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UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE  
SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD MEETING (CLOSED)

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Wednesday, 5 January 1955, at 3 p.m.

CONTENTS:

1. Recall of Mr. Alexis Ladas, Liaison Representative, for consultations.
2. Draft replies to letters dated 1 December and 10 December from the representatives of Iraq and Egypt respectively.
3. Consideration of Draft Fourteenth Progress Report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. BARCO	United States of America
	Mr. COOK	
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. ORDONNEAU	France
	Mr. ASTROGLU	Turkey
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. CHAI	Acting Principal Secretary

The representative of the United States (Mr. Barco) assumed the Chairmanship of the Commission.

#### ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

#### 1. RECALL OF MR. LADAS, LIAISON REPRESENTATIVE, FOR CONSULTATIONS

The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Commission had, some weeks previously, decided in principle to recall Mr. Ladas for consultations. It now remained to decide on the date of his return. There were a number of questions on which the Commission should receive a first-hand report, such as the situation in the area in general, the actual state of the liaison work being carried out by Mr. Ladas, the compensation question, and the work on the identification of Arab property. The Chairman felt that only by means of such a report could the Commission acquire a full feeling of the situation in the area. He also thought that Mr. Ladas might be asked to call on the Jordan and Israel Governments and the Director of UNRWA before returning, as well as breaking his trip to consult in London with representatives of Barclay's Bank concerning the latest developments in the blocked accounts question, particularly with regard to the safe deposit boxes.

Mr. ASTIROGLU (Turkey) thought the suggestion an excellent one.

It was agreed that Mr. Ladas should be asked to return to Headquarters for a few weeks, arriving around the 20th or 25th of the month. The Acting Principal Secretary was requested to seek the authorization of the Administration, so that the necessary arrangements could be made.

The CHAIRMAN added that there was one other matter which could usefully be discussed with the Liaison Representative on his return, namely the possibility of transferring the bulk of the property identification work to Jerusalem, instead of continuing to operate it in both Jerusalem and New York. The Chairman had

(The Chairman)

felt for some time that such a division of effort was not as efficient as it might be, particularly with regard to the transfer of documents. He wondered whether the Commission could be considering the matter and, possibly, take a decision on it in principle pending Mr. Ladas' return, at which time the latter's views could be sought.

Mr. ORDONNEAU (France) thought that the Chairman's comments were most pertinent and agreed that the matter should be considered and then discussed with Mr. Ladas.

It was agreed that the members of the Commission would take a decision in principle to transfer the bulk of the work to Jerusalem, while at the same time giving further thought to the matter and awaiting the views of Mr. Ladas. It was also agreed to ask the Acting Principal Secretary to report to the Commission as to the views of the Secretariat in the matter, including those of the Land Expert, Mr. Hadawi, so that the Commission would have all the information it needed before taking a final decision.

The CHAIRMAN wished to raise one further point, although without wishing in any way to embarrass the Acting Principal Secretary concerning his own plans. In the Chairman's view, if the Commission did decide to concentrate the identification work in Jerusalem, it would be highly advantageous for Mr. Chai to make a trip to the area to look over the operation. The Chairman was not asking Mr. Chai to comment on the proposal now, but he did think that the Commission might usefully consider it. Mr. Chai could perhaps return to the area with the Liaison Representative.

Mr. ORDONNEAU (France) was in full agreement with the Chairman's suggestion. Mr. Chai would not only be able to contribute his own wisdom to the situation, but would be able to observe matters at first hand. The French delegation would be happy to have Mr. Chai reflect upon the proposal.

Mr. ASIROGLU (Turkey) expressed his agreement with the views of his colleagues.

2. DRAFT REPLIES TO LETTERS DATED 1 DECEMBER AND 10 DECEMBER FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF IRAQ AND EGYPT RESPECTIVELY

The replies to the representatives of Iraq and Egypt, who had requested detailed information on the release of the blocked accounts, were approved, with certain drafting changes.

3. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT FOURTEENTH PROGRESS REPORT TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The CHAIRMAN recalled that the submission of a progress report covering the Commission's activities for the previous year was a practice which the Commission had followed in 1953. He himself had certain comments of a general nature which he wished to make on the draft text which the Commission had before it, but first wondered if his colleagues had any observations.

Mr. ORDONNEAU (France) and Mr. ASIROGLU (Turkey) both observed that they had not had sufficient time to formulate their views fully on the draft text and would be happy to hear the Chairman's views.

The CHAIRMAN said that his observations were based on the following considerations: During the past year, the Commission had been engaged in very complicated and often difficult negotiations with regard to the blocked accounts question, which had raised certain doubts in the minds of some of the Governments with which the Commission had dealings. The Commission must dispel those doubts, or its own record would remain obscure. In addition to the need, from its own point of view, for giving a full account of the blocked accounts negotiations, the Commission had also received formal requests from two of the Arab Governments for a detailed account of the proceedings. If such an accounting were not made in the

Progress Report, other means would have to be found. The Chairman thought that to employ the routine method of a Progress Report would be preferable to the issuance of some form of special report, which might give rise to invidious comparisons.

For these reasons, the Chairman thought that the present Progress Report should be keyed to the two Arab requests. The report as presently drafted was perhaps too matter-of-fact and might give rise to questions in the mind of the reader as to why certain actions or decisions had been taken. More interpretation of the events reported was required. It was true that such an amplification might result in a somewhat critical impression. But the facts themselves did that. The Chairman thought that such an impression could be counterbalanced by a summing-up at the end of the section on blocked accounts, in which the Commission would state honestly that there had been differences of opinion, but that those differences had been resolved through the very processes of conciliation for which the Commission had been established. The summing-up could end on a note of satisfaction that the conciliation process had resulted in success.

The specific points on which the Chairman thought that the report could be amplified were as follows:

(a) In the opening paragraph the two Arab requests should be mentioned as being the reason for the Commission's giving a detailed account of the blocked accounts negotiations.

(b) Paragraph 12 should be given a fuller treatment as it was not entirely clear what the issues in connexion with the Refugee Congress were.

(c) Paragraphs 13 through 16 should also be expanded and connected more explicitly, and in paragraph 16 mention should be made of the reaction of the Jordan Government, which was a justification of the Commission's position in that it represented the very outcome which the Commission had always feared.

(d) A final paragraph should be added along the lines previously set forth by the Chairman.

It was agreed to ask the Secretariat to prepare a new text, taking these observations into account. The members of the Commission could then submit any further comments to the Acting Principal Secretary, and the text could be finalized at the Commission's next meeting.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.