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UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE
SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND NINETY-SECOND MEETING (closed)

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 28 October 1952, at 12.30 p.m.

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PRESENT:

Chairman:

Mr. ORDONNEAU France

Members:

Mr. BARAN Turkey

Mr. ROSS United States of America

Mr. BARCO

Also present:

Mr. BLANDFORD Director of the United Nations
Relief and Works Agency

Mr. INGRAND Advisory Commission to UNRWA

Secretariat:

Mr. CHAI Acting Principal Secretary

Mr. BERNCASTLE Land Specialist

Mr. LADAS

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

2. CABLE FROM MR. REEDMAN WITH REFERENCE TO THE DISCUSSIONS ON BLOCKED ACCOUNTS

(a) PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE ISRAEL EXPERTS AND BARCLAY'S BANK

The CHAIRMAN noted that Mr. Reedman's cable, copies of which were before the Commission, posed the questions of how the identity of the recipients was to be determined, and how they were to be paid. The suggestion that Barclay's Bank should operate the central control for the payment presupposed the agreement of the Israel Custodian of Absentee Property. He therefore suggested that the Commission might approach the Israel delegation on the point, since Israel's agreement to that procedure would make a great deal of difference with respect to the amount of time required for completion of the operation.

It was agreed that the Chairman should undertake a démarche with the delegation of Israel along the lines suggested.

(b) REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FROM UNRWA

Mr. ROSS (United States of America) wondered whether UNRWA would not become too involved in the mechanical aspects of the operation if it furnished all the assistance requested in Mr. Reedman's cable. He thought that the Commission was agreed on the desirability of restoring the normal relationship between the banks and their clients. He was not so concerned with the possibility of UNRWA assuming responsibility as with its being placed in a position between the banks and their clients. The appropriate course, he thought, would be for UNRWA to do everything it could to assist the operation without coming between the two.

Mr. BARAN (Turkey) believed that Barclay's would have real difficulty in contacting and identifying the recipients and would therefore need help. The question was that of the means to put Barclay's into contact with the refugees.

The CHAIRMAN agreed with the views expressed by the other members of the Commission. He was sure that Mr. Blandford would not wish UNRWA to become too involved in the operation. Only the third and fourth points in Mr. Reedman's

cable, however, would lead to that danger, and since once contact had been established, any correspondence could be sent by mail, the third point was hardly essential. He felt that there was no objection to the first two points, namely that the Commission request UNRWA's assistance to distribute the forms on request and to receive and despatch the applications to the banks.

Mr. ROSS (United States of America) and Mr. BARANI (Turkey) agreed with the views expressed by the Chairman.

On the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Blandford (UNRWA) and Mr. Ingrand (Advisory Commission to UNRWA) took seats at the Commission's table.

The CHAIRMAN welcomed Mr. Blandford and Mr. Ingrand. Reviewing the work of the Commission on the question of unfreezing blocked Arab accounts in Israel, he stated that the meeting had been called to consider practical questions arising from the discussions in progress in London between representatives of Israel and Barclay's Bank on the transfer of the amount to be released as the first instalment to the owners of the accounts. He drew attention to the cable from Mr. Reedman, which noted the need for a certain amount of assistance from UNRWA. The Commission felt that any such assistance should not involve any addition to the existing responsibilities of UNRWA, but UNRWA's assistance would be most helpful and it was the best agency for establishing the contacts required.

Two of the points in Mr. Reedman's cable would not involve the assumption of responsibility by UNRWA, namely the distribution of forms to claimants on request, and the receiving and despatching of applications to the banks. The third and fourth points brought up in the cable had already been discussed by the Commission. Point three would involve more responsibility for UNRWA and was all the less necessary, since there would be no need for UNRWA to act as a channel for correspondence once it had facilitated the establishment of contact.

Mr. BLANDFORD (UNRWA) expressed pleasure at meeting once again with the Commission. In reply to the statement made by the Chairman, he said that he had received a cable from the Chief of the Economic Division of UNRWA, Mr. Baste, a few days previously, to which he had replied, not anticipating the meeting with

the Commission and the presence at Headquarters of Mr. Ingrand. He had agreed in principle with the course proposed in Mr. Baster's cable and had asked Mr. Baster to confer with the members of the Advisory Commission on how UNRWA could be of assistance. He had also had some doubts as to the fourth point in Mr. Reedman's cable, and had said in his cable to the Chief of the Economic Division that UNRWA should not be responsible for the final determination of the identity of the recipients or of the amounts they were to receive. The intention of his message had been that UNRWA should be as helpful as possible. A more specific cable could be sent to Beirut if that were thought desirable.

The CHAIRMAN thanked Mr. Blandford, expressing the view that if the operation could be carried through rapidly, the position of their respective bodies throughout the Middle East would be helped thereby. He proposed that the Commission should take note of Mr. Blandford's answer and leave it to Barclay's representative on the spot to ask UNRWA for all the assistance necessary.

It was so agreed.

Mr. BLANDFORD (UNRWA) said that he would be happy to take all measures necessary to provide Barclay's with as much assistance as possible.

Mr. Blandford and Mr. Ingrand withdrew.

3. INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT OF ARAB REFUGEE PROPERTY ABANDONED IN ISRAEL

Mr. ROSS (United States of America) thought the working paper prepared by the Secretariat reasonable, and suggested that the Commission might wish to express that opinion.

The Commission agreed on the text of a letter to be sent to the Secretary-General by the Chairman concerning the projected study of individual assessment of Arab refugee property abandoned in Israel contained in the working paper submitted by the Secretariat.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

4/11 p.m.