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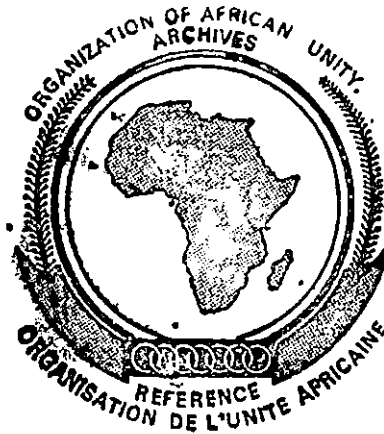
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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION

CM/1419

MICROFICHE

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERALON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION

1. Following the consideration of the Report of the Secretary-General on the Palestinian Question as contained in Document CM/1389 (XLIV), the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity meeting in its Forty-Fourth Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa from 21 to 26 July, 1986, adopted Resolution CM/Res.1061 (XLIV) in which it strongly condemned Israeli practices, called for a quick and lasting solution to the Palestinian Question and asked the Secretary-General to follow developments relating to the said Question and report to the next Session of the Council.
2. It should perhaps be stated at this point that this question which is somehow at the heart of the Middle East problem is still without a solution. The period under review was characterized by resurgence of violence without the faintest glimmer of hope for settling this problem.
3. In Lebanon, the camp wars between Amal Shiites and Palestinians broke out again to the great satisfaction of Israel whose air force has been pounding Palestinian camps with bombs. The death toll is high, kidnappings frequent occurrences and material damage heavy. During this time, the Israeli army continued with unmitigated repression and all kinds of demands on the populations in the occupied territories. The Report published by Amnesty International in September, 1986, is enough proof. The glaring case of Adnan Mansour Ghanem, arrested after having been liberated in an exchange of prisoners, caught the attention of the humanitarian organization. He has suffered and is still suffering all kinds of torture.
4. Repression in the occupied territories did not spare the dead. The forces of occupation continued to violate and desecrate the Maaman Alla cemetery. Searches continued during the month of November, 1986, in the Muslim cemetery of Al Oods.

5. These repressive measures were extended to the Universities in the occupied territories. Bethlehem University was closed for two weeks and the Students subjected to all kinds of demands. Following the serious incidents which occurred between the Israeli army and students of Birzaik University in the West Bank, soldiers opened fire on students protesting against the setting up of barricades around the University premises and the institution of control.

6. All these acts of harrasement continued even though the Chairman of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) took a major and decisive step towards the negotiating table. In deed, Mr Arafat declared to the Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, in September, 1986, that he accepted Resolution 242 of the UN Security Council. He, however, premised his acceptance, which seems normal, on an overall settlement of the Israeli Arab conflict under the auspices of an international Conference which will take into consideration all the UN Resolutions relating to the Palestinian Question and, above all, those which recognize the national rights of the Palestinian People, their right to self-determination, an independent state, etc. This declaration complemented that of Cairo (October, 1985) in which the PLO Chairman made a commitment to limit armed operations to the occupied territories and to Israel, following the commandeering of the Italian cruise liner Achille Lauro.

7. Thus, the "Cairo Declaration" and what can be termed the "Harare Declaration" are some of the facts which should be taken into consideration in the search for a solution to the Palestinian Problem especially in preparing an international peace conference on the Middle East to involve all the parties to the conflict and the five Permanent Members of the Security Council.

8. Israel and its allies should understand this and show proof of good faith for the organization of this international conference. The favourable stand adopted by the Israeli Prime Minister at the end of the Alexandria Summit in Egypt in September, 1986, sufficiently binds Israel.

9. However, in spite of the efforts made to find a solution to the Palestinian Question, which it cannot be over-emphasized, is at the heart of the Middle East conflict, Israel persisted in its policy of aggression, repression and establishment of new settlements in the occupied territories. The alarm raised by the UN Secretary-General at the Forty-First Ordinary Session of the General Assembly is particularly significant in this respect and should alert the International Community to take effective and urgent measures to assist Palestinians regain their usurped rights.

10. The Organization of African Unity which supports the just cause of the Palestinian People in their struggle to regain their inalienable rights to self-determination and independence issued a press release on 29 November, 1986, reiterating its position on the question, on the occasion of the Day for International Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

11. The General Secretariat will continue to follow developments on the Palestinian Question and will report to the next Session of the Council of Ministers.



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