



Recommendation 1152 (1991)¹

Situation of the Palestine refugees and the immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established in 1948. Currently 2,42 million refugees, of whom 900 000 in the occupied territories, are registered with the agency, a situation which remains a matter of grave international concern.
2. The Assembly commends the invaluable work of UNRWA and other agencies in providing humanitarian aid and basic services, often in co-operation with the governments of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan and the Israeli authorities in the occupied territories of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.
3. The Assembly notes that the Government of Israel during a number of years has made great efforts to improve the situation for the local Palestinian population in the Gaza District and in the West Bank. Housing programmes have been established for the resettlement of refugees. Substantial results can also be noted from measures taken by the government in areas like education, health care and medical attendance.
4. The Assembly notes with concern the adverse effects of three years of intifada in the occupied territories on UNRWA's capability of providing services, the disintegration of municipal services causing squalor in the refugee camps, the increased unemployment and the general deterioration of the refugees' living conditions.
5. The Gulf conflict has caused unemployment for tens of thousands of Palestinians and additional hardship to those refugee families in the occupied territories who had relied upon the income previously remitted from the Gulf, and this places further pressure on UNRWA's already strained budget.
6. The inhabitants of the occupied territories have suffered from the intifada and its consequences, protracted curfews, frequent transgressions of basic human rights, the confiscation of land, the sealing or demolition of homes as a form of collective punishment by the Israeli authorities, all of which are direct violations of Section III, Part III, of the 4th Geneva Convention of 1949 relating to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.
7. The Assembly recalls the various resolutions of the United Nations Security Council calling upon Israel to cease the deportation of Palestinians in violation of the 4th Geneva Convention and reaffirming the de jure applicability of this convention to the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem.
8. The Assembly urges the governments of member, observer and special guest states to be aware of the shortfall in donations needed to satisfy UNRWA's expenditure, which itself is not keeping pace with the refugees' population growth nor reflecting the needs created by the intifada and the Gulf conflict.
9. The shortage and increased salinity of the water supply in the region and reports of an inegalitarian distribution in the occupied territories between Palestinians and Jewish settlers are a matter of great concern.

1. Assembly debate on 25 April 1991 (7th Sitting) (see [Doc. 6402](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, Rapporteur : Mr Atkinson). Text adopted by the Assembly on 25 April 1991 (7th Sitting).



10. The self-support grants and loan-based projects created by both UNRWA and non-governmental organisations have led to encouraging results. They provide the refugees with a foundation for economic growth, infrastructure development, income and wealth generation and community self-help, and prevent complete dependence upon UNRWA services.

11. The Assembly is concerned by Israeli obstructions of economic development in the occupied territories through its policies of capital controls, credit and resource rationing, export and import quotas, marketing restrictions and, specifically, the alteration of the existing tax regime, which is in violation of Article 48 of the 4th Hague Convention of 1907 concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land.

12. The growing number of Soviet Jews arriving in Israel, as is their right - 120 000 in 1990, 200 000 expected in 1991 and even more in a near future - is creating an additional source of tension and an adverse effect on the opportunities for employment and housing for Palestinians in Israel.

13. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers urge the governments of member states :

13.1. to respond positively to the UNRWA Commissioner-General's appeal of 21 September 1990 for immediate and generous assistance to overcome the shortfall in the funding of the Emergency Measures in Lebanon and the Occupied Territories programme (EMLOT) ;

13.2. to renew a call upon Israel as the occupying power and as a High Contracting Party to the 4th Geneva Convention to accept the de jure applicability of the convention to the territories of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, and to comply fully with all the obligations of the convention ;

13.3. to urge Israel to respond positively to the United Nations Secretary General's report of 31 October 1990 (S/21919) on the protection of the refugees and the recognition of the immunity and privileges of UNRWA staff in the performance of its duties, and to enter into discussions with UNRWA on how best to achieve this under present circumstances ;

13.4. to urge Israel to avoid the settlement of Soviet Jews beyond the "green line" established by the 1949 Armistice and the establishment of further settlements in the occupied territories pending the outcome of negotiations on a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute ;

13.5. to urge the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the United National Leadership of the intifada, and all those with influence, to end the intifada, thereby allowing normal life to be restored, UNRWA services to be fully resumed, infrastructure to be repaired, and a suitable climate to be established during which the governments of Israel and Jordan and the representatives of the Palestinians will engage in a dialogue with the aim of establishing a comprehensive peace process ;

13.6. to develop a programme of direct investment for the economies of the affected areas, with an emphasis on economic growth, infrastructure development, income and wealth generation, and community self-help, on the basis that economic stability and co-operation are a foundation for peaceful coexistence between neighbouring peoples ;

13.7. recognising the new political opportunities arising from the outcome of the Gulf conflict, to continue to seek to co-ordinate their Middle East policies in an attempt to end the current stalemate and to encourage a comprehensive, just and lasting political solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the refugee problem.

14. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers urge the governments of Israel and the Soviet Union, with reference to the European Convention on Human Rights, to let Soviet Jews leave Soviet territory directly for any destination, according to their own wishes.

15. The Assembly asks its Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography to report, as and when it deems necessary, on the human rights situation for Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories.