

UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

RESTRICTED

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19 October 1951

ENGLISH

ORIGINAL : FRENCH

Letter dated 19 October 1951
to the Chairman of the Conciliation Commission
from the Israel Representative

Sir,

The Israel delegation has taken most careful note of your letter of 18 October 1951.

As stated in its letter of 14 October 1951, the delegation would be happy to meet the Commission.

However, it feels bound to reaffirm that it cannot acknowledge that the Arab delegations, by refusing to subscribe to the declaration requested of them by the Commission, and replacing it by a declaration which limits the scope of the Armistice Agreements to prohibition of the use of military force only - all other acts of hostility being permitted - and thus stressing their intention to disregard the decisions of the Security Council, have "contributed to the creation of a favourable atmosphere for the present discussions and for the promotion of the return of permanent peace in Palestine".

It is likewise difficult for the Israel delegation to conceive that, in those conditions, the Arab text can "constitute a basis" for the pursuit of the negotiations.

The Israel delegation had noted, in the course of the meetings of this conference in which it participated, that there was a complete identity of views between it and the Commission on the substance and spirit of the expression of good will required of the parties as a primary condition for any positive progress.

That identity of views was present in the mind of the Israel delegation in drafting its reply of 14 October 1951.

No apprehension concerning the Commission's interpretation of the Armistice Agreements or the United Nations Charter can be said to exist in the mind of the Israel delegation. But the declaration by the Arab States is such that it gives rise not to the apprehension but to the certainty that they interpret in a manner which is unacceptable their obligations under the Armistice Agreements and as Members of the United Nations.

The reservations expressed in the Chairman's letter of 18 October 1951 disassociate the Commission from the Arab attitude but cannot, unfortunately, alter the negative atmosphere created by the latter or the impossibility of agreeing that that attitude could constitute a starting point for the discussions.

It is clear that no one, however strong his desire for conciliation, can take the place of the Arab States in manifesting initial good will, without which there can be no progress towards a settlement of the problems, which is the purpose of this conference. On the Arab States, and on them alone, rests the responsibility for making an unequivocal change in their attitude, by accepting a formula for the expression of good will such as would correspond to that given by Israel in its offer of non-aggression pacts.

The Israel delegation considers that examination of the situation explained in its letter of 14 October and in the above paragraphs cannot be avoided and therefore invites the Commission to take that examination as the agenda for the next meeting.

With regard to the latter, the Israel delegation regrets that it must ask for the proposed date to be changed, 22 and 23 October being Jewish holidays.

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of my high consideration.

(signed) Maurice Fischer