



DIVISION FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

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

At the 8th plenary meeting of its thirteenth session, on 8 May 1991, the Commission on Human Settlements adopted the following resolution:

"13/6. Housing conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories

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

"Recalling also General Assembly resolution 40/120 dated 17 December 1985 concerning the provision of assistance to the Palestinian people,

"Recalling also Security Council resolution 465 (1980) and the remaining United Nations resolutions that view the Israeli settlement policies as illegitimate and a serious obstacle for the peace process,

"Noting with satisfaction the report of the Executive Director on housing requirements for the Palestinian people (HS/C/13/2/Add.1),

"1. Reiterates its resolution 12/11 of 2 May 1989, and requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to intensify efforts to follow up those paragraphs of the resolution that have not been implemented yet and submit a report to the Commission at its fourteenth session;

"2. Condemns the Israeli refusal of the dispatch of a fact-finding mission from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to the occupied Palestinian territories to investigate the housing conditions of the Palestinian people, that had been endorsed by the Commission during its twelfth session;

"3. Reaffirms the right of the Palestinian people to implement its national shelter strategy within the context of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000;

"4. Condemns strongly the continuation of the establishment of Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories and the housing of new settlers in them;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Executive Director and in cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, to devise a plan for the implementation of a shelter strategy for the Palestinian people to the year 2000, as contained in the report of the Executive Director on the housing requirements of the Palestinian people, together with the provision of necessary funds;

"6. Further requests the Executive Director to report to the Commission on the implementation of this resolution at its fourteenth session."

II. UNRWA DONORS PLEDGE RENEWED AID TO PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

The following press release was issued by UNRWA on 10 June 1991 (see PAL/1765):

"The representatives of the major donors to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and of Governments hosting Palestinian refugees met informally in Vienna on 5 and 6 June. The delegates of the 24 countries and the European Community discussed the current financial plan and the emergency measures taken by the Agency to alleviate hardship faced by Palestinians in the aftermath of the Gulf war. Several increases in contributions and pledges to UNRWA's regular and emergency programmes and the Gaza hospital project were also announced.

"The UNRWA Commissioner-General, Iltar Turkmen, chairing the annual meeting for the first time since taking up his post in March, said that the support of donor Governments has 'a meaningful encouragement to the Agency at a time when the needs are so pressing'. In the aftermath of the Gulf war the plight of the Palestinians in the occupied territory 'has increased tremendously with a further loss of

employment and income' resulting in 'an atmosphere of despair (which) pervades the refugee camps and Palestinian communities'. In this situation, the Palestinians were 'pinning their hopes on the current efforts to initiate a viable and productive peace process'.

"Mr. Turkmen emphasized that the Gulf crisis had also had a negative impact on the Jordanian and Lebanese economies and that against this background it was imperative for the Agency to place more emphasis on income generation.

"Donor Governments voiced their praise for the Agency in continuing to render indispensable humanitarian aid to the Palestinian refugees in increasingly difficult circumstances. Participants specifically mentioned their support for UNRWA's income-generating programme which they suggested would 'help alleviate the economic pressure on Palestinians and ease certain burdens of the Agency.'

"During the meeting UNRWA's role in promoting stability in the region was mentioned by both UNRWA and its donor Governments. The Commissioner-General stated his conviction that UNRWA 'is part and parcel of any peace process in the region, that its very operations help prevent a deterioration in the situation and create an environment more conducive to confidence-building measures.'"

III. UNITED NATIONS SPONSORS JOURNALISTS' ENCOUNTERS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/67 C of 6 December 1990, the United Nations Department of Public Information held a series of journalists' encounters on the question of Palestine at Brussels on 22 May, at Bonn on 24 May, and at Helsinki, from 3 to 5 June of this year.

The purpose of the encounters was to promote better understanding of the question of Palestine among the media by bringing their representatives together with specialists on the subject for brief, in-depth, informal and candid discussions.

At Brussels and Bonn, the theme of discussion was "The protection of Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation". The meetings were co-hosted by the Parliamentary Association for

Euro-Arab Co-operation and the German Association for the United Nations.

Some 45 journalists attended each encounter. The Palestinian panellists, both in Brussels and Bonn were Mr. Nasser Al-Kidwa, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, and Dr. Saab Erekat, Professor of Political Science at An-Najah University in Nablus. In both cities, the Israeli panellists were Ms. Yael Dayan, a Labour Party member of the Knesset, and Mr. Avigdor Feldman, a civil rights lawyer and co-founder of the human rights organization B'tselem.

At Helsinki, the theme of the encounter was "Prospects for an international peace conference on the Middle East." The meeting was conducted with the support of the Press Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Finland. The encounter was moderated by Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Vasiliy Safronchuk.

Some 60 representatives attended the Helsinki meeting. Panellists comprised: Yasir Abed Rabbo, Member of the Executive Committee, Palestine Liberation Organization; Hanan Mikhail-Ashrawi, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Bir Zeit University; Haim Ramon, Member of the Knesset; Elazar Granot, Chairman of the United Workers Party (MAPAM); H.E. Fuchang Yang, Deputy Foreign Minister of China; Simon James Fraser, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom; Anatoly Ivanovich Philyov, First Deputy Head, Directorate for the Middle East and North Africa, USSR; William Quandt, Senior Fellow, the Brookings Institution, U.S.A; and, Mohamed El-Shafei Abdel Hamid, former Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, Egypt.

Participants were welcomed by the Acting Finnish Secretary of State, Mr. Mauri Eggert, and an opening address was made by Mr. Safronchuk.

A concluding statement was made by Mr. Mustapha Tlili, co-ordinator of the encounter.

**IV. DECLARATION OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL ON THE PEACE PROCESS
IN THE MIDDLE EAST ISSUED ON 29 JUNE 1991**

On 29 June 1991, the following declaration was issued by the European Council:

"The European Council has examined the state of play on the Middle East peace process. While reaffirming its well-known positions of principle, it emphasized the necessity of setting in motion without delay a process, on the basis of United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), leading to a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian question.

"To this end, the European Council believes that the current initiative, launched by the United States of America, offers real prospects of peace in the region. It confirms its firm support for this initiative and calls urgently upon all parties to overcome final difficulties so that a peace conference can be convened. As a participant in the peace conference, the Community and its member States aim to make their full contribution to its success and to the negotiations between the parties.

"Besides a settlement of the Palestinian question through the exercise of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, lasting peace and the stability of the region should involve the end of the state of belligerence among all States in the region, the commitment not to resort to force and to the peaceful settlement of disputes, and respect for the territorial integrity of all States, including Israel.

"The European Council confirms the determination of the Community and its member States to contribute to the economic and social development of all peoples in the region once the prospect of peace is clear. To this end, the Community and its member States will work to promote intraregional solidarity and relations of friendship and cooperation with all countries in the region. The Community and its member States emphasize their interest in a political dialogue with regional groupings.

"The European Council once again underlines the need for all parties to adopt reciprocal and balanced measures to establish a climate of confidence to get the negotiations going, and to avoid all measures that might hinder the process. It believes specifically that the policy of establishing settlements in the territories occupied by Israel, which is in any case illegal, is incompatible with the will expressed to make progress with the peace process." (see A/46/285 - S/22766)

**V. EIGHTH UNITED NATIONS NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL NGO
SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE, HELD AT
MONTREAL, CANADA, FROM 28 TO 30 JUNE 1991**

The Eighth United Nations North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, on the theme "Palestine: protecting lives and promoting peace: the impact of the Gulf war", was held at Montreal, from 28 to 30 June 1991, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/67 B.

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by a delegation comprising: H.E. Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee, and Mr. Nasser Al-Kidwa (Palestine).

The Symposium was attended by 104 NGOs, 40 of them as observers. Also present were representatives of 19 Governments, Palestine, and 1 intergovernmental organization.

The event was opened by Mrs. Diallo, who spoke on behalf of the Committee. Mr. Al-Kidwa read out a message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Chairman of the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs, Ms. Jeanne Butterfield, also made a statement.

Three panels were established to discuss the following topics:

- I. "Palestine: protecting lives and promoting peace : the impact of the Gulf war";
- II. "Teach-in on Israeli/Palestinian conflict"; and,
- III. "Palestine: responding to current developments."

During the course of the Symposium, a total of 20 workshops took place dealing with three sub-themes: "Special protection needs"; "Critical issues for NGO work"; and, "Organizing strategies for Canadian and United States constituencies for protection and peace". Recommendations of these workshops were presented to the Symposium.

At the concluding meeting, the Symposium adopted a resolution calling upon the NGO community to initiate a boycott of Israeli goods and services. The Symposium also adopted a number of action-oriented proposals and elected a new Coordinating Committee for NGOs in the North American Region.

The full report of the Symposium will be issued in due course as a publication of the United Nations Division for Palestinian Rights.

**VI. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:
ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION**

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

1. ICCP Newsletter No. 35, available from: the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, 150 Route de Ferney, Case postale 2100, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.
2. Challenge, a magazine of the Israeli Left. Available from: P.O. Box 2760, Tel Aviv 61026, Israel.
3. The Other Front, available from: the Alternative Information Center, P.O. Box 24278, Jerusalem.
4. News from Within, independent newsletter; available from: Alternative Information Center, P.O. Box 24278, Jerusalem.
5. Middle East International, bi-weekly publication, available from: P.O. Box 53365, Temple Heights Station, Washington, D.C. 20009, United States of America.
6. NECEF Report, publication of the Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada. Available from: 106, Duplex Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5P 2A7.
7. "FROM THE FIELD", monthly report on selected human rights issues. Published by Palestine Human Rights Information Center, P.O. Box 20479, Jerusalem, or 2753 N. Broadway, Suite 930, Chicago, IL 60640, U.S.A.
8. Jerusalem, publication of Palestine Committee for NGOs. Available from: B.P. 554, Tunis, Cedex 1080, Tunis, Tunisia.

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