

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

FORTY-SECOND SESSION

Official Records\*



SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE  
10th meeting  
held on  
Wednesday, 28 October 1987  
at 10 a.m.  
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 10th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-KAWARI (Qatar)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 74: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION: REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON THE EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 79: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL (continued)
- (b) REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued)
- (c) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE (continued)
- (d) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

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Distr. GENERAL  
A/SPC/42/SR.10  
30 October 1987

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

9p.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 74: EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION: REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON THE EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION (continued) (A/SPC/42/L.2 and L.4)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to draft resolution A/SPC/42/L.2 and the amendment to it submitted by Iraq (A/SPC/42/L.4). At its 4th meeting, the Committee had decided to postpone consideration of the draft resolution in order to allow time for consultations, which he understood had taken place.
2. Mr. AL HADDAWI (Iraq) explained that the aim of the amendment submitted by his delegation was to expand the original draft resolution, which was especially necessary since the United Nations had not yet devised practical guarantees to ensure the protection of nuclear installations against armed aggression. Iraq was the only State Member of the United Nations in which nuclear installations constructed for peaceful purposes had been the subject of aggression by the Zionist entity. His country was therefore particularly concerned at the possibility of further armed aggression against its own nuclear installations or those of other States, which could have dramatic consequences over a wide area. However, his delegation did not wish to be accused of obstructing a consensus in the Committee, and if the latter wished to adopt an incomplete resolution and the sponsors refused to respond to his objective amendment, in a desire to co-operate he would withdraw it, although his delegation still had reservations on the draft resolution and his country's position on the item would not change. It was to be hoped that at the forty-third session of the General Assembly the Committee would adopt an objective and comprehensive resolution.
3. The CHAIRMAN said that, since the representative of Iraq was not requesting a vote on his amendment (A/SPC/42/L.4), he took it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/SPC/42/L.2 without a vote.
4. Draft resolution A/SPC/42/L.2 was adopted.
5. Mr. STRÖMHOLM (Sweden) expressed satisfaction that the draft resolution on the item had once more been adopted by consensus. He appreciated the co-operative spirit shown by the representative of Iraq in withdrawing his amendment.
6. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 74.

AGENDA ITEM 79: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL (continued) (A/42/13 and Add.1)
- (b) REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued) (A/42/633)

(c) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE (continued) (A/42/515)

(d) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/42/309, 445, 446, 480, 481, 482, 505, 507)

7. Mr. FREUDENSCHUSS (Austria) said that the number of employees of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) killed, wounded, kidnapped or detained during the reporting period provided ample evidence of the difficult conditions under which the Agency operated. That was particularly true of the tragic situation in Lebanon which, on 19 March 1987 had led the President of the Security Council to express the Council's alarm at the suffering of the civilian population in the camps and reiterate its call for a speedy end to violence. Although the situation seemed to have improved, on 7 October 1987 the Commissioner-General had made an urgent appeal that UNRWA be enabled to make emergency housing repairs to camps in Beirut.

8. Over the years, Austria had not only repeatedly called for the full restoration of Lebanese unity, sovereignty and independence but had also carried out a number of humanitarian projects in that country, in addition to the support given to UNRWA. It would remain committed to contributing to efforts aimed at alleviating the lot of the civilian population there.

9. The situation of the refugees in the occupied territories was also a matter of concern and, as stated in the Commissioner-General's report (A/42/13, para. 16), frustration had led to an increasing number of acts of defiance against the occupying authorities, often countered by violence.

10. Although the financial situation of UNRWA had improved, there was no reason for complacency. The base of financial support had not broadened, and there were continuing problems caused by lack of funds for the construction budget

11. Mr. RAMIN (Israel) said that for many years the Arab delegations had been abusing the international humanitarian concern for the refugees in order to pursue unabated hostility towards Israel, and certain other Member States had acquiesced in that policy. But for that policy, the victims of which were the refugees themselves, the problem could have been solved many years earlier.

12. It was generally known that, had the Arab States accepted United Nations resolutions affirming the Jewish people's right to independence and refrained from invading Israel in defiance of the Charter, there would have been no Arab refugee problem. Yet the Arab Governments deluded themselves that that basic reality could be ignored and responsibility for the problem shifted to Israel. It was a well-documented fact that the Arab States had rejected General Assembly resolution 181 (II) and, at the time of the British Mandate, had fomented anti-Jewish disturbances in Palestine, which had been followed by Arab incursions from across the borders and then by a full-scale invasion by Arab armies as soon as the Mandate had come to an end. At that time, the Arabs had claimed credit for that aggression. The representative of the Arab Higher Committee, then representing the

(Mr. Ramin, Israel)

Palestinian Arabs, had told the Security Council on 16 April 1948 that the Arabs did not deny that they had begun the fighting, and on 21 May 1948, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union had expressed surprise, also in the Security Council, at the military operations carried out by the Arab States and had said that Israel had not invaded the territory of another State except in self-defence. The United States representative on the Security Council had also referred the next day to the admission of the Arab countries that they were carrying on a war.

13. That war had caused a large-scale movement of Arabs out of Israeli territory and an increased exodus of Jews from the Arab States where their families had lived for centuries. At that time, there had been about 1 million Jews in the Arab countries, the majority of whom had since found refuge in the Jewish State and within a relatively short time had become self-supporting citizens. With the acquiescence of the Arab Governments, there had been a virtual exchange of population between Israel and the Arab countries, somewhat similar to that between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s and between India and Pakistan in the late 1940s. The search for a possible settlement could not be based on reversing those two parallel movements of large masses of people but must be guided by the successful integration of refugees in other parts of the world.

14. There had been no discussions in the United Nations about the plight of the Jewish refugees and no relief agencies established to help in their rehabilitation. The Arabs who had left Israel had also found refuge among their own kin, the great majority merely moving from Jewish-controlled areas of Palestine to those under Arab control. Yet they had become wards of the United Nations, and UNRWA had been set up to assist in their rehabilitation. The most striking difference between the treatment of the two groups of refugees, however, had been the attitude of the Arab Governments towards their own brethren. Their misery was to be perpetuated and exploited in the campaign of unabated political and military hostility against Israel. Development plans to resettle them and provide work had been rejected by the Arab Governments, which had also barred emigration to receptive third countries. Attempts by refugees to become self-supporting within the host countries were discouraged. Those facts had been recognized in the January-March 1957 bulletin of the Research Group for European Migration Problems, which had stated that the Arab Governments were seeking to prevent any sort of adoption and integration because the refugees were seen as a political means of pressure to obtain the greatest possible number of concessions. A former head of UNRWA in Jordan had said in 1958 that the Arab States wanted to keep the refugee problem as an affront to the United Nations and a weapon against Israel.

15. Wars had always uprooted people and produced flows of refugees. Millions of people had been displaced in the wake of the First and Second World Wars. All those problems had been solved by integrating the refugees in the countries of refuge. The Arab refugees from Palestine were the sole exception. Nothing had been solved by preventing the resettlement of refugees and turning them into an instrument of continued warfare in an international conflict.

(Mr. Ramin, Israel)

16. The Arab Governments had for many years demanded that the Palestine refugees should be returned to their homes on the basis of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III). By placing all the emphasis on that paragraph and giving it their own particular interpretation, they distorted the purpose of the entire resolution: a peaceful Arab-Israeli settlement.

17. That same disregard for fact and reason was also apparent in the Arab position on the persons displaced by the 1967 hostilities. Their return to Israel would expose the people of Israel and the inhabitants of Judea, Samaria and Gaza to great danger, facilitating the entry into those areas of terrorists and agents of hostile Arab States. The Arab terrorist organizations publicly proclaimed their intention to continue their acts of murder and sabotage. Israel, therefore, was under no obligation to permit the unrestricted entry of those displaced persons. It must be borne in mind that the refugee problem was a consequence of Arab aggression against Israel and that Israel was still trying to defend itself against that aggression. The problems of displacement dating from 1948 and 1967 could be fully solved in the context of peace. For many years the Arab States had attempted to focus attention on paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) in isolation from the rest of the resolution. That approach, however, had proved sterile, and Security Council resolution 242 (1967) had recognized that the refugee problem was one element in a comprehensive peace "package". The reference to refugees in that resolution was to both Jewish and Arab refugees. The same held true for the displacement of persons in 1967. It would be unreasonable to believe that unrestricted repatriation could take place without regard for political or security considerations.

18. The Government of Israel had taken several steps to assist the displaced persons. By the early 1950s, 50,000 Arab refugees had returned to Israel under a family reunion scheme. Another 50,000 displaced Arabs living in Israel had been resettled. Israel had offered to participate in any programme to assist the resettlement of refugees in the Arab world. His country had issued more than 72,000 permits for the return of persons displaced as a result of the 1967 hostilities. Its direct contributions to cover the needs of refugees for the year ending 30 June 1987 amounted to more than \$28 million.

19. Israel was helping refugees to find work, obtain better housing and improve their living conditions. The majority of refugees in Judea, Samaria and Gaza had become assimilated in the areas where they lived. Refugees also benefited from the health and education services provided by the Israeli authorities. Students from Gaza, Judea and Samaria travelled abroad to pursue their studies in Arab and other universities. Thousands of refugees had exercised the freedom to travel to and from neighbouring Arab countries. Despite political obstacles, there had been substantial economic absorption of the refugees over the years. The refugees had to a large extent merged with the local population. The camps themselves had evolved into villages and towns. The majority of persons whose names were on UNRWA registration lists had been born after the war of 1948. An accurate assessment of the degree of assimilation of the refugees was complicated by the fact that the Agency's working rule was "once a refugee, always a refugee". Even persons who became self-supporting and no longer received help were still registered as UNRWA

(Mr. Ramin, Israel)

refugees. Refugee status was also perpetuated by the practice of handing down such status from parents to children. In that regard, he stressed the need to update the UNRWA rolls, particularly in view of the financial difficulties facing the Agency.

20. The problem of the Palestine refugees had been created by the war against the establishment of the State of Israel. It could be solved fully within the context of a just and lasting peace between Israel and the neighbouring Arab States. Nothing was more vital than peace for Israel and for the region as a whole. The majority of the refugees were practically integrated into the economies of the countries in which they resided. In Jordan, which had sincerely tried to help the refugees over the years, they enjoyed full citizenship. In Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district they lived among other Palestinian Arabs. Approximately 80 per cent of all Palestinian Arabs lived in Jordan and those areas.

21. The time had come for the Arab Governments to address that problem constructively and stop exploiting it as a weapon against Israel. The problem must be solved through peace negotiations based on mutual respect for the rights of Israelis and Arabs alike. Israel pledged its co-operation to achieve that goal and called upon its neighbours to do likewise.

22. Mr. FERM (Sweden) said that the assistance provided by UNRWA was a tangible expression of international solidarity. The international community had the responsibility to provide such assistance until a just and lasting solution to the Middle East problem was found. Sweden strongly supported the Agency in its efforts to ease the problems in the area. Since the establishment of UNRWA, his country had been one of the major contributors to the Agency and would continue to do so. Although the improved financial situation of UNRWA was encouraging, the Agency needed broader and more regular political and financial support in order to meet future challenges. Without such support, programmes and construction projects might be interrupted owing to lack of funds. Sweden appealed to the international community to increase its support for the Palestine refugees.

23. The problems confronting UNRWA in Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were of great concern to his Government. He deplored the fact that UNRWA staff had encountered difficulties in carrying out their tasks. His Government appealed to all in the area to co-operate with UNRWA and facilitate its important work. The various parties involved in the fighting in Lebanon should do their utmost to avoid a repetition of what had happened in February and March 1987. Humanitarian assistance must be provided to women, children and sick persons without interference.

24. In Lebanon, UNRWA staff had carried out their work at considerable personal risk. He conveyed his Government's condolences to the families of those who had been killed during the past year while working for the Agency. The kidnapping of UNRWA staff members in Lebanon must be condemned in the strongest terms. Sweden's support for UNRWA activities in Lebanon did not imply that it disregarded the plight of the Lebanese. Accordingly, his country welcomed the idea of associating

(Mr. Fern, Sweden)

cher organizations within the United Nations system in a broader programme of assistance for all groups in Lebanon. Lastly, his Government, which was following the explosive situation in the Gaza Strip with particular apprehension, was willing to consider contributing to special projects in the Gaza Strip to enable the Agency to improve its services there.

25. Mr. AL-AYADHI (Bahrain) said that, after almost 40 years, the problem of the Palestine refugees was still not solved, despite the fact that the basis upon which it was to be solved had been set out in General Assembly resolution 194 (III) in 1948. The report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA (A/42/13 and Add.1) drew attention to the Agency's improved financial situation and attributed it to the achievement of a delicate equilibrium between expenditure and income. It was important that the austerity measures taken by the Agency should not hamper its ability to administer relief, educational, health and training services to the refugees. Bahrain hoped that in the coming years the Agency would be able to secure the necessary financing, particularly for the construction of schools, clinics and other utilities.

26. The situation of refugees in the occupied territories remained a matter of concern. The United Nations had assumed a special responsibility towards the Palestine refugees since it had voted in favour of the partition of Palestine, which led to Israel's expulsion of the Palestinians from their homes and the consequent creation of the refugee problem. Thus, it was the duty of the international community and the United Nations to shoulder the responsibility of financing the Agency.

27. The problem of the Palestine refugees was essentially political. Consequently, addressing it effectively not only entailed financing the Agency but also putting an end to the sufferings of the Palestinian people which for over 40 years had been appealing for the restoration of its inalienable rights. UNRWA was not an end in itself but merely a provisional humanitarian establishment set up to alleviate the sufferings of Palestinian people. The Agency's continued existence was the result of Israel's constant refusal to comply with paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), which stipulated that refugees wishing to return to their homes should be permitted to do so and that compensation should be paid for losses and damage incurred.

28. The only solution to the problem of the Palestine refugees was through restoration of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, including the right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian State in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/43. Until the Palestinian people regained its inalienable rights, his delegation viewed the continuation of UNRWA services as essential.

29. Mr. MANSOUR (Observer, Palestine Liberation Organization), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, drew attention to paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Commissioner-General's report and said that General Assembly resolution 41/69 A had been adopted without a single negative vote. Only one country had abstained,

(Mr. Mansour, Observer, PLO)

namely, Israel. It was possible that the new representative of the Zionist State, who had alleged that paragraph 11 of Assembly resolution 194 (III) was not applicable, belonged to the Kahane faction, which was working to expel all Palestinian Arabs from historic Palestine.

30. Mr. GLAIEL (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he wished to point out a particular danger in what the Israeli representative had called the problem of Jewish refugees. Was he speaking of those Jews who had been tempted by Zionist promises to leave their homelands for occupied Palestine and thus had become refugees? Since its establishment, the State of Israel had opened its doors to all Jews who wished to immigrate, and had even extended to them prior citizenship rights. The Zionist Government and its machinery had used various means of pressure to bring Jews to Israel, including the exploitation of so-called anti-semitism and the enactment of decree-laws to assist in the absorption of Jewish immigrants. The Jews had not been expelled. They had not gone to occupied Palestine because of wars but because of temptations and promises made by Israel and world Zionism. In referring to Jewish refugees, the Israeli representative was making a dangerous call for the establishment of an agency parallel to UNRWA.

31. He emphasized that his country had always expressed its readiness to solve the problem of Palestine on the basis of all applicable United Nations resolutions.

32. Mr. RAMIN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, read out paragraphs 5 and 6 of Assembly resolution 194 (II) and said that the six Arab States which had been Members of the United Nations in 1948 had all voted against the resolution. Nevertheless, for 40 years they had been singling out paragraph 11 and inscribing it on their banner. The basis accepted nowadays by certain Arab States, including Jordan, was Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which referred specifically to the resolution of the refugee problem as part of an overall peace settlement. The members of the Committee were all duty-bound to base progress towards peace on that resolution.

33. He had explained the previous day why the bad treatment of Jews had caused the exodus of many tens of thousands from Syria. With regard to the statement by the Iraqi representative that the Jews had left voluntarily, he could state from personal experience that the Iraqi Jews had left their homes and property because of persecution.

34. Mr. AL-AYADHI (Bahrain) said that the Israeli representative could not answer his delegation's statement, especially the argument that the Palestinian problem had not been created by a natural disaster but by the establishment of Israel, which had displaced the Palestinian people from their land.

35. Mr. BURAYZAT (Jordan) said that he wished to clarify several points concerning the Arab States' rejection of General Assembly resolution 194 (III). First, since 1948 and even before, Jordan had wished to coexist and to create an atmosphere favourable to peace, but that had been rejected by the Zionist leaders. Second,



(Mr. Burayzat, Jordan)

Israel had not complied with Assembly resolution 181 (II) but had occupied further Palestinian territory after the cease-fire. Third, concerning the Israeli representative's insistence that the refugee problem could be solved only in the context of a peace settlement, if the refugee problem was not inextricably linked to the historic rights of the Palestinian people, what was the use of talking about a political settlement? Egypt and Jordan had stated that they were committed to full implementation of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), whereas Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs Abba Eban had said that Israel regarded that resolution as a framework for negotiations. Israel had undermined the resolution by establishing settlements, desecrating Islamic holy places, carrying out oppressive practices against Arabs, and annexing the Golan Heights. Israel had acted to undermine the resolution in practice, having rejected it through diplomatic channels.

36. Negotiations were a means of resolving conflicts, but not the only means. The Palestine question, by its very nature, could not be helped by negotiations. Zionist practices before the establishment of Israel, and Israeli policies since then, had created barriers to negotiations in Arab public opinion. Hence, the Israeli insistence on negotiations had become an impediment to peace.

37. The Arabs were not afraid of peace. They would accept a peace based on justice, legitimacy and United Nations resolutions, not on capitulation.

38. Mr. RAMIN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, if the parties would meet at the negotiating table, a solution could perhaps be found, despite their differences at the outset. That was what had happened in the case of Egypt. His position was to seek negotiations without pre-conditions.

39. Concerning earlier statements by the Syrian and Iraqi representatives, the Iraqi Jews had not left voluntarily, but in response to persecution and the presence of Fascist and pro-Nazi groups. His own family had left Baghdad in 1935, and if the Iraqi representative favoured the appointment of a custodian to oversee the Palestinian properties, he would like an accounting of what had happened to his family's property.

40. Mr. GLAIEL (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, asked whether the Zionist representative's statement indicated that Israel was ready to participate in an international conference to discuss the questions of Palestine and the Middle East.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.