

UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

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Letter dated 2 May 1949 from Dr. Walter Eytan,
Head of the Israeli Delegation, Lausanne, to
the Chairman of the Conciliation Commission.

I thank you for your courtesy in making available to me further copies of the Conciliation Commission's memorandum of 11 April 1949.

My delegation has now had an opportunity of making a preliminary study of this document, and I am in a position to give you immediate assurances on two of the points raised.

With regard to the first suggestion - that a declaration be made by the Government of Israel that it will cooperate to the fullest possible extent in the solution of the refugee problem - I should like to draw your attention to the following statement which I made at a press conference on 30 April at Lausanne in my official capacity as head of the Israeli Delegation:

" Recognising that the problem of the refugees is one of the main problems confronting this Conference, the Israeli Delegation has come prepared to tackle it with sincerity and in a spirit of realism. We believe this problem to be soluble and are prepared to do everything possible to help in arriving at a solution. We shall cooperate with the United Nations and with the Arab States in implementing the solution of this problem, on the assumption that co-operation with the Arab States will extend to other spheres as well. "

With regard to the third point contained in the memorandum of 11 April, may I recall that at his meeting with the members of the Conciliation Commission on 7 April, Mr. Ben-Gurion stated emphatically that the Government of Israel fully respected the rights of minorities within its borders and would punish anyone infringing these rights?

I should like to add that the Israeli Delegation is now giving its earnest consideration to the other suggestions made in the memorandum. I hope to be able to communicate with you further on this subject in the course of the week.

Thanking you again for your courtesy,

Yours sincerely,

Walter Eytan
Head of Israeli Delegation