Recommendation 1025 (1986)[1]

Situation of the Palestine refugees

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to its Recommendations 520 (1968), 566 (1969), 658 (1972) and 901 (1981), on the situation of the Palestine refugees, and noting that the situation is steadily worsening on account of :

1.1. the considerable loss of human life among the refugees as a result of the fighting in Lebanon ;

1.2. enormous material damage and, above all, the departure of many survivors from the refugee camps of Sabra, Shatila and Borj el-Barajneh in Lebanon ;

1.3. the expulsion of refugees working in the Gulf states ;

1.4. the continuation of the Israeli policy of settlement in the Gaza and West Bank territories up to 1984 ;

1.5. the departure for Europe of a growing number of refugees traumatised by the camp war or forced to leave by the authorities of their country of residence ;

2. Observing :

2.1. that the above-mentioned conflicts as well as those which occurred in Jordan in 1969-70 illustrate clearly the dire consequences of superimposing military objectives on the humanitarian purpose of the camps ;

2.2. that the hostilities in Lebanon and the expulsion of Palestinians working in certain Gulf states are causing an influx of Palestine refugees into Europe, among whom there may be terrorists ;

2.3. that the exercise of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination is compromised for the future by the growing exodus of refugees ;

2.4. that continued action by the partisan militias in Lebanon as well as other militias may give rise to further bloodshed by provoking a legitimate reaction of self-defence on the part of the refugees ;

2.5. that the Israeli policy of settlement in the Gaza and West Bank occupied territories, which was conducted up to 1984, is a real provocation that can only fuel extremist tendencies within the Arab world, particularly the paramilitary activities in the camps ;

2.6. that the outstanding humanitarian work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is running into considerable difficulties in Lebanon and in the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank ;

3. Considering :

3.1. that the alleviation and even more the termination of the tragic situation of the refugees depend on a comprehensive political solution being worked out for the future of the Palestinian people and the security of the state of Israel ;

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1. Assembly debate on 28 and 29 January 1986 (22nd and 25th Sittings) (see Doc. 5507, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography). Text adopted by the Assembly on 29 January 1986 (25th Sitting).

3.2. that Council of Europe member states are directly concerned on account of their participation in the work of UNRWA as well as the actual or potential consequences of the situation in the Middle East,

4. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the governments of member states :

a. to bring pressure to bear on the parties directly involved with a view to a comprehensive political solution being worked out for the Palestinian problem in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions ;

b. to support the Jordano-Palestinian agreement in the search for such a solution ;

c. to call for an end to the military utilisation of the refugee camps in Lebanon and for a halt to the process of establishment of Israeli settlements on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip ;

d. to review the work of UNRWA in Lebanon and in the Gaza and West Bank occupied territories ;

e. to promote a ministerial conference on the problem of the reception and possible return of the Palestine refugees, having regard to Assembly Recommendation 1016 (1985), on living and working conditions of refugees and asylum-seekers.