



Recommendation 1090 (1988)¹

Situation of the Palestine refugees

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to its Recommendations 520 (1968), 566 (1969), 658 (1972), 901 (1980) and 1025 (1986), on the situation of the Palestine refugees, and also its [Resolution 902 \(1988\)](#) on the prospects for an international Middle East peace conference, and noting that after forty years there are now 2,2 million homeless and stateless people registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in the Near East (UNRWA), a situation which remains a matter of grave international concern ;
2. Appreciating the outstanding work of UNRWA, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other agencies, which continue to provide humanitarian aid, without which there would undoubtedly be even greater instability, tension and confrontation in the areas they cover -Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip ;
3. Noting with increasing concern :
 - 3.1. the continuing anarchy and conflict in Lebanon which is imposing intolerable hardships and risks on all, including the refugees and those working with them ;
 - 3.2. the effects of the current unrest in the occupied territories on the provision of UNRWA's health, education and relief services, and especially the closure of schools, the interruption of out-patient medical services, particularly for those requiring regular medical attention such as diabetics, and the growing squalor in the camps caused by the breakdown of municipal services ;
4. Affirming that the Fourth Geneva Convention, on the protection of civilians in time of war, of 12 August 1949, is applicable to the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including east Jerusalem ;
5. Sharing the deep concern expressed by ICRC about a certain number of violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention, in particular the repeated expulsions of nationals of the occupied territories and the internment of persons from the occupied territories in military detention centres located in Israel ;
6. Urging the governments of member and observer states to become more aware of the value of UNRWA's work, its continuing shortfall of resources to satisfy outstanding needs, particularly for those refugee families who are currently eligible for hardship relief, and of the need to provide a long-term commitment to financing the agency to enable it to plan ahead more effectively, as it has requested ;
7. Noting that the Council of Europe member states, the United States and Canada contribute almost 70% of UNRWA's budget, and regretting the minimal regular contributions of the Arab states (2%), and the continuing refusal of the Soviet Union and its allies to contribute at all ;

1. Assembly debate on 7 October 1988 (16th Sitting) (see [Doc. 5936](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, Rapporteur : Mr Atkinson). Text adopted by the Assembly on 7 October 1988 (16th Sitting).



8. Noting the encouraging response of some of the Arab countries, of the European Communities and of certain Council of Europe member states, especially Italy, to the unrest in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, providing special donations to relieve hardship and to support hospitals and health services which are attempting to deal with the victims of both physical violence and stress-related problems, and urging other states to follow this example ;
9. Further noting Israel's programme for replacing refugee camps with permanent neighbourhoods in the Gaza Strip which has rehoused 60 000 people to date, and the objections raised by UNRWA ;
10. Objecting in particular to the Israeli settlement policy and the diversion of resources, especially water and agricultural land, to those settlements ;
11. Concerned that the reunification and rehabilitation of families in the Rafah-Canada camp, after the re-drawing of the Egypt-Israel border through the town in 1982, are being held up by unnecessary obstructions ;
12. Concerned at the growing unemployment among refugees in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as a result of curfews and other consequences of the current unrest, and in Jordan as a result of the current recession in neighbouring Arab oil-producing countries ; at the large number of young Palestinians shortly to come on to the job market ; and also concerned that the high Palestinian birth-rate will further affect the economic and social stability of the countries concerned ;
13. Aware of Jordan's plans to educate and train a Palestinian work-force in the supply of banking, computer and other high-technology services to the region, as outlined to the Parliamentary Assembly by Crown Prince Hassan in January 1987, and noting the cancellation by King Hussein of Jordan's proposed four-year development plan for the West Bank and, with particular concern, the dismissal there of its Palestinian employees in schools, hospitals and agricultural projects,
14. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers urge the governments of member states :
 - 14.1. to give immediate support to UNRWA's plans to improve infrastructure, services and relief to hardship families in camps in Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip affected by the current unrest, and to urge Israel to improve its co-operation with UNRWA in times of crisis ;
 - 14.2. to urge all parties concerned to allow UNRWA reconstruction work to resume in Lebanon ;
 - 14.3. to respond to the United Nations Secretary General's request for long-term commitment to small but regular annual increases in contributions to UNRWA's budget ;
 - 14.4. to renew their appeals to Arab oil-producing countries to increase their regular contributions to UNRWA's budget ;
 - 14.5. and, similarly, to the Soviet Union and East European states and other non-contributing industrial nations to reverse their policy, as a recognition of the humanitarian problems arising from the current situation in Lebanon and the occupied territories ;
 - 14.6. to call upon Israel, as the occupying power and as a High Contracting Party to the Fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in time of war, of 12 August 1949, to accept the de jure applicability of the convention to the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including east Jerusalem, and fully to comply with its obligations under that convention ;
 - 14.7. to recognise, being High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, their obligation, under Article 1 of this convention, to ensure respect for the convention in all circumstances ;
 - 14.8. to urge the United Nations Secretary General, in consultation with the Commissioner General of UNRWA, to consider the problem of the protection of the Palestine refugees, and to take more effective measures to guarantee their safety and security, and their legal and human rights, in all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 ;
 - 14.9. to urge both Israel and Egypt to bring about the swift completion of the Rafah-Canada camp project, to enable divided families to be reunited ;
 - 14.10. to continue to co-ordinate their Middle East policies to encourage a comprehensive, just and lasting political solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and a just resolution of the refugee problem ; and to co-operate on a programme of international aid for the economies of the affected areas, on the basis that economic stability is a foundation of peaceful coexistence between different people.