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ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE
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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Thirty-Seventh Ordinary Session

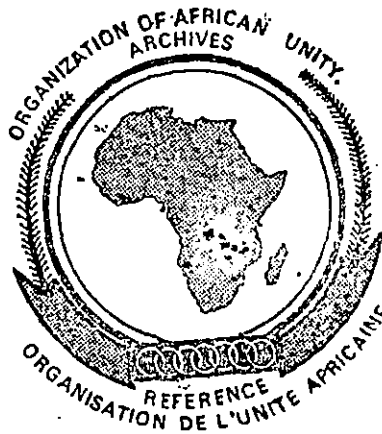
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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE PALESTINE
QUESTION



CM-1126

MICROFICHE

Report of the Secretary-General on the Palestine Question

1. The Council of Ministers of the OAU will recall that, at its Thirty-fifth Ordinary Session held in Freetown, Sierra Leone, from 18th to 28th June, 1980, resolution CM/Res.787 (XXXV) on the Palestinian Issue had been adopted.
2. The Council, in its resolution, has, inter alia, reaffirmed all its previous resolutions and its unswerving support to the Palestinian people in the the tireless struggle they wage for the recovery of their inalienable rights to create an independent and sovereign State, under the leadership of their legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization.
3. With regards to the United Nations' General Assembly Seventh Special Session on the Palestinian Issue, held on July 22nd, 1980 in New York, the Council of Ministers invited all Member States of the OAU to participate as actively as possible at ministerial level, by throwing in their weight regarding the decision to be taken on the Palestinian issue, as it is at the very core of the Middle East conflict.
4. During the same Session in Freetown, the Council of Ministers adopted another Resolution CM/Res.791 (XXXV), specially on Jerusalem. In this resolution, the Council clearly reaffirmed that the Holy City of Jerusalem belongs to the Palestinian and Arab occupied territories. It stressed the necessity of maintaining the Holy City's original status and of preserving its historical character.

The Council also condemned Israel's annexation measures, as well as its policy of judisation and usurpation, namely of real estate, in Jerusalem. It launched an appeal to Member States of the OAU so that these measures be considered as null and void. It demanded that Israel comply with the resolutions of International Bodies and renounce its claims on Jerusalem.

5. During the course of the debates of the UN General Assembly's Special Emergency Session, various delegations took the floor and spoke in favour of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to a sovereign State in Palestine. They condemned Israel's challenge, claiming to transform Jerusalem into a capital of the Zionist State and stressed that it was the duty of the General Assembly to envisage coercive measures to have the decisions of the International Community respected. The delegations also denounced the attitude of the United States and the magnitude of its military and financial aid to Jerusalem. They stressed that Israel's right is to be recognized, but that this must not be done to the detriment of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

6. The General Assembly once again asked that Israel immediately stop its policy of establishing Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. It deplored the United States for having blocked the action of the Security Council by using its right of veto in favour of Israel whilst providing it with protection and military assistance, thus enabling it to absorb the occupied territories.

7. The General Assembly's resolution once again recognized the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. The resolution thence reaffirmed the PLO's right to participate in all the efforts, deliberations and conferences of the United Nations as representative of the Palestinian people, on an equal footing with the other parties. Consequently, the text excluded any separate treaty or agreement signed without the party concerned which is the PLO.

8. The resolution requested Israel to entirely and unconditionally withdraw from the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, leaving all the goods and services intact and that before November 15th, 1980. Moreover

the Security Council was requested to hold a meeting, should Israel not comply with this resolution, in order to examine the situation and to envisage efficient measures as indicated in Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. Obviously, mandatory sanctions should be envisaged in this case.

9. This resolution reaffirmed the fundamental principle that acquisition of territory by force is unacceptable, and stressed that a global, just and durable peace would not be established in the Middle East without Israel's withdrawal from all occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and the adoption of just solution to the Palestinian problem, on the basis of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians.

10. It requested Israel to comply with the provisions of Resolution 465 (1980) unanimously adopted by the Security Council on March 1st, 1980 and with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations on the historical character of the Holy City of Jerusalem, in particular resolution 476 (1980) of June 30th, 1980.

11. Since the Seventh Special Emergency Session, the Palestinian issue was not settled as expected because of Israel's policy of annexation and repression of the authentic sons of Palestine.

This Special Emergency Session, which consecrated the success of the Palestinian cause, once again served Israel as a pretext to increase violence in the region.

12. Israel's reaction indeed, was swift after the adoption of the resolution on Palestine on July 30th, 1980 by an outstanding majority of 112 votes against 7, and 24 abstentions. Upon announcement of this resolution, the Israeli Parliament immediately rejected the United Nations resolution asking that Israel start total withdrawal, before November 15th, 1980, from the territories occupied before June 1967, including Jerusalem.

13. This decision of the Knesseth provoked waves of serious indignation not only within the International Community, but also within the Organization of Islamic Conference. Thus, the Committee on Jerusalem (Al QODS) which is mandated by the Islamic Conference to promote the liberation of Jerusalem, met in Casablanca, Morocco, from 15th to 18th August 1980 under the Chairmanship of His Majesty King Hassan II, to examine the dimension and implications of the Knesseth Decision, that the Holy City should become the Capital of Israel.

14. At the end of the debates, the Committee on Jerusalem decided to invite the Arab and Muslim countries to boycott, both politically and economically, the countries which would recognize Jerusalem as Capital of Israel, have diplomatic representations there, or decide to establish them. The Committee requested that the necessary means be implemented so that sanctions against Israel be taken by the United Nations.

15. On August 20th, 1980, the Security Council, on its part, decided by 14 votes and 1 abstention (United States) not to recognize the Fundamental Law proclaiming Jerusalem Capital of Israel, and asked Member States of the UN to abide by the Council's decision. This resolution also requested States which had established diplomatic missions in Jerusalem to withdraw them from the Holy City.

Israel officially rejected this resolution adopted by the Council.

16. It must be admitted that Israel's stubbornness did not pave the way to peace in the Middle East, more specifically, in Palestine. On the contrary, Israel's manoeuvres only aggravated the situation in the region.

17. After the Committee meeting at Al Qods, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Conference met in Fez, Morocco, from 19th to 20th September 1980, to examine the Palestinian issue. They emphasised that more than 250 resolutions had been adopted by the International Organizations, inviting Israel to put an end to its expansionist, racist and segregationist policy and to liberate the Arab occupied territories. All these resolutions remained a dead issue, always ignored by Israel who, benefitting from the support of certain great powers, continues its policy of arrogance and defiance towards the International Community.

18. The Islamic Conference emphasized the necessity of devising a common and efficient strategy on the military, political, economic and trade levels so as to ensure the liberation of Jerusalem and ensure the triumph of the Palestinian cause. In this context, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs decided to suspend credits and contributions to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and to the World Bank as long as these institutions continue to refuse to grant the Palestinian Liberation Organization Observer Status.

19. The UNESCO General Conference which was held in Belgrade in October 1980 condemned Israel's decisions concerning Jerusalem in the same terms as the Security Council during its meeting of August 20th, 1980. The UNESCO General Conference's resolution recommended to the World Heritage Committee that the procedure of including the City of Jerusalem on the World Heritage list be accelerated, and to envisage that this procedure is endangered.

20. The Second Arab Summit, which was held in Amman, Jordan from November 25th to 27th 1980, decided that Arab States should sever diplomatic relations with any State which would recognize Jerusalem as Capital of Israel.

21. On the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the OAU, in a Press Release published on November 29th, 1980 condemned Israel's flagrant challenge of the resolutions of the United Nations, the OAU and the Non-Aligned Movement, and asked that Israel unconditionally withdraw from the territories occupied by force since 1967. It also condemned the criminal aggressions perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinian refugees, and judisation of Jerusalem.

22. In December 1980, the General Assembly of the United Nations once again adopted, by 98 votes against 16 and 32 abstentions, a resolution demanding Israel's unconditional withdrawal from the Arab occupied territories. It stressed the inadequacy of Security Council resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, which does not comprise the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, the implementation of which is a sine qua non condition for the solution of the Palestinian problem. It condemned all separate agreements or treaties signed without the PLO, sole representative of the Palestinian people.

23. The resolution adopted requests the Security Council to hold a meeting to examine the situation in Palestine, and impose international sanctions against Israel, with accordance in Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter which defines mandatory coercive measures against those threatening international peace and security.

Once more, Israel categorically rejected, on December 16th 1980, all the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on the Palestinian issue.

24. The Third Islamic Summit Conference on Palestine and Jerusalem, which was held in Taef, Saudi Arabia, in January 1981 was, once again, an important success for the Palestinians. It was unanimously agreed that the oil weapon should be used against Israel and that massive support be extended to the Palestinians and the PLO.

The Conference rejected all initiatives which would exclude the Palestinian option and envisaged the reaction of the Islamic Boycott Bureau of companies working with Israel.

25. During the Non-Aligned Conference held in New Delhi in February 1981, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed that the establishment of a just peace in the region can only come about with the complete and unconditional withdrawal by Israel from the occupied territories including Jerusalem as well as recognition of PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians and total respect of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

26. Despite all these measures taken by the International Community and other international bodies, Israel pursued its policy of annexation, colonisation and repression.

27. In reaction to the steps taken by the International Community, Israel has always responded by violence, repression, and attacks. It has multiplied settlements on the West Bank and Gaza. Repression of the Palestinians was not only restricted within the occupied territories, but also without. Lately, Israel intensified its attacks against South Lebanon. Israeli incursions in the South of Lebanon are uncountable.

28. Over and above its policy of annexation, establishment of Israeli settlements, expulsion and deportation of Palestinians whilst denying them the right to return, of expropriation of property and destruction of houses, Israel carries out massive arrests and badly mistreats the civilian population. It hampers the free practice of religion and disrespects family rights and customs. It bullies and tortures prisoners, disregarding Security Council Resolution 446 of March 22, 1979 and Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of August 1949.

29. The Human Rights Commission, which met in Geneva on February 11th, 1981, condemned Israeli practices in the Arab occupied territories including Palestine.

30. It is the duty of the International Community to shoulder its responsibilities before history so as to isolate Israel politically and economically by applying the mandatory sanctions outlined in the United Nations Charter.

31. In accordance with the decisions formerly adopted by the Council of Ministers, the General Secretariat of the OAU is following the development of the Palestinian issue and will report to the Council thereon.



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