



UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE
GENERAL COMMITTEE
SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 13 March 1950, at 10.00 a.m.

Present:	Mr. BARCO	(United States of America)	Chairman
	Mr. TOUSSAINT	(France)	
	Mr. ERALP	(Turkey)	
	Mr. de AZCARATE		Principal Secretary

Possible Creation of Joint Committees (MCP/23/50)

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the business before the meeting was the examination, and possibly the approval, of the draft [report](#) to the Conciliation Commission by the Secretariat on the creation of Joint Committees.

Mr. ERALP (Turkey) said he wished to point out, before the draft [report](#) was read, that the General Committee had certainly decided at its last meeting that outstanding questions should be studied by bilateral committees comprising representatives of Israel and representatives of one of the Arab states respectively, but it had not been definitely stated that all questions outstanding between any two of these States must necessarily be dealt with by a single committee rather than by several committee. The Principal Secretary had very rightly observed that committees with wide terms of reference would inevitably take on the character of veritable peace conferences. Therefore the General Committee had considered submitting these alternatives to the Commission while leaving it free to choose between them.

In order to take account of these observations the draft [report](#) prepared by the Secretariat might be slightly amended so as to cover in the case of questions outstanding between any two of the States concerned, either one committee with wide terms of reference or several committees to deal with special problems.

The CHAIRMAN said he had understood that, so far as committees of the first type were concerned, the members of the General Committee had agreed to recommend that one national committee should be set up to deal with all questions outstanding between Israel and each of the Arab States, or four committees in all. However, account was taken in the [report](#) of the view expressed by the delegate of Turkey by mentioning the possibility of allocating the problems to be studied by these committees among a number of working parties.

The General Committee had proposed that these national committees should be assisted by special multilateral committees which would deal with questions concerning all the Arab States or more than one of them.

Mr. ERALP (Turkey) explained that the of his remarks had been to stress the advisability of considering whether, in the case of questions outstanding between Israel and each of the Arab States, the principle of the single national committee should be recommended in conjunction with sub-committees set up with a purely secondary role, as suggested in paragraph 4 of the draft or whether it was preferable to propose the setting up of several committees right at the start. He himself thought the choice should be left to the Commission in order to avoid the danger of creating joint committees which suggested peace conferences from the outset. In any case the General Committee was merely asked to *study* the question and it could therefore submit the two aspects of the question to the Commission without taking any decision between them.

The CHAIRMAN considered Mr. Eralp's remarks very apposite. At the last meeting he had believed the General Committee to be in favour of keeping the number of the proposed committees as low as possible owing to the limited staff that the Commission and the delegations could supply. It had also been his impression that the General Committee had finally agreed that one single committee should be set up to deal with all questions outstanding between Israel and each of the Arab States, but that each of these Committees might set up subsidiary organs.

In addition, he thought it advisable to submit explicit recommendations to the Commission, which need not however exclude the possibility of taking the views of all

members of the Committee into consideration.

In his view the Committee should take as its basic principle the creation of a single national committee for all questions outstanding between any two States. If the Commission adopted at the outset the principle of a division into several committees the resultant plan would be difficult to work out and to implement. It was preferable that subsidiary organs should be created as and when required.

Mr. TOUSSAINT (France) stressed that the ideal aim was clearly to set up committees with as wide terms of reference as possible after the nature of peace conferences held under the auspices of the Commission. But if the Commission defined the aim and the means of attaining it so sharply, it might possibly offend some of the delegations on whose acceptance the implementation of the plan depended. The difficulty lay in reconciling the two methods by adopting a procedure which allowed for both these facts.

The CHAIRMAN said he was under no illusions as to the difficulty of having the proposal accepted; but the aim should be as lofty and as far-reaching as possible. The need to amend the proposal and to transform it into a more flexible plan might arise in the course of discussions with the parties. In his view the Commission should submit its maximum proposals to the delegations for tactical reasons.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY said that the only point of disagreement emerging from the discussion was on the question of expediency. The General Committee was unanimous on one point, namely that it wished to propose two possible solutions, i.e. the two types of bilateral committees, to the Commission. The only question at issue was whether or not the Committee should make definite proposals to the Commission on methods of applying the procedure and, if so, whether it should at the risk of offending delegations, begin by submitting maximum proposals which would be subsequently transformed into compromise solutions during negotiations or whether delegations should first of all be presented with modest proposals which would gradually develop once the work had begun. The choice between these two procedures depended on the individual member's estimate of the attitude of the delegations.

With regard to paragraph 7 of the draft [report](#), he thought that it should be re-worded in a more flexible form less binding on the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN repeated that he was in favour of recommending one particular course to the Commission.

After a discussion during which various amendments of detail to the Secretariat's draft [report](#) were proposed by members of the Committee, the CHAIRMAN moved that the next meeting of the Committee should re-examine the proposal as redrafted by the Secretariat on the basis of the various comments made. He would inform the Commission, which would meet shortly, that the [report](#) of the General Committee was not yet ready.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

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