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UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION
FOR PALESTINE

SUMMARY RECORD OF A MEETING BETWEEN THE CONCILIATION
COMMISSION AND THE ARAB DELEGATIONS

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday 29 March 1950, at 4.30 p.m.

Present:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. de BOISANGER	(France)
	Mr. PALMER	(United States of America)
	Mr. YALCIN	(Turkey)

Principal

<u>Secretary:</u>	Mr. de AZCARATE	
	Mr. Abdel Monem MOSTAFA,	Representative of Egypt
	Mr. Hafez ABDULHADI,	Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
	Mr. Negib-Fateck CHEHAB,	Representative of Lebanon
	Mr. Ahmed SHUKAIRY,	Representative of Syria

The CHAIRMAN informed the representatives of the Arab States that they had been invited to attend the Commission in order to receive a communication⁽¹⁾, which they were requested to transmit to their Governments. The communication concerned a new method of work and its terms had only been decided after thorough consideration and after consultation with the Governments represented on the Commission. Since the Commission attached great importance to this memorandum it did not expect immediate, or even early, replies but preferred that the Governments receiving it should take ample time for reflection before replying. A similar approach would be made to the Israeli delegation a few minutes later.

While the Commission would not interrupt its work and would remain in Geneva, it would hold no meetings for some weeks. But that would not prevent Governments so wishing from getting into touch with it. The Commission would be re-convened on 17 April in order to meet the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the members of the Advisory Commission who would arrive at Geneva on that date. It intended then, if such a course was deemed expedient, to arrange conversations between the representatives of the Arab States and these personages. Thereafter the Commission would be glad to examine with the delegations of the parties the replies to the memorandum which had been handed to them that day.

The Chairman of the Commission and the Principal Secretary were going to Jerusalem next week and, although they had made no detailed plans for their stay, they intended if necessary to get in touch with the Governments of the Arab States.

The Commission had, after consideration, agreed on the inadvisability of making the memorandum in question public at that stage, preferring that the parties should be given time to consider it. The advisability of publication was a question that could only be considered after a later exchange of views between the representatives of the Arab States and the Commission.

Furthermore, the Commission fervently hoped that the Arab Governments would be favourably disposed in their approach to the communication, since acceptance, at any rate of its principles might give a marked impetus to the Commission's work.

(1) Reproduced as Document AR/26

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) said that the Commission had devoted much thought to the proposal contained in the memorandum, which should be regarded as a very sincere attempt by the Commission to find a procedure which would contribute to a solution of pressing problems and, ultimately, to the conclusion of peace.

The Commission had decided to remain in Geneva for the sake of convenience. The Arab Governments might take advantage of the Chairman's presence in Jerusalem if they required further information or explanations concerning the memorandum, or if they wished to explain their points of view.

As soon as the Chairman returned to Geneva the Commission and the parties could resume the search for solutions to the important problems.

The reason why the Commission had preferred not to publicise the approach it was making was that it was anxious to avoid obliging the parties to take a hurried decision and to spare them anything that might disturb a study demanding a calm and thoughtful atmosphere. Of course the time would come when publication was necessary, but not without a thorough examination by both sides of the advantages and inconveniences of such publicity. The Commission, for its part, would not undertake publication without prior intimation of the exact date of publication to the parties in order to enable the latter to take similar action at the same time unless, of course, their Governments wished to withhold information intended for the Press for a longer period.

Briefly, the decisions of the Commission arose out of the desire to give its proposal the best possible chance of success.

Mr. YALCIN (Turkey) stated that the memorandum had been adopted by the members of the Commission unanimously and that, in view of the explanations given to the Arab representatives, he had no further comment to make.

In reply to a question by Mr. ABDULHADI (Jordan), the CHAIRMAN said that the Commission would remain at Geneva where it would be represented either by some of its members, or by alternates. The Secretariat would also remain in Geneva. It would therefore always be possible to hold a meeting of the

Commission. Only the Principal Secretary and himself were proceeding to Jerusalem.

Mr. MOSTAFA (Egypt) undertook to transmit the proposals contained in the Commission's note to his Government forthwith. He was sure they would receive careful consideration from the Egyptian Government. He would inform the Commission of his Government's point of view as soon as he was in a position to do so.

With regard to the confidential character of the note, he assured the Commission that the utmost secrecy would be observed by the Egyptian authorities; but he stressed the difficulty of keeping confidential a document which had been seen by many persons. He asked how contact could be made between the Arab Governments and the Chairman when the latter was at Jerusalem.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Commission had proved on several occasions that secrecy could be maintained.

He could not state the form which contact between himself and the Arab Governments might take. Jerusalem had been chosen as his destination in the Middle East because it was the official headquarters of the Commission, but it was quite possible that he might visit Cairo and he would discuss with the representative of Egypt how contact could be made with his Government. One reason why the details of his itinerary had not yet been fixed was the important meeting then being held in Cairo and attended by the Foreign Ministers of several Arab States. At all events he wished to get in touch with the Governments of the Arab States.

Mr. SHUKAIRY (Syria) said that he would refrain from commenting on the note until his Government had had time to study it; the Commission was already well aware of his Government's views on the problems with which the note dealt.

He thanked the Commission for its efforts as reflected by the note, although it was possible that his Government might not accept the proposals it contained. The note was nevertheless, an earnest desire of the Commission to break the deadlock.

Furthermore, his Government would be pleased at any time to receive the Chairman of the Commission, whether for the purpose of studying the proposals in question or for that of examining other questions. He trusted that some progress might be made after the Chairman's return on 17 April.

The CHAIRMAN informed the representatives of the Arab States that, should they wish any further information before transmitting the memorandum of the Commission to their governments, the Commission, all the members of which would still be in Geneva for a few days, was at their disposal.

Mr. ABDULHADI (Jordan) asked whether the Commission's note expressed the views of the Governments represented by its members.

The CHAIRMAN replied in the affirmative.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.