affirms that the health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security,

"Mindful of its responsibility for ensuring proper health conditions for all peoples who are victims of exceptional situations, including foreign occupation, and especially colonization by settlers,

"Expressing its deepest concern at the obstacles created by Israel to the provision of basic health services in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine and the Golan,

"Recalling the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly concerning the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination,

"Recognizing the reasons behind the present intifadah of the Palestinian people,

"Affirming the right of Arab refugees and displaced persons to return to their land and property from which they were deported,

"Recalling previous resolutions of the World Health Assembly on the health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied territories, including Palestine,

"Taking into account the report of the Special Committee of Experts on the health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine,^{1/}

"Taking note of the Director-General's report on the WHO Collaborating Centres in Primary Health Care Research in the occupied Arab territories,^{2/}

"1. REAFFIRMS the right of the Palestinian people to have its own institutions to provide health and social services;

"2. ASSERTS WHO's responsibility to ensure for the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health as one of the fundamental rights of every human being;

"

^{1/} Document A42/14.

^{2/} Document A42/15.

"3. EXPRESSES its grave preoccupation and concern at the deterioration in the health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine and the Golan;

"4. STRESSES that the Israeli occupation is inconsistent with the main requirements for the development of a health system appropriate to the needs of the population in the occupied Arab territories;

"5. DECIDES to develop a complete programme and plan, in co-operation with Palestine and the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean, to meet the health needs of the Palestinian people in both the short and the long term and to provide and allocate the funds necessary for the implementation of this plan and its programmes, and the establishment of an organizational unit on the health of the Palestinian people in WHO headquarters, to have the task of monitoring the implementation of the plan and its programmes in the occupied Arab territories;

"6. DEPRECATES Israel's inhumanity to the Arab population of the occupied Arab territories, especially to the Palestinian people in their current intifadah in inflicting physical and psychological injury on them and detaining thousands of them in prisons and detention camps;

"7. EXPRESSES its deep concern at the Israeli refusal to permit the Special Committee of Experts to visit the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine and the Golan, and asks Israel to allow the Committee to fulfil its mission of investigating the health conditions of the populations in those territories;

"8. THANKS the Special Committee of Experts for its report and requests it to continue its mission and report on the health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine and Golan, to the Forty-third World Health Assembly;

"9. THANKS the Director-General for his efforts to implement the resolutions of the World Health Assembly, and requests him:

"(1) to arrange for the Special Committee of Experts to visit the occupied Arab territories and to report on their visit to the Forty-third World Health Assembly;

"(2) to promote co-operation and co-ordination with the Arab States concerned, and with Palestine, with regard to the assistance for the population of the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine;

"(3) to increase the assistance given to centres for training health personnel to enable them to provide training for Palestinians working to develop the primary health care services in the occupied Arab territories;

"(4) to stress the international nature of the WHO collaborating centres under his supervision so that they can be administered by competent Palestinians, not by the occupation authorities;

"(5) to give material and moral support to all local, Arab and international foundations, associations, bodies and centres wishing to establish hospitals and health units in the occupied Arab territories;

"(6) to report to the Forty-third World Health Assembly on the steps taken for the implementation of this resolution, and particularly its fifth operative paragraph;

"10. THANKS all regional and international agencies and associations for their assistance, and in particular UNRWA; and calls on Member States to promote the work of such bodies.

"Twelfth plenary meeting, 17 May 1989" (See A42/VR/12.)

X. COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS ADOPTS RESOLUTION ON HOUSING CONDITIONS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

By a vote of 30 to 1, with 10 abstentions, the Commission on Human Settlements at its twelfth session adopted the following resolution on 2 May 1989:

"The Commission on Human Settlements,

"Recalling the relevant General Assembly resolutions on the question of Palestine, in particular resolution 42/190 of 11 December 1987, on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories,

"Recalling also the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, f/ which focused on continued land expropriation and demolition of houses,

"Remaining seized with the issue of Israel's continuous blowing up and bulldozing of Palestinian houses and other civilian structures in the occupied Palestinian territories as part of collective punishment policies and indiscriminate vengeful practices,

"Aware that such activities will inevitably lead to a further exodus of the Palestinian people from their homeland, and exacerbate the wider political, social and military conflict in the region,

"

f/ A/43/694.

"Convinced that such practices are obvious violations of international laws and, specifically, of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, g/ as reaffirmed in Security Council resolutions 607 (1988) of 5 January 1988 and 608 (1988) of 14 January 1988,

"Taking note of the report of the Executive Director on the reconstruction needed in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, h/

"Considering that the rebuilding of those Palestinian houses and other structures which have been destroyed by the Israeli occupation authorities is a necessity and should be supported by the international community,

"1. Reaffirms the international legal principle of the non-acceptability of a State's acquisition of territories by force;

"2. Affirms the right of the Palestinian people to secure adequate shelter in which to live in peace and dignity;

"3. Calls upon the Israeli occupation authorities to cease their malpractices against Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly the blowing up and destruction of Palestinian homes and their civilian structures, such atrocities conflicting with the aims and principles of the Commission on Human Settlements and its endeavours to fulfil the goals of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless;

"4. Recognizes the need for an enabling approach to the reconstruction of destroyed houses and for planning for the future housing needs of the Palestinian people such that they will have the opportunity to improve their housing conditions according to the needs and priorities that they themselves will define;

"5. Reiterates the right of the Palestinian people whose houses and other civilian structures have been blown up and destroyed by the Israeli occupation authorities to rebuild their homes and reside peacefully;

"6. Calls upon the Israeli occupation authorities to make open the houses sealed by military order in the occupied Palestinian territories;

"7. Requests the Secretary-General in consultation with the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to establish an international fund for the purpose of rebuilding the home and other structures, which were demolished by the Israeli occupation authorities, as the demolition process has rendered numerous Palestinian families homeless;

"

g/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973.

h/ HS/C/12/2/Add.3.

"8. Condemns Israel's alteration of the demographic character of the Palestinian occupied territories by establishing exclusive Jewish colonies on the Palestinian homeland as a violation of international law and as a threat to the security of Palestinian people;

"9. Calls upon the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to dispatch a fact-finding mission to the occupied Palestinian territories to investigate the whole question of the denial of housing rights to and the destruction of housing of the Palestinian people by the Israeli occupation authorities and to submit the mission report to the Commission at its thirteenth session;

"10. Also calls upon the Executive Director to devise a national housing development strategy for the year 2000 for the Palestinian people based on the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 in co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, including the housing requirements of a future independent Palestinian State, and to submit this report to the Commission at or before its thirteenth session.

7th plenary meeting
2 May 1989"

XI. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION

In the course of June the following information was received by the Division for Palestinian Rights:

- 1) "Najda Newsletter", Publication of women concerned about the Middle East, April/June 1989 issue. Available from Najda, P.O. Box 7152, Berkeley, Ca. 94707.
- 2) "AL HADAF Newsletter", available from Al Hadaf, P.O. Box 169, 30010 UMM El Fahem, Israel 06-352915.
- 3) "Palestine and the Palestinians", a hand-book produced by the Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada, 106 Duplex Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5P 2A7, Canada.
- 4) "Palestinian Children and Israeli State Violence", a publication of the Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada, March 1989. Available from NECEF, 106 Duplex Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5P 2A7, Canada.
- 5) "A Tangled Web, a Search for Answers to the Question of Palestine", published by the Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries, the United Methodist Church. Available from: Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, Ohio 45222 - 1800 United States.

- 6) "Solidarité Palestine", numéro 5, 4 avril 1989, Bulletin Bimestriel de L'Association Médicale Franco-Palestinienne, 14, Rue de Nanteuil 75015 Paris, France.
- 7) "Act Now", newsletter of the International Centre for Trade Union Rights. Available from ICTUR, P.O. B. 34, 120-00 Prague 2 Czechoslovakia.
- 8) Amnesty International. "Israel and the Occupied Territories: Administrative Detention During the Palestinian Intifadah", report dated 15 June 1989. Available from Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8 DJ, United Kingdom. Or, Amnesty International United Nations Office, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017, United States.
- 9) "Fédération Internationale des Résistants". A special issue of the Federation's newsletter covering a fact-finding visit to Israel in November and December 1988 by representatives of the organization is available from: Internationale Föderation der Widerstandskämpfer, Secretariat, A-1020 Wien 11, Alliiertenstrasse 2 - 4, Austria.
- 10) "Jerusalem", No. 48, May 1989, published by Palestine Committee for NGOs, B.P. 554, Tunis Cedex 1080, Tunis, Tunisia.
- 11) "Capital District Committee for Palestinian Rights", Middle East Peace Campaign. Information available from 33, Central Avenue, Albany, N.Y. 12210, or Middle East Peace Network, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10115.
- 12) "Palestine Focus", May-June and July-August 1989 issues. National Newspaper of the Palestine Solidarity Committee, P.O. Box 372, Peck Slip Station, New York, N.Y. 10272.
- 13) "United Palestinian Appeal", appeal for funds for the UPA Child Sponsorship Programme, the Projects Fund and the Completion of the UPA Nursing College Information from Suite 409, 2100 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20037.
- 14) "Association of Israeli and Palestinian Physicians", appeal for funds. Information from JCIPP, c/o Ellen Siegel, P.O. Box 4991, Washington, DC 20008, USA, or AIPP 5, Mozkin Street, Tel Aviv, Israel 62288.
- 15) "General Union of Palestine Students USA", newsletter available from P.O. Box 57, FDR Station, New York, N.Y. 10150.
- 16) "Afro-Asian Solidarity", quarterly publication of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) 89, Abdel Aziz Al-Seoud Street, Manial El-Roda, Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt.

