



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/36/305/Add.2
25 September 1981

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-sixth session
Agenda item 12

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Assistance to the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM ORGANS AND ORGANIZATIONS
OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT)

1. Following the adoption by the Commission on Human Settlements of resolution 3/1 entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian people", officials of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitats) met with the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to Habitat. Subsequently, the Executive Director wrote to the Palestine Liberation Organization requesting its views and advice on how Habitat could best provide assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. Habitat has subsequently been in continuous contact with the Permanent Observer in Nairobi regarding this matter. The Permanent Observer has informed Habitat that he has conveyed its communication to the headquarters of his organization in Baghdad and that he would communicate with the Centre as soon as a response was received. In the meantime, a number of possible activities are being explored for assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of human settlements. For example, Habitat plans to organize a course on management and public housing programmes, including sites and services, for countries in the Middle East and North Africa which will include the provision of fellowships for suitably qualified Palestinians. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, the Palestine Liberation Organization has also been invited to participate in the annual sessions of the Commission on Human Settlements.
2. The Executive Director has also been in touch with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) regarding the recommendations of the interagency task force on assistance to the Palestinian people, which had been established by the Administrator of UNDP, particularly those related to human settlements (housing). As Habitat had participated in and contributed to the work of this interagency task force, the Executive Director enquired how Habitat could assist in the implementation of the projects that had been identified in this particular field. UNDP indicated in reply that the occupying authorities had given permission for action to begin on some of the projects in the West Bank and Gaza which had been approved by the UNDP Governing Council, including one related to training in the field of housing, and that these authorities had further specifically requested that UNDP itself should be the sole executing agency for the projects.
3. A major activity in which Habitat was involved was the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 34/113. In an effort to ensure a balanced and expert view, Habitat recruited the services of three expert consultants to prepare the required report. In the comprehensive and analytical report that resulted (A/35/533 and Corr.1), the experts addressed themselves to several aspects of the living conditions of the Palestinian people and identified the various factors which determine or influence the quality of life of the Arab population in the Arab towns and villages within the occupied territories.