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

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 15 September 1961, at 3.20 p.m.

CONTENTS

Adoption of the agenda

Working Papers on Repatriation and Compensation (A/AC.25/81/Rev.1,
A/AC.25/82)

- (a) Corrigenda and amendments thereto dated 6 August 1961;
- (b) Personal letter from Ambassador Comay to the Acting Principal Secretary dated 31 August 1961 concerning the two Working Papers

Question of initiating release of blocked accounts of Arab refugees in banks other than Barclay's D.C.O. and the Ottoman Bank

Arab League request for "microfilm of the Registry of Arab properties in Israeli-controlled territories in Palestine"

Mission of Mr. Joseph E. Johnson, Special Representative of the UNCCP

Other business: Request by Mr. Don Peretz for access to UNCCP documentation

A/AC.25/SR.345
English
Page 2

PRESENT:

Chairman:

Mr. ELDEM

Turkey

Members:

Mr. DAUGE

France

Mr. PLIMPTON

United States of America

Secretariat:

Mr. GAILLARD

Acting Principal Secretary

Mr. JARVIS

Land Expert

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

WORKING PAPERS ON REPATRIATION AND COMPENSATION (A/AC.25/81/Rev.1, A/AC.25/82)
(a) CORRIGENDA AND AMENDMENTS THERETO DATED 6 AUGUST 1961

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Commission should not take up the Corrigenda and Amendments dated 6 August 1961 to the Working Papers on Repatriation and Compensation at that stage, in order to give members the opportunity of holding informal discussions on the amendments proposed by the United States.

It was so agreed.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Commission might consider what publicity it would ultimately give to the Working Papers in question.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) said that he was in favour of making the reports in their final form available to the interested delegations. Indeed, in view of the criticism levelled at the Commission's work by certain delegations in the Special Political Committee, the reports might be given general circulation.

Mr. GAILLIARD (Acting Principal Secretary) pointed out that for general circulation as Assembly documents the reports might have to be translated into several languages and not only into French, as would be the case if they were made available as Commission documents only to the interested delegations. Such a course might delay the date of their issue.

Mr. DAUGE (France) considered that the documents should be available to interested delegations and said that he would have no objection to the documents being circulated in English first, provided the French translation was issued without undue delay.

After further discussion, Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) suggested that the Acting Principal Secretary should be asked to ascertain into which languages the documents would have to be translated, assuming that they were given general circulation, and what the likely delay would be. The Commission could take a final decision in the light of that information.

It was so agreed.

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(b) PERSONAL LETTER FROM AMBASSADOR COMAY TO THE ACTING PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
DATED 31 AUGUST 1961 CONCERNING THE TWO WORKING PAPERS

The CHAIRMAN drew the Commission's attention to the fact that the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations, by letter dated 31 August 1961 addressed to the Acting Principal Secretary of the Commission, had raised objections to the proposed title of the Working Paper on Repatriation because it made no reference to reintegration by resettlement.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) suggested that the title of the document might be amended to "Historical Survey of the Question of Reintegration by Repatriation or Resettlement".

Mr. GAILLARD (Acting Principal Secretary) drew attention to the Secretariat memorandum of 14 September 1961 in which it was suggested that the two reports should be entitled "Historical Survey of Efforts of the UNCCP to secure the implementation of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III)", with two sub-titles: "Question of Repatriation" and "Question of Compensation" and should include expanded introductions indicating that the question of resettlement was treated in relation to the subjects of the two papers.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) observed that objection might be raised to the sub-title "Question of Repatriation" as somewhat restrictive. The study should include some additional material directly reflecting the views expressed by delegations over the years on the importance of resettlement.

Mr. GAILLARD (Acting Principal Secretary) said that it would be rather difficult to redraft the papers in the light of the United States representative's suggestion in time for the sixteenth session of the General Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of Turkey, suggested that the Commission might state that a further paper dealing with resettlement might be issued at a later stage.

Mr. GAILLARD (Acting Principal Secretary) thought that to make such a statement would be to admit, perhaps unnecessarily, the existence of lacunae in the papers under discussion. While the papers indicated clearly the relationship between the question of resettlement and the subjects of the two papers, it was true that that question was not treated in the same detail, partly owing to the

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(Mr. Gaillard, Acting
Principal Secretary)

fact that since 1951 the problem of reintegration had become largely an UNRWA preoccupation. In any case, the Commission could not produce an effective paper on resettlement except in co-operation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. The possible redraft of the Introductory Note to the Working Paper on Repatriation, as it appeared in the Secretariat memorandum of 14 September 1961, was an attempt to meet adequately the point raised by Ambassador Comay. Although it might not fully satisfy the Israel Ambassador, the title proposed by the latter would not reflect quite accurately the contents of the paper and would certainly be objectionable to Arab States as embodying the pet thesis of the Israelis.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) proposed that further discussion of the question should be postponed to enable the members of the Commission to give further consideration to the Working Document of 14 September.

It was so agreed.

QUESTION OF INITIATING RELEASE OF BLOCKED ACCOUNTS OF ARAB REFUGEES IN BANKS
OTHER THAN BARCLAY'S D.C.O. AND THE OTTOMAN BANK

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the note by the Acting Principal Secretary on the blocked accounts problem and the draft Press statement on the subject. The Commission should decide whether to proceed with the operation without the formal agreement of the United Arab Republic and should also approve the draft Press statement and decide whether the latter should be submitted to the Government of Israel for comment prior to release.

Mr. DAUGE (France) felt that in order to benefit the refugees as soon as possible the operation should be initiated immediately, without the consent of the United Arab Republic. For practical reasons, the draft Press statement should be cleared with the Israel Government before publication.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) agreed that a copy of the statement should be sent to the Israel Government before it was released. However, the draft statement as it stood suggested that all refugees and absentee owners would be able to apply for the release of their accounts whereas in fact only those resident in Jordan and Lebanon would be able to do so. He proposed therefore that the Press release should mention the fact that negotiations were proceeding with the Government of the United Arab Republic and that it was hoped that its consent would soon be obtained.

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Mr. GAILLARD (Acting Principal Secretary) suggested that any addition to the Press release should be so worded as not to apply pressure to or offend the Government of the United Arab Republic.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of Turkey, suggested that an additional sentence be added at the end of the fourth paragraph stating merely that the matter was under discussion with the United Arab Republic Government and that a further statement would be issued.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) proposed that the additional sentence should be worded as follows: "As soon as arrangements have been concluded with the competent authorities in the United Arab Republic a further announcement will be made as to where in the United Arab Republic such application forms may be obtained."

It was so agreed.

It was also agreed that the Press statement as finally drafted should be transmitted to the Israel authorities in advance of publication, as a matter of courtesy but not for review.

Mr. GAILLARD (Acting Principal Secretary) said that he would circulate the revised text of the draft Press statement and secure the informal agreement of members of the Commission. He would also transmit the text to Barclay's Bank in Jerusalem to make sure that it had no objections to it. Once the text was approved and the assent of Jordan and Lebanon had been obtained to the use of the two Banks in question, then the operation could go ahead.

ARAB LEAGUE REQUEST FOR "MICROFILM OF THE REGISTRY OF ARAB PROPERTIES IN ISRAELI-CONTROLLED TERRITORIES IN PALESTINE"

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) inquired how much the microfilm would cost.

Mr. GAILLARD (Acting Principal Secretary) replied that the cost would be somewhere between \$15,000 and \$20,000. The Arab League had indicated that it was prepared to pay for the microfilm.

The CHAIRMAN, supported by Mr. DAUGE (France), thought that mention of the cost might imply that the Commission agreed in principle to the request.

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In reply to a question from Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America), Mr. GAILLARD (Acting Principal Secretary) said that as there were two copies of most of the rolls of film, he felt, as did Mr. Jarvis, that a copy for the Arab League could be made without real inconvenience to the valuation work in progress. He drew attention to the Legal Council's opinion circulated on 12 September, and pointed out that ultimately any agreement on compensation and evaluation would probably involve consulting experts on both sides, at which time the Arab League would have to have access to the documents.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) questioned whether it was in order for the United Nations to release copies of material of which Israel owned the originals, when Israel would probably be unwilling to do so itself.

The CHAIRMAN said that it appeared from the Counsel's opinion that the only objection could be on political grounds. If an agreement on compensation was achieved, the Arab States would wish to check the land-registration records, and the microfilm might offer the only means of doing so. Perhaps the Israel delegation might be informally approached; if no objection were offered to the Commission's acceding to the League's request, the problem would be solved.

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) said that his delegation favoured a polite but firm rejection of the request. A decision might be postponed until members had studied the interim report of Mr. Jarvis (A/AC.25/W.83).

Mr. DAUGE (France) suggested that the Commission might inform the Arab League that all the documents used by the Commission's experts would be made available to interested parties when they had completed their work. He pointed out that according to the Acting Principal Secretary's note the Commission's former refusal to a 1953 Arab League request had been based on technical grounds; the Commission should not now change its position and give a refusal on principle.

The CHAIRMAN agreed. He suggested that the Commission should postpone its decision on the matter.

It was so decided.

MISSION OF MR. JOSEPH E. JOHNSON, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNCCP

Mr. GAILLARD (Acting Principal Secretary) explained that Mr. Johnson, who was at present in Israel, had decided, in agreement with the Commission, to omit his proposed courtesy visit to Ankara. The question of his visiting Paris had been left open. A cable had given 20 or 21 September as his probable date of return to New York.

Mr. DAUGE (France) said that he had cabled to his Government concerning Mr. Johnson's possible visits to Ankara and Paris. A favourable reply had been received requesting information on the date of arrival, so that interviews with experts in the French Foreign Ministry could be arranged. However, the situation had now changed, as Mr. Johnson would be seeing the Turkish Foreign Minister not in Ankara but in New York. The Committee might wish to leave to Mr. Johnson's discretion to decide whether, under the circumstances, it was worthwhile going to Paris, provided that there was no danger of a visit to Paris only being interpreted as lacking in objectivity.

The CHAIRMAN remarked that the talks in Paris could in any case only be preliminary ones and suggested that the matter should be left to Mr. Johnson's discretion. The Commission could cable him to that effect.

It was so decided.

OTHER BUSINESS: REQUEST BY MR. DON PERETZ FOR ACCESS TO UNCCP DOCUMENTATION

Mr. PLIMPTON (United States of America) said that his delegation did not consider that it would be appropriate to grant to a private individual access to the documents in question which were not available to Member States. In any case the material was not likely to be particularly helpful to him.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as the representative of Turkey, said that, while he would have liked to help a scholar, he would not oppose the United States position.

Mr. DAUGE (France) agreed with the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the reply should be made if possible orally and state that circumstances were not at present favourable to such action on the Commission's part.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.