



## General Assembly

GA/PAL/1094

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

### Background release

#### **UNITED NATIONS MEETING TO MARK 60 YEARS OF DISPOSSESSION OF PALESTINE REFUGEES**

#### **TO BE HELD AT HEADQUARTERS ON FRIDAY, 20 JUNE**

The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People will convene the "United Nations special meeting to mark 60 years of dispossession of Palestine refugees" on Friday, 20 June, in accordance with its mandate under General Assembly resolutions 62/80 and 62/81 of 10 December 2007. The meeting will start at 10 a.m. in the Economic and Social Council Chamber.

The objective of the special meeting is to draw the attention of the international community to the fact that it has been 60 years since hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were forced to leave their homes and property as a result of the 1948 hostilities. Those Palestinians have remained refugees until today. The Committee remains deeply concerned that the unresolved question of Palestine continues to prevent the Palestinian people from exercising their inalienable rights, namely the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence and sovereignty, and the right to return to their homes and property from which they had been displaced.

Invited to the special meeting will be internationally renowned experts, representatives of United Nations Members and Observers, representatives of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, as well as the media. The Committee has invited experts on the issue at hand to share with the United Nations membership their views on the present situation, as well as on prospects and modalities for a solution to the question of Palestine.

The special meeting will be opened by Paul Badji (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee. The opening address will be followed by statements by Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, and by Andrew Whitley, representative of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

The invited experts are Laila Atshan, Lecturer, Birzeit University in Ramallah; Susan Akram, Professor at Boston University, School of Law, Boston, Massachusetts; Michael Fischbach, Professor of History at Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, Virginia; and Nadia Hijab, Senior Fellow and Co-Director, Institute for Palestine Studies, Washington, D.C. The speakers will address various aspects of the consequences for the Palestinian people of 60 years of dispossession.

At lunch break a documentary film *La terre parle Arabe* will be shown to participants.

The special meeting will be held in the official languages of the United Nations.

Participants and observers, including the representatives of the media without a grounds pass are required to register and obtain meeting badges prior to entering the conference room. Please bring legitimate photo identification to register, such as a national passport, national identification, press card or university identification, together with the letter of invitation.

Registration of participants and observers, including the media, will take place on 20 June from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Please enter the United Nations premises from the Visitors' Entrance. After going through a security check, please find a registration desk in the Public Lobby of the General Assembly Building, where the staff of the Division for Palestinian Rights of the United Nations Secretariat will register and issue you a grounds pass, which should be worn visibly while on the premises.

