

UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE  
GENERAL COMMITTEE

RESTRICTED  
Com.Gen./SR.11  
2 June 1949  
Original: English

SUMMARY RECORD OF A MEETING BETWEEN  
THE GENERAL COMMITTEE AND THE  
DELEGATIONS OF THE ARAB STATES

held in Lausanne on Thursday,  
2 June 1949, at 4 p.m.

Present: Mr. de la Tour du Pin (France) - Chairman  
          Mr. Yenisey (Turkey)  
          Mr. Wilkins (U.S.A.)  
  
          Mr. Milner - Committee Secretary  
  
          Mr. Abdel Chafi El Labbane - Representative of  
  Egypt  
          Mr. Jamal Tugan )  
          Mr. Edmond Roch ) - Representatives of  
  Hashemite Jordan  
  Kingdom  
          Mr. Mohamed Ali Hamade - Representative of  
  Lebanon  
          Mr. Farid Sad )  
          Mr. Ahmad Choukairi ) - Representatives of  
  Syria

- - - - -

Population statistics

Mr. TUGAN (Hashemite Jordan Kingdom) completed the replies to the population questionnaire submitted by Mr. Wilkins (document Com.Gen./2).

Questions 1 (a) and 1(b) had already been answered at a previous meeting (document Com.Gen./SR.7).

Questions 1(c) and 1(d): Refugee workers at ports of Haifa and Jaffa and Lydda Airport.

It was difficult to furnish accurate figures, since access to the ports was cut off. Approximate figures were as follows:

Haifa port	5,000
Jaffa port	3,000
Lydda Airport	100

Question 2: Arabs in each of administrative districts in Palestine on December 31, 1947.

Based on the statistics furnished by the Palestine Administration to UNSCOP, as of 31 December 1946, figures for the six districts were as follows:

Galilee and Acre district:	212,647
Haifa	" 137,635
Samaria	" 238,997
Jerusalem	" 299,630
Lydda	" 220,156
Gaza	" 157,551

TOTAL 2,266,616

To this total must be added the figure, static since 1931, of 66,553 nomad Bedouins in the region of Gaza and Beersheba. The total must be further augmented to allow for natural increase, at the rate of 26.56 per thousand for Moslems, 16.82 per thousand for Christians, and 19.90 per thousand for others. The total would thus be raised to 1,330,169.

As regards the nomad Bedouins, Mr. Tugan pointed out that the figure was based on a rough census taken in 1931, but remained static; the food control figure was about 92,000, but neither could be taken as accurate.

Question 3 (a): Arabs on 1 May 1949 in area of Palestine allocated to Israel under 29 November Resolution in 1947.

The estimated total of 59,000 was divided as follows:

Eastern Galilee	4,000
Haifa and district	15,000

plus an estimated 40,000 nomad Bedouins, chiefly in the Beersheba region.

Mr. Tugan emphasized that the figures given for question 3 were rough approximations, gathered from various sources; it was impossible to give any authentic statistics.

Question 3 (b): Arabs on 1 May 1949 in Arab area of Palestine under 29 November 1947 Resolution and at present Israeli-occupied.

The estimated total of 51,000 was divided as follows:

Western Galilee	40,000
Lydda district	5,000
Gaza district	6,000

Question 3 (c): Arabs in Arab area of Palestine under 29 November 1947 Resolution.

	<u>Residents</u>	<u>Refugees</u>
Jerusalem district (excluding the international area)	143,000	185,000
Samaria	233,000	125,000
Gaza	68,000	200,000
TOTALS	444,000	510,000

Question 3 (d): Arabs on 1 May 1949 in area of Palestine allocated to Israel under 29 November 1947 Resolution and at present Arab-occupied.

The Arab delegations had no reply to make to question 3 (d).

Mr. Tugan added the information that there were approximately 116,000 refugees in Lebanon, 80,000 in Syria, 80,000 in the Hashemite Jordan Kingdom, 14,000 in Egypt, and 5,000 in Iraq. There were also 60,000 Arabs in the international area of Jerusalem.

Mr. Tugan pointed out that a comparison of the estimated figures for 1 May 1949, with the official figures for 31 December 1946 showed an estimated total for question 3 of 1,375,000, as

against the total of 1,330,169 for question 2. He therefore considered his estimate a reasonable figure.

In reply to a question from Mr. Wilkins, Mr. TUGAN said that the figure of 60,000 Arabs in the international area of Jerusalem did not appear in the statistics for 1946. He added that his estimated figures for the Jerusalem area included Bethlehem and Beit Jala, where the Arab population was chiefly residents.

The CHAIRMAN said he had been informed by the mayor of Bethlehem that there were several thousand refugees in that city and Beit Jala and that the population had doubled.

Mr. TUGAN thought it possible that many of those refugees had now returned to Jerusalem, where most of them had their homes.

2. Point 9 of the Memorandum of 18 May from the Arab Delegations and paragraph 3 of the Memorandum of 21 May from the Arab Delegations.

Mr. HAMADE (Lebanon) explained that the safeguards asked for returning refugees in point (9) of the Memorandum of 18 May concerned only provisional measures covering refugees whose return was being demanded as a matter of particular urgency, and not the measures that would be required in a final settlement. Such safeguards should assure the returning refugees of free exercise of their rights in conformity with the law of nations and the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948.

The Arab Delegations were concentrating their requests on two provisional measures: (1) That the Jewish authorities should be required to undertake to respect the Declaration of Human Rights in relation to returning Arab refugees, and (2) that United Nations observers should be appointed, under the aegis of the Commission, to supervise the fulfillment of that undertaking.

As examples of the rights of which respect should be guaranteed, he cited from among those listed in the Plan of Partition of 1947, under Chapter 2 (Document A/516, page 7) the traditional family law (point 4), freedom of education (point 6), the use of the native tongue (point 7) and defence against appropriation (point 8).

To a question from Mr. YENISEY as to the type and functions of the proposed observers, he replied that such observers should be appointed by the United Nations to ensure that the Jews fulfilled their undertaking; they would act in the same way as the Truce Observers. To further questions from Mr. YENISEY whether their function would be only transitional and whether the Arab Delegations contemplated guarantees for Arab minorities in an eventual peace treaty, he replied that the measures he was now proposing were

transitional, to cover refugees accepted back on a temporary basis; other guarantees would be asked when the time came for a final peace settlement. It was necessary, however, that the proposed guarantees should be applied within the framework of the United Nations, not within that of a peace treaty.

Mr. LABANNE (Egypt) said the measures proposed were intended to cover a particular case, which had not only a character of urgency but could be considered unique and had no relation to a final settlement. The field of action of the observers requested was defined in the Memorandum; their task would be to ensure that refugees recreating their homes had the "guarantees necessary to their security and peace and to their liberty, in conformity with the principles of human rights." It was for the United Nations to select qualified persons for such a task, in the same way as it had selected the members of the Conciliation Commission.

The CHAIRMAN asked for fuller explanation of the reference to "international guarantees" in paragraph 3 of the Memorandum of 21 May, in respect of refugees returning to the areas specified in that Memorandum.

Mr. HAMADE (Lebanon) said that guarantees consisting in an undertaking to be given by the Jewish authorities, and the appointment of United Nations observers to ensure its fulfillment should apply to all cases during the transitional period.

The CHAIRMAN enquired as to the Arab attitude on the question of the refugee owners and workers of the orange groves around Jaffa, an area not among those mentioned in the Memorandum of 21 May, and which might be permanently incorporated in Israeli territory. Would the Arab delegations be satisfied if Israel were ready to grant such refugees Israeli citizenship, with the guarantees provided in the Draft Constitution of Israel which, like that of France, incorporated a Declaration of the Rights of Man. If that Constitution were finally adopted, would the Arab delegation consider the constitutional guarantees which it entailed a sufficient assurance as to the status of the returned refugees?

Mr. HAMADE (Lebanon) considered United Nations control desirable for an initial period of some duration. In time, and according to the course of events, the Arabs might come to accept the constitutional guarantees as sufficient, but for the time being it was not certain whether, even with a formal Jewish undertaking, the rights of the returning refugees would be respected.

Mr. ROCH (Hashemite Jordan Kingdom) said that the Chairman's question bore rather upon a final settlement. At the moment only

conservatory, temporary measures were being considered.

Mr. LABANNE (Egypt) took it that the Chairman's question did not imply that the return of the refugees concerned should be made conditional on their acceptance of Israeli nationality. Such a question was premature. The Jewish Constitution had not yet been adopted. The refugees in question were adults, capable of free choice, and no pressure should be brought to bear upon them to effect their choice.

The CHAIRMAN thanked the Arab delegations for the detailed explanations they had given.

- - - - -