

UNITED-NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

MIXED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE FOR BLOCKED ACCOUNTS

RESTRICTED
MCA/SR/1
16 August 1949
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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIRST MEETING

held in Lausanne, on Tuesday,
16 August 1949, at 4 p.m.

Present: Dr, P. de Azcarate -- Chairman
Mr; A. El Labbane -- Arab member
Mr, Z. Lifshitz -- Israeli member
Mr. T. Arazl

Statements

The CHAIRMAN, after welcoming the members of the Committee, recalled that the Committee was to be a technical one and that consequently both the Arab and Israeli members would have the right to be assisted by experts who would, however, be included in one or the other of the two delegations; The Chairman hoped that the Committee would be able to proceed with its work with a minimum of formality and a maximum of efficacy, If the parties present saw no objection, he thought that that first meeting might be devoted to taking' the necessary decisions as to the formal composition of the Committee and the way in which it would function; Representatives would probably prefer to wait for the experts to arrive before beginning discussion of the technical questions to be studied'by the Committee, The Chairman asked whether members were in favour of holding strictly private meetings with no summary record or whether they would prefer meetings to be private but with summary records kept of the discussions,

Mr. LABBANE thanked the Chairman for his statement and expressed his gratification that the Committee which had been set up in response to a humanitarian appeal from the Commission was beginning to meet; He stressed the fact that, if Egypt had agreed to sit on the Committee, it was because of the essentially technical nature of the Committee whose aim it was to come to the assistance of the Arab refugees; Mr. Labbane would prefer to wait for the expert adviser who would arrive shortly before beginning discussion of the technical questions

to be examined by the Committee. He stated that he was in favour of private meetings with summary records.

Mr. LIFSHITZ was pleased to see set up the first civil mixed committee where both the interested parties were present. He agreed with his Egyptian colleague that the problems to be dealt with by the Committee would be technical problems and he assured the Committee of his delegation's full collaboration. He was of the same opinion as Mr. Labbane that the Committee should wait for the arrival of the experts and of the necessary documentation before beginning discussion of the technical questions, and also that meetings of the Committee should be private in nature but that summary records should be kept;

Terms of reference of the Mixed Committee of Experts

After a brief discussion of the Committee's terms of reference, the Committee agreed on the following text:

"In response to the humanitarian appeal of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, the two parties have accepted the principle of unfreezing, on a basis of equal and reciprocal compensation, assets blocked both by Israel and by the Arab States,

"Therefore, there has been established a Mixed Committee of Experts, composed of one Arab member, one Israeli member and a representative of the Commission;

"This purely technical committee is charged with the task of submitting to the General Committee the basis of a procedure which will permit the above-mentioned unfreezing of assets, "

Press 'communique

The Committee approved the draft of a press communique (document PRESS/13).

The date of the Committee's next meeting would be decided by the Chairman who would inform the parties concerned;