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UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

Letter dated 30 November 1954 addressed to the Chairman
of the Conciliation Commission from the Deputy Permanent
Representative of Israel to the United Nations.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you a copy of my Government's announcement of 16 November 1954 to which I referred at the meeting of the Commission on 25 November 1954. The announcement outlines the procedures to be followed by persons who wish to apply for the release of absentee or refugee accounts held in banks in Israel, and also, for articles deposited for safe custody and the contents of safe deposit lockers. This announcement was transmitted over the Israel radio in Hebrew, Arabic and other languages, and also displayed prominently in the Israel press. It has also, I understand, been given considerable publicity in the press and over the radio in certain of the Arab countries.

Please accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

/s/ M. R. Kidron
Deputy Permanent Representative
of Israel to the United Nations

November 16th, 1954

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL

On 27 September the Government of Israel announced its intention and on 3 November elaborated its decision to proceed with the release to absentee or refugee owners of the outstanding balance of their accounts with banks in Israel, together with articles deposited for safe custody and the contents of safe deposit lockers. The Government of Israel have since been in a position to consider practical proposals as to the measures for implementing their decision and they are now able to announce that the release procedure will be as follows:

All account holders who have already been receiving releases at the monthly rate of 50 pounds sterling and up to a maximum of 500 pounds sterling, will shortly receive a letter, addressed to them at the address given on their previous application form, enclosing a simple form of request for the release and transfer of the remaining balance held in their name. This form, when completed, should be submitted, either directly by the applicant or through any local organization he may select, to the nearest branch of Barclays Bank D.C.O or of the Ottoman Bank or the London offices of these two banks or through the nearest UNRWA office.

Account holders who have not so far submitted applications or whose applications were not eligible under the previous release scheme will be required to make an application in the manner specified above on special forms which should be available within two weeks at branches of Barclays Bank D.C.O. and the Ottoman Bank and at UNRWA offices in the countries bordering Israel. Application forms will be available at the London offices of the two Banks. The Government of Israel will ensure that applications are dealt with as expeditiously as possible and certainly within 14 working days of receipt.

All amounts deducted under the 10% Compulsory Loan and all amounts which have been transferred to the Custodian of Absentee Property in respect of balances of accounts exceeding 500 pounds sterling, will be refunded and included in the final release.

The transfer of the amount released will be made in sterling, at the rate of one Israel Pound equals one pound sterling, in one payment.

Applicants requiring the release of articles deposited for safe custody or the contents of safe deposit lockers will also be required to complete a special application form. After verification by the bank and approval of the application by the Government of Israel the articles can be released in one of the following ways:

- (a) to the depositor himself on personal application;
- (b) to the representative of the depositor on production of an adequate letter of authority;
- (c) by posting the articles wither to a bank nominated by the applicant or to the applicant himself on his written application, subject, of course, in all cases to compliance with the normal customs regulations in force at the time, but not to any Currency or Exchange Control regulations which for this purpose will not be applied in respect of any article released by the Israel Custodian of Absentee Property.

If, in terms of (a), the depositor wishes to make personal application the Government of Israel is prepared to facilitate this by providing an escort and transport if necessary for the depositor and his property.

The Government of Israel reserves its right to refuse entry to any person at its sole discretion.
