



Recommendation 658 (1972)¹

Position of the Palestine refugees and the activities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Middle East (UNRWA)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its Recommendations 520 (1968) and 566 (1969) on the situation of the refugees in the Middle East, and noting that the lot of the Palestine refugees remains a problem of grave concern ;
2. Expressing its gratitude to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Middle East (UNRWA) and to other organisations who, through their assistance to the Palestine refugees, have made a significant humanitarian effort ;
3. Considering, however, that relief operations hitherto have not led to any fundamental change in the situation of the refugees nor to any decrease in their numbers, after more than twenty years ;
4. Believing that Israel and the Arab States concerned should endeavour to reach a political agreement with a view to bringing about lasting peace in the Middle East and achieving a satisfactory solution to the refugee problem ;
5. Considering that, in the absence of a political settlement, the situation of refugees should be reviewed and action taken to reduce their numbers and enable them to resume a normal life ;
6. Believing that one of the most effective ways of improving the lot of the refugees is to provide them with vocational training to enable them thereafter to live in normal conditions without recourse to international aid ;
7. Considering that unless industrialisation is intensified in the host countries, even trained refugees will have difficulty in finding work ;
8. Noting that the present structure of UNRWA is not conducive to that body itself implementing projects designed to increase employment for refugees in the host countries, but considering that Council of Europe member States might contribute individually to the economic development of this area,
9. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite member governments :
 - a. to finance, in agreement with the authorities of the host countries, industrial peaceful projects designed to further the economic development of this area, and at the same time create employment opportunities for refugees ;
 - b. by means of subsidies or guarantees, to help private industry in member States to carry out schemes, in agreement with the authorities in the host countries, of a nature to create employment from which refugees might derive benefit ;

1. Assembly debate on 20 January 1972 (17th Sitting) (see [Doc. 3062](#), report of the Committee on Population and Refugees). Text adopted by the Assembly on 20 January 1972 (17th Sitting).



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- c. to increase their special financial contributions to UNRWA, with a view to combined aid for education and housing programmes, while requesting that body to expand its own corresponding programmes in collaboration with specialised agencies of the United Nations, non-governmental organisations and private foundations in a position to further development projects in the Middle East.