Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 901 (1980)[1]

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

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its Recommendations 520 (1968), 566 (1969) and 658 (1972) on the situation of the Palestinian refugees, and noting that this remains a matter of grave concern ;

2. Reaffirming its Resolution 728 (1980) on the situation in the Middle East, and underlining the urgency for a general political solution which alone could establish a just and lasting peace in this area ;

3. Deploring the fact that, after three decades, the situation of these refugees, though improved in some material respects, seems no nearer to a real solution ;

4. Expressing its gratitude to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and to other organisations which have rendered humanitarian aid ;

5. Noting with alarm the grave financial crisis in which UNRWA finds itself, which may, in the immediate future, endanger an important part of its education programme, involving the closure of its schools in Syria and Jordan, and convinced of the need, pending a political solution, to ensure the continuity of UNRWA's activities ;

6. Regretting that regular contributions of Arab countries, especially oil-producing ones, are still very low, and that the USSR and other Eastern European countries refuse to contribute to the UNRWA budget ;

7. Taking account of the differing situations and of the aspirations of those Palestinian Arabs who live in occupied territories and those who live in neighbouring Arab countries ;

8. Reaffirming its conviction that all states in the region, including of course Israel, have an unchallengeable right to live in peace within secure and recognised frontiers ;

9. Recalling the text of paragraph 7 of Resolution 728 (1980) of the Parliamentary Assembly, concerning the hopes created by the Camp David Agreements and their real effects with respect to a general solution of the problem of the Middle East ;

10. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe urge member governments :

10.1. to increase their regular contributions to UNRWA, in order to enable it to continue its activities until a global solution to the Palestinian question has been found

10.2. to make, in addition, special donations at once to meet the present crisis in the education programmes of UNRWA as referred to in paragraph 5 above ;

1. Assembly debate on 26 September 1980 (12th Sitting) (see Doc. 4583, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography). Text adopted by the Assembly on 26 September 1980 (12th Sitting).

10.3. to try to persuade the oil-producing Arab countries to increase their regular contributions to the UNRWA budget in order to help save that organisation from the annual threat of bankruptey and from the need to ask for special donations ;

10.4. to appeal to the USSR and other East European states to reverse their policy of non-contribution to UNRWA, in view of the purely humanitarian and non-political nature of its activities ;

10.5. to so frame their Middle East policies as to contribute towards a political solution to the Palestinian question compatible with Resolution 728 (1980) of the Parliamentary Assembly.