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QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Letter dated 8 August 1984 from the Chairman of the Committee on
the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
addressed to the Secretary-General

The effect of the Israeli occupation on the enjoyment of political, social, economic and cultural rights by the Palestinian people and on their prospects for development has been described in countless reports prepared by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I should like to draw your attention to the fact that the Committee, while taking note of certain positive aspects in those reports, remains seriously concerned about the situation of the Palestinian Arabs in the occupied Arab territories.

After studying the situation regarding human rights in the occupied territories, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories concluded, in its latest report to the General Assembly, that the Israeli policy of annexation and Jewish settlements had led to violations of the right to liberty, freedom of movement, freedom of expression and academic freedom, and that the situation continued to deteriorate (see A/38/409, pp. 4 and 5).

Two reports prepared by teams of eminent international experts that have just been submitted to the Economic and Social Council, at its second regular session, and which will be submitted also to the General Assembly at its next session, set forth in detail the negative effects of the occupation and of the policy of Israeli settlements on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and on their right to sovereignty over their national resources (documents A/39/233 and A/39/326).

The specialized agencies of the United Nations, each in its own field of competence, have also submitted documents concerning the effect of the Israeli

occupation on the situation of workers, on health conditions and on educational and cultural institutions in the occupied territories. While indicating that some of their recommendations have been implemented, these agencies have pointed out that values such as human dignity, freedom and equality, on which their standards were based, could not be given concrete form in the overall context of the occupation. Permit me to draw your attention in this connection to the reports recently prepared by the specialized agencies, which are annexed to this letter:

- I. International Labour Organisation: report of the Director-General of the International Labour Office on the situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories (International Labour Conference, seventieth session, 1984).
- II. World Health Organization: report of the Special Committee of Experts appointed to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories (thirty-seventh World Health Assembly, A37/13).
- III. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: report of the Director-General on the implementation of resolution 21 C/14.1 concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories (hundred and sixteenth session of the UNESCO Executive Board, 116 EX/16 and Corr.1 and Add.1-3).

The volume of evidence accumulated in the above-mentioned documents clearly indicates that the rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories are being flagrantly violated and that its situation has continued to worsen. The General Assembly, at its most recent session, in resolution 38/166 of 19 December 1983, expressed its alarm at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 as a result of the Israeli occupation, and affirmed that the occupation was contradictory to the basic requirements for the social and economic development of the Palestinian people in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. At the same time, the Assembly, on the recommendation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish its own independent State in Palestine, as well as the need to put an end to the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories, in accordance with the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force.

In conclusion, I have the honour to request you to arrange for the text of this letter and its annexes to be circulated as a document of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 33.

(Signed) Massamba SARRE
Chairman of the Committee on the
Exercise of the Inalienable Rights
of the Palestinian People

ANNEX I

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

REPORT ON THE SITUATION OF WORKERS
OF THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

Introduction

1. This report is presented to the Conference pursuant to the Director-General's previous commitment, as recalled in last year's report, and in application of the above-mentioned resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 66th Session in 1980. It also complies with the request made by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 38/79 of 15 December 1983.¹

2. In order to prepare this report, the Director-General made similar arrangements to those of past years so as to be sure that the situation of the Arab workers of the occupied territories was examined objectively. A mission composed of the Chief of the Equality of Rights Branch (Mr. C. Rossillion) and the Director of the ILO Regional Office for Arab States (Mr. S. Dajani) visited the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan to hold consultations with the governmental, employers' and workers' circles of those countries. The Government of Egypt and representatives of Egyptian employers' and workers' organisations were consulted during a subsequent mission to that country carried out by the Chief of the Equality of Rights Branch. Further consultations were held with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organisation during certain of these missions.

3. The fact-finding mission itself, which the Director-General has sent to Israel and the occupied Arab territories regularly since 1978, took place this year from 23 February to 4 March 1984. As in 1983, it was headed by Mr. Ian Lagergren, Chief of the International Labour Standards Department, accompanied by another official of the Department who had taken part in the earlier missions (Mr. J. P. Arlès) and an official from the Equality of Rights Branch (Mr. G. Minet).

4. The mission's mandate is broad, consisting as it does of preparing the report which the Director-General is requested under paragraph 6 of the above-mentioned 1980 resolution to submit to the Conference "on the situation of Arab workers in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories in accordance with the provisions of this resolution". As in the past, the mission considered that the Golan still came within its mandate as an "occupied territory"² and accordingly informed the Israeli authorities that it wished again to include a visit to the Golan in its programme. The Israeli authorities allowed the mission to visit this territory after formally restating their position on the subject.³

¹ In part D, paragraph 12, of that resolution, the General Assembly "urges ... in particular the International Labour Organisation to examine the conditions of Arab workers in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem".

² The decision resulting from the Israeli Act of 14 December 1981, which seeks to extend Israeli "law, jurisdiction and administration" to the Golan, was declared "null and void and without international legal effect" by resolution 497 (1981) adopted unanimously by the United Nations Security Council on 17 December 1981.

³ The position of the Israeli Government was stated in the following terms: "The ILO mission is meant to collect material for the Director-General's report on the administered areas. It is the position of the Government of Israel that the Golan, to which Israel law, jurisdiction and administration have been applied, is not now such an area. In view of this consideration, approval for a visit of the ILO mission to the Golan was given as a gesture of goodwill without prejudice. The decision to facilitate such an informal visit shall not serve as a precedent and does not contravene the Israel Government's position."

5. During its visit the mission had talks with the Israeli authorities, and specifically with representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Labour and representatives of the civil administration in the territories of the West Bank and Gaza. Two main meetings were held at the Ministry of Labour on the follow-up to the recommendations made in the Director-General's previous report, on specific employment and labour issues and, with the participation of representatives of the Bank of Israel, on general economic matters relating to the occupied Arab territories. The economic and social situation was discussed with the representative of the co-ordinator of government operations in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza (Ministry of Defence) and with the heads (or their deputies) of the civil administrations of these territories. The mission also had talks with officials of the General Federation of Labour of Israel, the Histadrut, and the principal employers' organisation of Israel, the Israel Manufacturers' Association. In the occupied territories, besides the above-mentioned meetings with the civil authorities, the mission met Israeli and Arab labour administration officials and visited employment offices, vocational training and rehabilitation centres and local undertakings and co-operatives. Much of the mission's time was devoted to talks with the Palestinian municipal authorities in office or removed from office, officials of the East Jerusalem, Hebron and Nablus chambers of commerce and various union leaders of the occupied Arab territories. The fact that many leading West Bank personalities were in Jordan at the time of the mission's visit restricted somewhat the range of contacts it was able to establish. In the Golan, the mission visited the employment office and met the mayor and representatives of the local council of Mas'ada and, subsequently, some of the heads of the Syrian Druse community in Majd-el-Shams. Finally, the mission visited undertakings in Israel where Arab workers from the occupied territories are employed.

6. The Israeli civil and military authorities offered the mission the necessary facilities to carry out its work successfully during its stay in Israel and its visits to the occupied Arab territories. The mission was able to speak in private with anybody it chose whenever it wished to do so. The Arab authorities, employers and workers in the occupied territories showed considerable interest in the mission and indicated their continuing desire to have the ILO examine the employment and labour situation of the population of these territories.

7. The mission has based its report on information collected on the spot in Israel, in the occupied Arab territories and in the Arab countries consulted. It has also used documentation supplied, on the one hand, by the Governments of Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Egypt and, on the other, by the Government of Israel. A number of employers' and workers' organisations and Palestinian bodies also provided it with information. Finally, the mission examined various communications received since the previous report, mainly from the Government of Jordan, the Arab Labour Organisation, the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the International Confederation of Arab Trade

Unions, the General Federation of Jordan Trade Unions, and trade unions in the occupied Arab territories such as the West Bank General Federation of Trade Unions.

8. When preparing its report, the mission took into account the various recommendations made in previous reports of the Director-General, in particular those contained in the 1979 and 1983 reports. As on previous occasions, it based its considerations on the ILO's constitutional principles, especially those embodied in the Declaration of Philadelphia concerning the aims and purposes of the ILO, and, more specifically, on the detailed standards concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, freedom of association and protection of the right to organise, which the International Labour Office uses as a reference framework for assessing the actual situations from the standpoint of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity and treatment. It is in the light of these standards and principles that the mission endeavoured to evaluate the situation of the workers of the occupied Arab territories. The mission was also guided, as were the previous missions, by the relevant standards of public international law, especially the 1907 Hague Convention and the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. This assessment must thus be seen in the context of the state of occupation of these territories.

STATE OF OCCUPATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SETTLEMENTS

9. The continuing state of occupation naturally casts a very special light on the economic and social problems of these territories which the mission has endeavoured to identify within its terms of reference. Earlier reports by the Director-General have invariably pointed out that, although the problems posed by occupation do not themselves come within the purview of the ILO, the values of equality, freedom and dignity on which the Organisation's standards are based are bound to be affected by the state of occupation and, therefore, that the special circumstances of the workers living under this regime must be borne in mind because of their repercussions on the field of labour.

10. Apart from the state of occupation as such, the specific situation of these workers is determined by the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. As early as 1979, the mission stated that it found it difficult to imagine that the settlement policy of the Israeli authorities could be pursued without conflicting with the objective of development by and for the local population and, therefore, without jeopardising their chances of employment. It therefore recommended that measures be taken vis-à-vis the development problems resulting from the Israeli settlements. In 1980 the resolution adopted by the Conference emphasised the implications of these settlements in connection with the situation of Arab workers. The mission therefore set out to take stock of developments in this respect from the standpoint of their impact on the labour problems and the general situation of the workers of the occupied Arab territories.

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11. Communications that the ILO has received from the Governments of Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic mention the establishment by Israel of a number of settlements during 1983. According to information supplied by the Government of Jordan, 19 new settlements were established in 1983, bringing the total to 200, of which 150 are on the West Bank (including 37 in East Jerusalem) and 14 in Gaza. The number of settlers on the West Bank alone (excluding East Jerusalem) was estimated to be around 39,000 at the end of 1983, an increase of about 11 per cent since 1982. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic mentions the existence in the Golan, in 1983, of 40 settlements with a population of 10,000 Israeli settlers. A new development in the settlement policy that is causing particular concern is the fact that more and more are being established or planned in Arab towns such as Hebron and Nablus and in the old part of Jerusalem. Moreover, the various incentives offered by the Government, a number of which have been cited in information received at the ILO from Arab sources, combined with the attraction which a suburban lifestyle has for many Israeli town-dwellers, have already resulted in a considerable change in the West Bank landscape. Consequently, most of the available information on this point refers to the "continuation of the consolidation of the Israeli presence in the occupied territories to the detriment of the civilian population"—to quote the report of the United Nations Special Committee to the 38th Session of the General Assembly.¹ There has been no fundamental change in the settlement projects outlined in the previous report (paragraph 11), despite the regular debate in Israel about the advisability of freezing the establishment of settlements in the light of the economic crisis currently facing the country. The cuts that may have been made in the budget have been presented as not signifying any change in the Government's attachment to its stated objectives; indeed, it has recently announced plans for the establishment of a number of new settlements on the West Bank.

12. The Israeli authorities have reiterated the position they have long maintained that the immediate impact of the settlements is altogether marginal and that they therefore have virtually no effect on the labour and employment problems of the Arab population. On the other hand, Arab sources maintain that they have considerable repercussions and a periodical report by the United States Government has once again drawn attention to the very substantial effect which the taking of land for settlements and for military use has had on the lives of Arab residents, many of whom have had to leave farming to become day labourers²—though this situation is seen by the Israeli authorities as following a

¹ *Report of the Special Committee to investigate Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the population of the occupied territories* (doc. A/38/409, para. 366). Following this report, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, on 15 December 1983, resolution 38/79, which "strongly condemns... [the] establishment of new Israeli settlements and expansion of the existing settlements on private and public Arab lands, and transfer of an alien population thereto", while reaffirming the illegal nature of these practices under international law.

² United States Department of State: *Country reports on human rights practices for 1983* (Washington, Feb. 1983), p. 1303.

natural pattern that is independent of the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories.

13. The reports of the Governments of Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic to the ILO cite a number of instances where land has been confiscated in order to establish or extend settlements or to build or widen roads. They make the point that for many of those affected this land is their only source of income. According to information supplied by the Government of Jordan, 41.7 per cent of all the land on the West Bank had by the end of 1983 been placed under Israeli administration, an increase of about 13 per cent over 1982. These estimates include all the land fenced off, seized or purchased for civilian and military purposes, and the information received from the Government of Jordan refers to a series of specific instances in 1983 of the Israeli authorities taking over land of varying legal status. According to the former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, 40 per cent of the land on the West Bank is liable to be used by Israel—enough to settle 200,000 people—and roughly a third of the Gaza Strip has been reserved for settlements.¹

14. The Israeli authorities have again denied the allegations that agricultural land and water resources are being diverted to the settlements. They state that so far 600,000 *dunams*² have been allocated, half of it on a long-term planning basis; this is public land and accounts for roughly 12 per cent of the total area of the West Bank. According to Ministry of Justice officials, there are strict controls to ensure that no private cultivated land is allocated for the establishment of settlements; only unregistered land that has not been cultivated for the past ten years may be declared state land and no proof of ownership is required if a person can prove that the land is used for cultivation. On the Palestinian side, on the other hand, the procedures employed and the allocations made are being challenged precisely on the grounds that the onus lies on the complainant to produce such proof, that land rights in the territories concerned are very complex and that there are gaps in the 1967 land register. Another complaint is that, by Military Order No. 1060, cases relating to land title were transferred in 1983 from the local Arab courts to a military tribunal. Consequently, as the aforementioned United States Government report points out, a large number of legal disputes have arisen between the administration and the Palestinian owners and farmers,³ which tend to find expression in strained relations with the Israeli settlers. It is in any case worth recalling the conclusion reached by the former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, already mentioned in the 1983 report, that all uncultivated land to which no property right can be invoked is now under the control of the Israeli authorities.

¹ *Jerusalem Post*, 4 Oct. 1983.

² The *dunam* is a measure of surface area equal to 0.24 acres.

³ *Country reports on human rights practices for 1983*, op. cit., p. 1297.

15. With regard to the settlements' economic activities, the mission noted last year that their effect on production and consumption in the areas concerned seemed limited, as they mainly involved the actual construction and establishment of the settlements. This finding was confirmed this year when the mission was informed that, except for construction materials and the temporary employment of local workers, all the technology and facilities needed for setting up a settlement are brought from Israel, without any attempt to find them on the spot, which means that there is no benefit whatsoever to the local economy. Economic circles in the occupied territories therefore see the situation as altogether negative from the standpoint of its repercussions on employment and the creation of development opportunities. The fact already noted in the past that the settlements tend to be enclaves now seems well established, as for example the financial assistance they receive from the Government indicates. According to observers,¹ the whole process is part of the industrialisation plan that the Israeli authorities drew up for the territories in 1980. The plan combines two basic features: the location of the Israeli industrial centres in the most densely Arab-populated regions of the West Bank, and the predominance of Israeli labour in the new industrial zones, in a proportion ranging from two to five times that of the Arab labour force. A total of 27,000 people residing in the settlements are expected to be employed by 1986, more than 60 per cent of them inside the West Bank—87 per cent of the latter in industry, tourism and social services.² The emphasis would seem above all to be on the creation of advanced technology production units that are unaffected by the constraints of the local employment market. Israel's industrialisation of the occupied territories could, in this way, help to transfer Israeli manpower from the country's services sector to production units in the territories.³ According to observers, however, it would be liable to encourage the proletarianisation of the Arab labour force.⁴ Moreover, if there were to be any confirmation of reports that Israeli planners intend to limit the development of Arab undertakings on the West Bank while aiming at a high rate of employment of Israelis in the settlements, the probable outcome is that the daily commuting of Arab workers of the occupied territories will not be reduced in absolute terms.⁵ Although these forecasts have not yet been fulfilled, they are nevertheless worth noting here, since their realisation is very closely bound up with the implementation of the officially announced projects under Israel's settlements policy in the occupied Arab territories.

¹ See H. Frisch: *Stagnation and frontier: Arab and Jewish industry in the West Bank* (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), pp. 81-82.

² See A. Hochstein: *Metropolitan links between Israel and the West Bank* (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), pp. 38-39.

³ As the example of an undertaking located in Ariel on the West Bank would suggest: *Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 13 Jan. 1984.

⁴ See Frisch, op. cit., p. 85.

⁵ See Hochstein, op. cit., pp. 44-49.

16. As far as agriculture is concerned, there is no doubt that the Israeli settlements and Arab villages are competing for the use of the land and water resources. The total cultivated area of the settlements accounts for 1.6 per cent of that of the West Bank; in the Jordan Valley, it is more than 25 per cent of the total. Furthermore, the irrigated area of the settlements is estimated at 42 per cent of the total irrigated area. In the Jordan Valley, the consumption of water for the irrigation of one *dunam* of land in the Jewish sector is double that of the Arab sector. Moreover, the restrictions imposed since 1967 on the drilling of new Arab wells for irrigation purposes are thought by observers to be harmful to the future development of West Bank agriculture since, given the control of the water resources by the Israeli authorities, new investment in irrigation to increase the cultivable area is unlikely to occur. The restrictions are in fact likely to result in a decline in arable land.¹ A number of Arab spokesmen whom the mission talked with further pointed out that, in practice, it was the local population that suffered and the settlements that benefited from the Israeli authorities' insistence on the need for the water resources to be utilised rationally.

MANPOWER AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

17. The population of the occupied territories in 1982 may be estimated at 1,310,900 persons, 1,178,900 for the territories of the West Bank and Gaza that are covered by Israeli statistics plus approximately 120,000 in East Jerusalem and between 11,000 and 12,000 in the Golan Heights. This includes Palestinians living in refugee camps in Gaza and on the West Bank who Arab sources claim are scheduled for resettlement by the Israeli authorities in an attempt to abolish their refugee status. The allegation is denied by the Israeli authorities.

18. The active population in 1982 was estimated at 225,200 persons, almost 87 per cent of whom were men. The labour force participation rate is still extremely low, as the active population accounts for only slightly more than one-third of the working-age population and less than 20 per cent of the total. The low overall participation rate is attributable to a number of known factors, including the very low female participation rate (less than 9 per cent in 1982 and less than 8 per cent during the period January-September 1983), the fact that the population is young, the school enrolment rates and the emigration of a population category with a naturally high participation rate (men in the 25-44 year age group).

19. The unemployment rate, which fell from 4.1 per cent in 1970 to 1 per cent in 1982, was 1.5 per cent of the active population (3,400 persons) in January-September 1983, the period for which the most recent data are

¹ See D. Kahan: *Agriculture and water in the West Bank and Gaza* (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), pp. 170-172.

available, a small increase over the corresponding period in 1982 (2,200 persons). The declining rate of growth since the middle of the 1970s continued during the early 1980s. There has been a levelling off of the gross national product on the West Bank, which was roughly the same in 1982 as in 1980, whereas in Gaza it rose on average by 2 per cent a year in 1981 and 1982. The annual rate of increase in per capita expenditure on consumption was around 1 to 2 per cent on the West Bank and 1 per cent in Gaza between 1980 and 1982. Taking the period 1968-82 as a whole, the annual average growth of the gross national product in these two territories was 10 per cent (8 per cent per capita) and that of private consumption 8 per cent (6 per cent per capita). Data supplied this year point to the same substantial gap between the gross domestic product and the gross national product which is one of the features of overall growth in the occupied territories, where a quarter of the gross national product of the West Bank and a third of that of Gaza are created outside the area.

20. A number of factors have fuelled the fears voiced on a number of occasions by several Palestinian representatives the mission spoke to that the level of employment of the labour force of the occupied territories is on the decline. While emphasising that Israeli unemployment figures in fact reflect only the percentage of Arab workers of the occupied territories who have unsuccessfully requested a permit to work in Israel, they point to the rising unemployment among Arab workers employed in Israel, which they say is due to the difficulties facing the Israeli economy. It is not easy to evaluate this phenomenon accurately, particularly since—as was explained to the mission—many jobseekers are disinclined to admit that they are unemployed. The building recession in Israel and its possible impact on the sector's demand for workers from the occupied territories is a further cause for concern. The mission's various consultations also drew attention to the negative repercussions of the new immigration policy pursued by the Gulf States as regards employment and of the restrictions that Jordan recently imposed on the residence of young Palestinians in the country. The decline of the Arab tourism sector, together with the stagnation of local industrialisation, add to the list of problems facing Arab workers of the occupied territories. Particularly alarming, because it concerns a vital aspect of the development of these territories, is the situation of the skilled labour force, as the number of graduates of West Bank institutions has increased while the offers of employment corresponding to their qualifications have remained stationary.

21. However, as has already been suggested, emigration is no longer an easy answer to this lack of openings, and there have been frequent reports of university-trained workers finding themselves obliged to take up unskilled work in Israel. The 200 or more unemployed engineers on the West Bank that the mission was told about certainly pose an unfortunate paradox in an area whose modern production sectors are so undeveloped. The Israeli authorities, on the other hand, argue that the increase in the number of workers of the occupied territories employed in Israel during 1983, in spite of the country's economic

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recession, is a positive sign. However, although unemployment among these workers is still quite low, the level of employment in the occupied territories is virtually unchanged, with the latest estimates showing it as 139,800 persons for the period January-September 1983 against 141,800 for the same period in 1982 and 152,700 in 1970. This is particularly surprising considering that there has been some increase in total employment of Arab workers of the occupied territories, from 220,700 in 1982 to 225,000 in 1983 compared with 173,300 in 1970. In other words, there is no sign of an end to the decline in employment opportunities on the spot that was observed between 1970 and 1981, let alone of the trend being reversed. Finally, the sectoral structure of employment in the occupied territories shows that the share of agricultural employment in the total has continued to fall, from almost 39 per cent in 1970 to only just over a quarter in 1982-83 (26 per cent), that the share of industrial employment is more or less stationary (about 16 per cent in 1982-83) and that the services sector takes the largest share, with nearly 48 per cent or almost half of total employment in the occupied territories in 1983. The mission had already observed this excessive share of the services sector in 1979, in some ways characteristic of the economic stagnation of the occupied territories. Finally, the construction sector increased its share from 8.4 per cent in 1970 to roughly 10 per cent in 1982-83.

22. The small share of employment in the industrial sector is a reflection of the persistent lack of development in this area. Jordan's report to the ILO refers to various obstacles that the Israeli authorities have placed in the way of normal production and trade activities in the occupied Arab territories during 1983. According to this information, they have closed down businesses in several places and have ordered production workshops to be torn down, sometimes with no explanation at all and sometimes on a variety of grounds such as the organisation of strikes in the town concerned or the location of a particular establishment. Security arrangements, especially the curfew on the centre of Hebron for over two weeks, have also meant considerable financial loss for Arab businesses. The tax collection campaigns aimed at these establishments and at production enterprises have moreover been described as particularly brutal and damaging, particularly where late payment of taxes has caused many businesses to be closed down. The mission's talks with the representatives of several chambers of commerce have confirmed these reports. They have also shown the depth of the gloom over the economic situation pervading business circles in the occupied territories, who have drawn attention to a number of tell-tale signs such as the increased tax burden on operators, the lack of any banking system capable of encouraging and sustaining the development of the Arab industrial sector in the area, and the cost of transporting goods over the bridges between the West Bank and Jordan, which entails the payment of various taxes. Reference has also been made to the way the Israeli authorities have hindered the implementation of certain specifically West Bank industrial projects.

23. As long ago as 1978, the mission sent by the Director-General came to the conclusion that an active investment and employment policy was needed in

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the occupied Arab territories corresponding to their specific needs and to those of their inhabitants. A recommendation was accordingly made in 1979 that the municipal authorities responsible for local affairs be encouraged to take development action, in other words that Israel should at least refrain from any interference in the efforts of these authorities to carry out economic and social development projects and, better still, take positive action to facilitate the success of such initiatives. However, it is only too obvious that, because of the limited means at their disposal, the municipalities still seem to find it very difficult to undertake any substantial investment directly. The continuing restrictions on the inflow of foreign capital naturally undermine the execution of development projects for which, as we have seen, there is no appropriate credit institution. And there is now the added requirement that any money transferred from abroad must be deposited with the Development Fund administered by the Israeli civil administration, a measure which would seem already to have had the effect of discouraging such transfers. As to the civil administration's development budget, press reports indicate that it has increased by 250 per cent since 1981 and that Israel will contribute 42 per cent of the area's total budget for 1983-84 a substantial part of which also comes from taxes collected from the local population.¹ Yet the authorities recognise that most of the development budget is spent on infrastructure and that it is too small to assist the area's industrial development. According to figures provided by the Israeli authorities, gross domestic fixed capital formation from public sources on the West Bank—roughly 10 per cent of total fixed capital formation—was 20 per cent up in 1981-82, after a drop of 16 per cent in 1980-81; in Gaza, after a 15 per cent decline in 1980-81, it remained at the same level. The municipal representatives currently in office whom the mission encountered claimed that certain major projects in their municipalities had been blocked. Finally, elected municipal officials in a number of the biggest towns in the occupied territories such as Gaza, Nablus, Ramallah and, since 1983, Hebron have been relieved of their duties and replaced by Israeli officials. This being so, the representatives of the population are inevitably excluded from the decision-making process as regards public expenditure.

24. As to private investment in the occupied Arab territories, data supplied by the Israeli authorities indicate that gross domestic fixed capital formation in the private sector of the West Bank dropped on average by 8 per cent in 1981 and 1982, after a similar decline in 1980. This is presumably attributable to the reduction in capital formation in the building sector (8 to 9 per cent in 1981 and 1982 and 6 per cent in 1980 and 1981), combined with a fall in capital formation in the machinery and equipment sector—which accounts for about 20 per cent of private-sector capital formation—of 6 per cent on average in 1981 and 1982 and 18 per cent in 1980 and 1981. In Gaza, on the contrary, there has been a slight increase in private-sector capital formation of around 2 to 3 per cent since

¹ *Jerusalem Post*, 27 Oct. and 4 Nov. 1983.

1980-81. Reference has already been made in the past to the traditional weakness of the industrial sector in the occupied Arab territories, whose share of the gross domestic product was under 9 per cent in 1982, down about three points since 1978. The reasons for this have already been explained in previous reports: in addition to the fact that the industrial sector in the occupied territories suffers from a primitive structure and a long history of low productivity and poor competitiveness, other factors are involved that stem from its dependency on the Israeli economy, the obstacles already mentioned that the Israeli authorities have created to capital investment and the construction of new factories which is restricted through a number of regulations.¹ Similarly, the severe restrictions that Jordan has imposed on West Bank exports have inevitably deprived local industry of a natural market where its products would be fairly competitive. From the very beginning, and as is already known, the Israeli authorities have for a number of reasons limited their support for the industrial sector of the occupied territories to a few small loans and export subsidies; yet for several years now even these meagre loans have come to an end. However one looks at the situation, there does not seem to be much hope of any significant change in the continuing stagnation of the industrial sector of the occupied territories, unless it is allowed to function in a more favourable environment, especially from the tax and financial standpoint.

25. An examination of the sectoral structure of the economy of the occupied territories shows how the agricultural sector's share of the domestic product has declined, from almost 34 per cent in 1978 to 27 per cent in 1982. Agricultural employment, which accounted for nearly 39 per cent of the total in 1970, was nevertheless still the main source of employment in 1982, with close to 26 per cent. The reasons for this trend are fairly well known and include the combined effect of attractive salaries in Israel and the Gulf States and the mechanisation of agriculture in the occupied territories. The Israeli authorities point to the progress made since 1967 in the agricultural sector of the occupied territories, as regards both the advance in technology and the parallel increase in production, productivity and the farmers' income, all of which they attribute to the direct and indirect contacts established over the years between the territories and Israel. They particularly emphasise the 40 per cent increase in the value added in agriculture between 1976 and 1982 on the West Bank and the doubling of agricultural production in real terms between 1970 and 1980. As in the past, the authorities claim that the West Bank agricultural sector has not suffered from the reduction in the labour force employed, as can be seen from the fact that the agricultural workers' earnings and the owners' income both increased regularly between 1970 and 1981 — by 6 per cent per year in the first case and 8.5 per cent in the second. On the other hand, Arab sources and information obtained from Palestinian circles draw attention to the difficult situation of agriculture in the occupied territories: first, because of the lack of capital and credit institutions,

¹ *Country reports on human rights practices for 1983*, op. cit., p. 1303.

the sector is unable to introduce capital-intensive crop processes; second, agricultural products from the occupied territories do not have free access to the Israeli market whereas there is nothing to prevent Israeli products from flooding the local market. In many cases exportation to external markets, which is subject to various taxes,¹ may be impossible for a number of reasons deriving, for example, from Israeli foreign trade objectives that run counter to the interests of production in the occupied territories, or from quite extraneous considerations. The blocking of exports to Egypt of citrus fruit, which is the principal produce of Gaza, and the difficulty of exporting agricultural products from the West Bank to Arab markets are typical of the kind of problems which farmers in the occupied territories encounter in the search for outlets for their produce. In addition, military orders issued in 1983 have restricted the production of certain foodstuffs by Jordan Valley farmers—1,700 of whom are already said to have suffered from the measure—and have made prior authorisation from the authorities necessary to plant certain crops on the West Bank. These measures, which Israeli sources explain by the need to conserve water resources and avoid overproduction, have naturally been interpreted by those affected as a sign of Israeli protectionism. The recent government decision to include Arab farms in the occupied territories in Israel's farming master plan follows exactly the same pattern.² The situation is compounded by the confiscation of land described elsewhere in this report and the problem of water resources which is discussed in connection with the settlement policy. Finally, the activity of co-operatives, which the Israeli authorities see as encouraging, is on the contrary believed to be sluggish, if not dormant, by certain Palestinian sources.

26. According to Ministry of Labour statistics, the wages of workers employed in the occupied Arab territories were 88.6 per cent of those of workers employed in Israel over the period January-September 1983, as against 90.5 per cent for the same period in 1982. The gap of roughly 10 per cent between the wages of these two categories has therefore undergone little change since 1981, whereas it was still 20 per cent in 1979 and 45 per cent in 1970. One must, however, bear in mind certain observations contained in a study published by the Bank of Israel,³ particularly as they relate to the persistence of both a structural gap deriving from the different characteristics—such as age and education—of the labour force employed in the two situations and a large industrial gap reflecting the weakness of that sector in the occupied territories. According to data supplied by the Israeli authorities on nominal wages and consumer prices, the Arab wages in the occupied territories rose in 1983 by 6.6 per cent in real terms on the West Bank and by 3.5 per cent in Gaza. However, Arab sources and some of the people with whom the mission talked emphasised

¹ On the Israeli side, it recently proved necessary, in order to avoid a glut on the local market, to abolish the tariff on the export of certain products to Jordan. See *Jerusalem Post*, 14 Mar. 1984.

² See *Jerusalem Post*, 14 Mar. 1984.

³ Raphael Meron: *Economic development in Judea-Samaria and the Gaza district: Economic growth and structural change 1970-1980* (Jerusalem. Bank of Israel Research Department, 1982).

the negative repercussions on Palestinian consumers and on intermediaries of the price increases and the devaluation of the Israeli currency. Several specific examples were given of a drop in purchasing power and of declining standards of living that make it increasingly difficult to purchase even such staples as food. Another complaint is about the impact of the value-added tax on consumer prices. It is generally felt that wage increases are not keeping up with rising prices and that there has actually been a drop in real earnings. It must in any case be borne in mind that consumer prices on the West Bank and in Gaza are tied to the inflation rate in Israel, which in 1983 was around 190 per cent, and that the occupied territories have no system of indexation comparable to that used in Israel.

Vocational training

27. In its earlier reports the mission has consistently made the point that a coherent employment policy is only possible if an effort is made at the same time to provide vocational training that is planned in terms of the specific needs of the local economy so that it can benefit properly. The information provided this year by the Israeli authorities on the Ministry of Labour's training programmes in the occupied territories suggests that this is now being given very close attention. By the end of 1983 the 27 vocational training centres that have been in operation since 1968, several of which the mission visited, had provided training for a total of 52,000 people—though the 19 West Bank centres still turn out only slightly more than half the total for an active population 60 per cent higher than that of Gaza. Between 1968 and 1983 there was roughly the same proportion of trainees in industry and in construction (about 20 per cent in each case). Almost a third received training in transport and various other unspecified occupations, and 16 per cent of the total were trained in more specifically feminine activities (dressmaking and hairdressing). Five new courses were introduced in 1983 that seem to be specially geared to local requirements. Instructor training courses were also organised in 1983 to improve present standards and the centres were provided with new equipment. While the mission was in Israel a study was being made of the requirements of undertakings in the occupied territories, with an eye to the syllabus of future courses. In spite of these indications that the authorities are making an effort in the field of vocational training, however, other factors point to the need for the whole structure of the training programmes to be looked at again. In practice, the level of skills of the local labour force continues to serve essentially for semi-skilled employment in the Israeli economy, and the decision to carry out the study referred to above is therefore certainly welcome. In a centre it visited on the West Bank, for example, the mission noted that only 10 per cent of those who had completed their training had managed to find work on the West Bank itself, while the remainder had gone to work in roughly equal proportions in Israel and in the Arab countries. In another centre it saw in Gaza, the proportion of former trainees employed locally was barely 20 per cent. There is therefore an urgent need for manpower resources and requirements to be geared

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specifically to the development of the occupied Arab territories. Moreover, despite some progress, the rate of increase in the total number of trainees—8 per cent between 1981 and 1983—is still fairly low. However, the promotion of the kind of training referred to in the two previous reports, which concentrates on industrial and transport occupations rather than on construction work, together with the effort to provide women with equal opportunities and to continue vocational rehabilitation activities for the handicapped, is a positive feature of Israel's recent approach to vocational training for Palestinian workers.

28. Last year's report emphasised the need for the authorities to encourage the regular and autonomous operation of the various training and teaching institutions in the occupied territories and, in particular, to interpret as narrowly as possible the notions of public order and security. However, the regulations based on the latter were still being strictly applied in 1983. University establishments continue to be closed down, sometimes for long periods as in Bethlehem and Bir Zeit, and on several occasions various measures were again taken—which numerous reports received by the mission described as involving searches, fines, suspension without pay of teachers in schools closed by the authorities, dismissal and arrest of teachers, expulsion of students and exclusion from examinations—that jeopardise the normal completion of the students' education. Reports were also received of the enforcement of Military Order No. 854, which empowers the authorities to supervise such matters as the appointment of teachers, and of threats to expel teachers not living in the occupied territories who refuse to sign a statement that they do not support certain organisations defined by the law. Generally speaking, the argument that these steps are taken in the interests of security is felt to be groundless by the Palestinian students and teachers concerned, who see them on the contrary as a deliberate attempt to restrict their academic freedom and disrupt the smooth running of the education system. The result of this situation, which is more particularly the domain of UNESCO, is in any case to undermine earlier efforts in the field of education that had led to the creation of a number of higher education establishments on the West Bank.

Trade union rights in the occupied territories

29. The mission sent by the Office has devoted particular attention to the trade union situation in the occupied territories ever since its first visit in 1978. For the ILO the recognition and effective exercise of trade union rights is universally relevant and, as such, applicable to the workers of the occupied territories as it is in Israel. Last year, the mission recommended, in the light of its observations, that the legal prohibition placed on trade unions to carry out political activities should not be interpreted in such a way as to undermine the fundamental principles laid down by ILO standards with regard to the exercise of trade union rights.

30. Since its last report the Office has received a number of communications from Arab trade unions and organisations referring to various violations of

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freedom of association and trade union rights in the occupied territories. The allegations mainly concern the searching of trade union premises by the military authorities and the confiscation of union files and documents, the closing down of union headquarters, the impossibility of receiving any assistance or documentation from outside sources and the application of the amendment to Jordanian labour legislation which, *inter alia*, empowers the authorities to supervise the submission of candidatures for election to trade union executive bodies. The complaints also refer to the persistent refusal of the authorities to register many new trade unions; on this point, the authorities have in fact stated that there are 140 active unions in the territories that have not been registered. Other cases brought to the attention of the Office have to do with repressive action against individual union officials and members. These measures, which are taken in pursuance of the emergency legislation promulgated under the British Mandate, consist of arrest, detention and various restrictions on freedom of movement such as sometimes repeated periods of house arrest. According to the United States Department of State's report on human rights which refers to an Amnesty International document on the subject, these restrictions, which involve no formal charges and are ordered by the military authorities with no requirement for judicial approval, often make it difficult for those affected to practise their profession or to pursue their course of study.¹

31. The mission was informed by the West Bank General Federation of Trade Unions of the searching of its Nablus headquarters by the military authorities, followed by the confiscation of union records and the interrogation of a number of persons, which the Israeli authorities justify on the grounds of the Federation's involvement in political activities. During the mission's talks with representatives of East Jerusalem trade unions, they reasserted their determination, already mentioned last year, to remain members of the West Bank General Federation of Trade Unions; they, too, mentioned cases of union premises being searched by the authorities.

32. The mission passed on to the Israeli authorities a list of names of 33 union leaders and members who were allegedly arrested in 1983 or early 1984 and three other union leaders under house arrest on the West Bank or in East Jerusalem. A list of names of workers and union officials allegedly arrested or imprisoned in the Golan was likewise communicated to the authorities, who did not feel called upon to take them into consideration in view of the Israeli Government's position vis-à-vis this territory already stated above. The Israeli authorities assured the mission that the relevant information would be sent on in the near future.

33. The number of registered trade unions has not changed since 1982; 28 on the West Bank (not including East Jerusalem) and seven in Gaza. As on the occasion of earlier missions, the Israeli authorities recalled that local legislation concerning freedom of association and the right to bargain was still applicable

¹ *Country reports on human rights practices for 1983*, *op cit.*, p. 1296.

and that workers employed on the West Bank and in Gaza could, by law, be represented by their own trade unions. They repeated their assertion that there was no interference in trade union activities unless these were likely to threaten the security of the region for which they were responsible.

34. In Gaza, which the mission visited, trade union activity appeared to be very limited, judging from the membership of the seven unions affiliated to the Gaza Trade Union Federation: 464 members in all, or 1 per cent of all workers employed in Gaza. The authorities have, admittedly, met some of the requests which the Federation communicated to the mission last year: they have provided it with a plot of land on which to build offices, granted financial facilities for the purpose and authorised the transfer of funds. Obviously, though, what seems vital to the effective exercise of trade union rights in the territory and to the existence of any genuine union protection for the roughly 46,000 workers employed there is the authorisation to accept new members, and this has still not been granted. Two other requests—the possibility of managing their own budget and the freedom to exercise trade union activities—have not yet been met, although discussions have been held on the former.

35. Past reports have consistently stressed the fundamental impact that the state of occupation has on the general context of union activities and that under the circumstances political and trade union considerations inevitably overlap. The mission must, however, once again insist on the corollary to this, which is that the legal prohibition on trade unions to carry out political activities must not be interpreted in such a way as to restrict significantly the organisations' possibilities of trade union action, limit trade union rights or hinder the normal defence by the trade unions of the occupational interests of their members. More generally, it will be recalled that in 1970 the International Labour Conference identified certain civil liberties in one of its resolutions as being essential for the normal exercise of trade union rights: namely, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of assembly, the right to freedom and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, the right to a fair trial by an independent and impartial tribunal and the right to protection of the property of trade union organisations. In 1983 the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations made a series of recommendations along the same lines that were referred to in last year's report (paragraph 55). Finally, several persons with whom the mission spoke mentioned the desirability of the ILO providing assistance in workers' and trade union education, an area in which the Office has already offered its services in the past and is fully prepared to respond to any request it receives, as is indicated below.

Labour regulations and medical care

36. The Israeli authorities have communicated to the Office a certain amount of information concerning the enforcement of labour regulations in the occupied territories from which it is apparent, in particular, that virtually all the establishments covered are obliged to take out employment injury insurance and

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that labour inspectors carried out 6,000 visits in the occupied Arab territories during 1983. In addition to the enforcement of labour regulations, the work of these inspectors includes the provision of assistance to workers in the exercise of their social rights. According to Arab sources, however, the working conditions in Israeli undertakings located in the occupied territories leave much to be desired from the standpoint of their Arab employees. As to the application of the ordinances respecting the minimum age of employment in Gaza and on the West Bank, the Israeli authorities state that the situation is quite encouraging as only eight cases had to be brought against offenders by the labour inspectors in 1983. It would seem that the employment of young Arab workers of the occupied territories in Israel is a matter for rather more concern.

37. As far as medical care is concerned, workers of the occupied territories employed in Israel are able to receive scheduled benefits under collective agreements for themselves and their dependants, and the Israeli authorities state that nearly 200,000 residents of the occupied territories are thus covered through employment in Israel. The special voluntary sickness insurance scheme introduced in the occupied territories in 1978 currently covers 43 per cent of the population of the West Bank and 64 per cent of that of Gaza, according to information supplied by the authorities. Taking into account the residents employed in Israel, this would mean that 68 per cent of the population now have medical coverage. One category of residents—pensioners, the members of whose families are not insured—would, however, seem to be in difficult straits as they have to use part of their usually meagre resources to pay for such coverage, and the mission felt that the possibility should be considered of waiving their contributions. A number of young residents, moreover, apparently do not feel any need to join a voluntary insurance scheme, even though the monthly premiums are low (about \$8 per family in Gaza and \$12 on the West Bank).

38. According to other sources, 40 per cent of the population of the occupied territories still have no insurance coverage and would therefore be hard put to it to meet the high cost of admission to hospital (\$100 a day) which, though more or less the same as in Israel, is beyond the means of a large segment of the population. As to the general situation of health services in the territories, the mission's attention was drawn to certain facts, some positive—such as the extension of the services of the Sheefa Hospital in Gaza which it visited—and others a matter of some concern—such as the fact that about 200 doctors on the West Bank are unemployed and that a hospice for uninsured and destitute Arabs in East Jerusalem is in danger of being closed down. Developments in the health conditions of the population of the occupied territories are kept under careful scrutiny by the World Health Organisation, and reference is made to the report of its Special Committee of Experts on the subject.¹

¹ See Thirty-sixth World Health Assembly: *Health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine*, Report of the Special Committee of Experts appointed to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories (doc. A36/14, 28 Apr. 1983), para. 4.3.1. See also WHO resolution WHA 36.27 of 16 May 1983 and the reports by the Government of Israel (A36/INF. DOC./3) and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (A36/INF. DOC./7).

39. The mission's talks in East Jerusalem, especially with the Arab Chamber of Commerce and the Trade Union Workers of Hotel and Restaurant, confirmed the fears it voiced last year. The situation in the tourism sector, which plays a dominant role in Jerusalem's economy because of its many spin-off effects, has shown no sign of improvement over the past year; on the contrary, a tax system that is seen as arbitrary and applied without consideration for those involved adds to the costs of the businesses whose activities, at best, have been barely maintained. The employers' and workers' representatives once again spoke of discrimination against Arab interests, mainly in the form of persistent attempts to direct much of the tourism flow to West Jerusalem, to the detriment of Arab services and hotel facilities. The Office has for example received information about the use of pressure and harassment—cited by the union of Jordanian tourist guides—against the 70 still active Arab tourist guides to make them give up their occupations so that Israeli guides can benefit; it is also alleged that the authorities do not recognise the diplomas issued by the school of tourism of Bethlehem.

40. Unemployment in East Jerusalem is moreover said to be on the increase, largely because of the reduction in construction work throughout the town and its total stoppage in the eastern sector where the authorities no longer issue building permits, in addition to the decline in tourism. It must be remembered, furthermore, that West Bank workers employed in East Jerusalem, of whom there are a great many in the hotel trade, have no unemployment protection.

41. Judging from the mission's talks, the economic situation of the Arab town would seem to be sufficiently depressed as to provide cause for alarm. It is estimated that some 85 per cent of the East Jerusalem population do not have even the minimum needed to live without outside help. The mission was informed of a recent initiative by the union of hotel workers—representing 1,350 members—which has set up a medical health insurance fund that any Arab workers employed in Jerusalem may join on payment of a contribution of 3 Jordanian dinars, an additional dinar being contributed by the hotels for each paid employee. This fund, which already has 600 members, is an attempt to respond to the special circumstances of workers employed in this branch of activity in Jerusalem: whereas normally no contribution for medical care is deducted from the wages of those employed in East Jerusalem, it is automatic for persons working in the western part of the town, in exchange for benefits that are said to be non-existent.

42. The situation the mission encountered in the Golan reflects the persistent problems posed by Israel's unilateral application of its "law, jurisdiction and administration" as far as respect for the cultural and national identity of the workers involved is concerned. It seems to be true, for instance, that, even though they refuse Israeli citizenship, most of the residents have to have Israeli identity cards without which their day-to-day life, including their working life, would inevitably be disrupted; yet Arab sources (mainly Syrian) report that the Israeli authorities continue to adopt all kinds of measures that

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undermine the population's economic liberties in the area. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic also refers to discrimination in favour of Israeli settlers in the agricultural sector and, more generally, to the negative repercussions of the establishment of Israeli settlements on the activities and income of the local populations, as well as on the area's demographic composition—repercussions which the planned intensification of the settlement policy is bound to aggravate. One can cite instances of the confiscation of land for security reasons with little or no compensation, the diverting of water resources and the introduction of high taxes on irrigation, obstacles to grazing rights and stock-breeding in general, the compulsory marketing of agricultural products through Israeli intermediaries at low prices fixed by them, discriminatory taxes and restrictions on freedom of movement towards the West Bank. Some local representatives were also worried about the possibility of preserving their Arab identity—which is particularly threatened in the field of education by the fact that young people cannot study in the Syrian Arab Republic, by the laying off of many teachers and by the contents of syllabuses—and of maintaining family contacts. Others repeated the requests they had voiced during the mission's previous visit, which have still not been met, for bigger schools and for the creation of undertakings, especially so as to promote the employment of women in the villages.

Technical assistance to the population of the occupied Arab territories

43. Two types of measures are examined in this section: the assistance provided through ILO participation in the UNDP's programme of assistance to the Palestinian people, and the assistance provided directly by the ILO.

44. The ILO has been involved from the beginning in the UNDP's programme of assistance to the Palestinian people and participated, during the project formulation stage, in the drawing up of initial projects in the fields of labour and training in the occupied territories namely (i) specific training in industrial management; (ii) the promotion of vocational and technical education, particularly for women; (iii) the development of co-operatives; (iv) the study of social security systems; (v) assistance to trade union organisations.

45. Amongst the projects mentioned above, one is operational, concerning the promotion of vocational and technical education. Its aim is to expand the existing vocational training facilities offered by the centres of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), government services or private institutions to enable them to meet urgent needs. Additional premises have been built and the necessary equipment purchased and delivered. The courses provided with UNDP assistance include two for radio and television repairers on the West Bank and a similar one in the Gaza Strip; there are also a course for repairers of air-conditioning equipment, refrigerators and household appliances and two training courses for women's jobs. Another project, which is reaching the implementation stage, is for specific training to meet urgent needs in the field of industrial management. The ILO

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International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training in Turin is directly involved in the implementation of this project, which aims at enabling about 20 participants selected from undertakings in the occupied territories to improve their managerial abilities and to acquire the necessary technological know-how, especially with a view to the replacement of production equipment, in order to improve the competitiveness of manufactured projects on the West Bank and in Gaza. Those eligible for this specialised training are owners or managers of undertakings in the region employing at least ten persons in one of the following branches of activity: food, textiles, metal products, non-metallic minerals (tiles, cement blocks) and footwear.

46. The other three above-mentioned projects in the field of labour initially submitted could not be included in the programme because of limited funds; in view of their importance, it would undoubtedly be desirable for them to be implemented in the near future, provided the necessary funding is made available. The first of these is the project of assistance to trade union organisations whose purpose is to award fellowships to Palestinian trade unionists to increase their ability to run trade unions and to exercise the relevant responsibilities (cost estimated at \$36,000 in 1979). The assistance provided in this field could also contribute towards promoting equality of treatment in practice for workers employed in Israel, through the more active participation of better-trained workers from the occupied territories in works committees. This project would appear to be in line with the wishes expressed to the mission concerning the organisation of seminars on training for trade unionists in the occupied territories, enabling them to play a fully effective role in defending workers' interests. The second project provided for the appointment of a specialist to carry out a study on the nature and scope of the kind of social security system that could be envisaged and developed in the occupied territories; its cost was estimated at \$25,000 in 1979. Finally, the project concerning development of co-operatives on the West Bank and in Gaza envisaged the setting up of training programmes at all levels and assistance in defining teaching methods and in the development and management of consumer, marketing, rural electrification and research co-operatives (cost estimated at \$650,000 in 1979).

47. Apart from the participation of the Turin Centre in the implementation of the UNDP projects of assistance to the Palestinian people, the Director-General has offered the services of ILO experts, as mentioned earlier. Consequently, an ILO expert in the vocational training of women was made available to the UNDP to implement a project of assistance to Palestinian women's institutions. This project is designed to expand the vocational training opportunities offered by these institutions and by Palestinian community development centres. Following the expert's first mission to Israel and the occupied territories to formulate the project, the ILO declared its willingness to collaborate with the UNDP in finalising project documents outlining a programme of suitable assistance to Palestinian women in fields within its

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competence, such as the promotion of long-term vocational training facilities at more advanced levels (technical schools for girls on the West Bank), the promotion of vocational training courses in income-producing skills (at the elementary and intermediate levels), the reinforcement and expansion of the educational activities of the best-organised and most effective women's organisations, and the support of handicraft production activities experiencing difficulties or threatened with disappearance. In addition, the ILO is prepared to consider carefully other possible ways of increasing its technical contribution to the UNDP's programme of assistance to the Palestinian people.

48. As in the previous biennium, the Director-General has granted an additional credit out of the Organisation's regular budget for 1984-85 to finance technical assistance projects for the population of the occupied territories. Isolated assistance activities in this respect have already been implemented in the past, especially by the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training which has provided assistance in the form of vocational training fellowships to Palestinians from higher training institutions on the West Bank. Several fellowships offered in 1983 were not taken up but the invitation remains open to make as much use as possible of the opportunities provided by the Turin Centre's programmes; indeed, these are likely to be of interest to a wide range of occupational categories, since they provide training opportunities for officers of trade unions, employers' organisations and co-operatives, or in the technical spheres of special interest to the region (in particular solar energy technology and its applications and the preservation of foodstuffs). Proposals for candidatures for programmes of this type, of which a detailed list is given in the 1982 report (paragraph 66), would gladly be examined within the framework of a suitable procedure.

49. As already mentioned, the mission had the opportunity to hold lengthy discussions with the representatives of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce on the West Bank and the chambers of commerce in East Jerusalem, Hebron and Nablus and to meet several individual employers on the West Bank and in Gaza. Those attending these meetings stressed the difficult situation with which employers' organisations in the occupied territories were faced. In this context, it seems that such organisations could benefit from assistance aimed at consolidating the development of their services, in view of the worrying instability of the economic environment. The ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities is at the disposal of the chambers of commerce and Palestinian employers to examine with them the desirability of providing assistance, which could take the form of fellowships, further training of managerial personnel or the organisation of seminars.

50. Finally, mention should be made here of the services which the Office can provide in assessing needs in the field of vocational training and social security and in drawing up legislation on equality of opportunity and treatment, the last of which is particularly relevant in the context of the employment in Israel of Arab workers from the occupied territories.

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THE EMPLOYMENT IN ISRAEL OF ARAB WORKERS FROM
THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

51. Last year, the mission noted an upward trend in the volume of employment in Israel of Arab workers from the occupied territories, which has since been confirmed. The proportion of residents of the occupied Arab territories employed in Israel increased in 1983 (January-September) when it reached 38 per cent—or more than 85,000 workers—as compared with nearly 36 per cent in 1982. The proportions in each territory were as follows: 33 per cent of the labour force of the West Bank (47,000 workers) and nearly 46 per cent of that of Gaza (38,000 workers) were employed in Israel in 1983. Estimates for the last four months of 1983 gave the figure of 92,000 workers, an increase which has been attributed to the decline in activities and demand in the Gulf States.¹ The volume of employment of workers from the occupied territories in Israel therefore remains high in proportion to their total. Similarly, the number of workers from the occupied territories as a proportion of the total employed in Israel rose slightly in 1983, when it accounted for about 6 per cent of the latter. For their part, Arab and Palestinian sources estimate that about two-thirds of the workers from the Arab territories are employed in one way or another in the service of the Israeli economy, taking into account subcontracting in the occupied territories and employment in Israeli agricultural and industrial units located in these territories.

52. The level of employment in Israel of workers from the occupied Arab territories therefore remained unaffected in 1983 either by the state of the Israeli economy or by a persistent average unemployment rate of more than 5 per cent of the active population. According to the Director of the Employment Service, there is a monthly turnover rate of about 5 per cent amongst workers from the occupied territories, as those leaving their jobs are replaced by other workers from the territories of whom there is a growing supply, in spite of the wish expressed by the authorities that attempts should be made to replace them by Israelis. This situation illustrates the continuing lack of real possibilities of substitution between Israeli workers and Arab workers from the occupied territories as the latter continue to do the jobs rejected by the former.

53. During the first three quarters of 1983, the proportion of residents of the occupied Arab territories employed in the building sector somewhat declined. Nevertheless, in spite of this relative downward trend, the concentration of workers from the occupied territories in Israel remains the highest in this sector, accounting for 50 per cent in 1983 (as compared with 54 per cent in 1970 and 52 per cent in 1982). This is explained by the high demand for unskilled building workers in Israel and also by the fact that this type of work makes it possible to maintain a marginal agricultural activity in the home territories. At the same

¹ It should be borne in mind that these data are relative because they combine the known number of workers regularly registered by the employment services and an estimate of the number of workers irregularly employed, which varies according to the source.

time, it can be noted that, in the sectoral structure of employment, the relative downward trend in employment of these workers in Israeli agriculture (less than 13 per cent in 1983) has been maintained, as has the upward trend in the proportion of these workers employed in industry, as pointed out in the previous report (nearly 19 per cent of workers from the occupied territories were employed in the Israeli industrial sector in 1983).

54. The Israeli authorities recalled once again the principles of the government policy regarding employment in Israel of Arab workers from the occupied territories; the first is to ensure full employment for these workers, who are free to seek employment on the Israeli labour market, which is viewed as supplementing the local market, and the second is to guarantee them equality of treatment with Israeli workers as regards wages, social benefits and working conditions. Since 1968, a network of employment offices has been entrusted with implementing this policy, the main features of which are as follows: compulsory hiring through the above-mentioned offices, compulsory registration of workers and issue of a work permit for a given job, and payment of wages and social benefits through the payments division of the Employment Service. In addition, collective agreements and cost-of-living adjustments are applied to all workers alike. Finally, the policy of the Histadrut (General Federation of Labour of Israel) with respect to the Arab workers from the occupied territories employed in Israel is officially based on the principle of equal rights. The examination of a number of areas covered by the recommendations made by the Director-General since 1979 should now reveal to what extent this principle is applied in practice.

Irregular employment

55. The conclusion drawn from last year's evaluation of government policy to combat irregular employment in Israel was that the number and proportion of irregular workers had not changed and that the phenomenon was, to say the least, persistent. This year, the situation still appears to be the same. Admittedly, the Israeli authorities informed the mission once again that they were doing their utmost to encourage regular employment and were committed to regularising situations after the event without prejudice to those concerned. In this context they pointed out that, in 1983, the Government had continued applying various measures to curb irregular employment, especially by stepping up road checks, information campaigns and the regular distribution of brochures in Arabic to inform workers of their rights and advantages if they sought employment through regular channels. A total of 350 persons have been appointed as inspectors in this field, while the penalties ensuing from violations of the law have become stricter and some 240 employers have been brought before the courts. Furthermore, the findings of an inquiry carried out by the authorities in 1983 on the attitudes of workers from the occupied territories show that the latter attach considerable importance to the advisory role played by the employment

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offices concerning the various aspects of work in Israel and often use the services of the latter.

56. The fact remains that, as the authorities themselves acknowledge, only about 70 per cent of all the workers from the West Bank and Gaza employed in Israel passed through the recruitment channels in 1983, the rest accounting for about 25,000 persons, of whom some 10,000 were most probably independent workers employed in the agricultural and building sectors. The estimates given by the Histadrut are somewhat higher, putting the figure at 25,000 to 35,000 workers; in the building sector, the Israeli federation even estimates that as many as half the workers (18,000) are illegally employed. Indeed, the problem seems to have changed very little in nature. The phenomenon of irregular work and the reasons for resorting to "illegal workers" are sufficiently well known. In this respect, the authorities also pointed out once again that much of the blame for irregular employment practices lies with small undertakings, where there is no trade union organisation. However, they acknowledge themselves that the action undertaken, whether preventive or repressive, is far from adequate, either from the point of view of the number of inspectors employed or as regards the size or the penalties against middlemen and employers, which until now have apparently failed to act as a deterrent. Doubts can also be raised as to the efficacy and the precise function of road checks, in the light of some allegations that these are more intended for statistical or security purposes than for specific action against irregular employment. In another context, the mission once again noted the existence of an ambiguous situation, already mentioned in the previous report: a percentage of irregular workers are paid through the payments division of the Employment Service without either the employers or the government services apparently being concerned about providing them with a work permit or renewing it.

57. The Histadrut reiterated its concern at the persistently high level of irregular employment and the poor results of governmental measures in this field. It recalled its conviction that more effective action could be taken if it were made responsible for monitoring the wages and social contributions of workers from the occupied Arab territories, as it considers that it is better equipped than the Government to guarantee that workers are employed in accordance with the law and collective agreements. The mission noted that the authorities were not willing, at least in the present circumstances, to envisage this course of action, which they considered inappropriate; however, discussions were continuing on the matter. Be that as it may, the vital importance of successfully combating the phenomenon of illegal employment in Israel cannot be stressed enough, since it is the major obstacle preventing Arab workers from the occupied territories from benefiting from an effective application of the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment.

58. The phenomenon of irregular employment inevitably raises the problem of the employment of young people, to which previous reports of the Director-General have consistently given special attention. The authorities

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reminded the mission of the regulation stipulating that work permits may not be granted in Israel to young persons under 17 years of age. However, it is commonly held that the irregular employment of young persons far below this age is widespread, especially in agriculture and small undertakings. Arab sources refer to the employment of children aged 12 years and upwards from the occupied territories and estimate that 20 per cent of irregular workers are minors who enter the labour market without having received a secondary education. Various Arab representatives with whom the mission spoke stressed the harmful consequences, both for the individuals concerned and for the world of labour in general, arising from the employment of young people below the legal age for work. Admittedly, as is the case everywhere in this field, this phenomenon is shaped by family needs and attitudes and, as a result, it is difficult to combat successfully. It is nevertheless vital that suitable and effective steps should be taken to this end in order to obtain tangible results. In this respect, the preventive action carried out by the Israeli authorities—which consists at present of special courses given during the summer to young persons from 13 to 15 years of age, among other things to encourage them not to take up employment in Israel—could be usefully backed up by information measures on a sufficiently large scale and aiming at a wider audience, such as the family. In addition to this and in view of the importance of protecting young people, labour inspection services in this field should be strengthened and heavy penalties imposed to deter persons from infringing the law concerning the employment of minors.

Employment and labour conditions

59. In a previously quoted study published at the end of 1982, the Bank of Israel considered it likely that the first to lose their jobs in the event of a decline in a sector's activity would be temporary and part-time workers, whereas in the case of the other workers the initial response would be to reduce working hours. While visiting undertakings in Israel, the mission found that this hypothesis was borne out; it was informed that almost the only difference between the Israeli workers and workers from the occupied territories was that the latter were not regarded as permanent, in spite of the fact that some of them had achieved substantial seniority in the undertaking. Furthermore, this situation raises doubts that the rule as regards dismissal based on the criterion of seniority ("last in, first out"), which is embodied in Israel's collective agreements, is effectively applied to Arab workers from the occupied territories. Another factor endangering the objective and non-discriminatory application of this rule is linked to the level of skill of the manpower employed; during the visits mentioned above, the mission was informed that in cases of staff cuts unskilled workers from the occupied territories were dismissed rather than Israelis in the same category; this discrimination does not, however, apply to skilled or semi-skilled workers. Furthermore, it was pointed out that the undertaking's main criterion in dismissing staff was its own interest, a notion which is questionable from the standpoint of protecting workers against discrimination.

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For its part, the Israeli Employers' Association has demanded the strict application of the criterion of seniority. Arab and Palestinian sources give examples of dismissals on abusive pretexts, which mainly affect Arab workers from the occupied territories. However, it was also mentioned that in some cases—especially in the building sector—the quality and the somewhat lower cost of these workers resulted in their being given preference over Israeli workers. Whatever the case, it would seem that the principle of non-discriminatory dismissal is more strictly applied to skilled or semi-skilled Arab workers from the occupied territories than to their unskilled colleagues, who suffer more from discriminatory practices.

60. As pointed out by the mission in its previous report, the inadequacy of the statistics makes it difficult to compare the level of remuneration of Arab workers from the occupied territories with that of Israeli workers. In 1982 the Bank of Israel calculated that the relative wage gap had narrowed by 70 per cent during the 1970-80 decade. The Israeli authorities affirm that there is full equality between the wage scale of workers from the occupied territories and that of the Israelis, for jobs of equal merit and skills. However, Arab sources continue to report a wage differential of at least 50 per cent and there are frequent allegations that Arabs from the territories working in Israel suffer from wage inequalities. In trying to understand this situation, various factors should be taken into account: first of all, the fact that workers from the occupied territories are considered as temporary, irrespective of their permanency in actual fact or their effective seniority, results in their receiving a lower wage because they fail to receive the seniority bonus to which they would be entitled if they were Israelis. Furthermore, in some undertakings at least, the practices adopted in this field are questionable. This is the case, for instance, with the practice of considering any worker from the occupied territories to be unskilled during the first six months of his employment, before establishing his initial salary. Another factor which no doubt contributes towards perpetuating the inequality of treatment suffered by these workers is that, although an increasing number of them have obtained qualifications—a fact which the Israel authorities never fail to point out—those concerned often lack the necessary documents or certificates to prove it and recognition of their skills depends on the good will of the employer; consequently, the level of wages and bonuses is strongly affected by comparison with those of the Israeli worker, whose occupational classification is recognised from the outset. Another factor accounting for inequality of wages, mentioned elsewhere in this report, is that some undertakings make cuts in the daily remuneration of workers from the occupied territories to cover the reimbursement of transport costs; this practice is both abusive and unauthorised by collective agreements. Finally, on another level, the unsolved problem of irregular employment cannot fail to act as a brake to any real equality of wages, especially in a sector such as construction, where only half the workers have permits. Furthermore, although the payment offices of the Employment Service are in a position to ensure that the minimum wage as established by collective

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agreement is respected, they are much less able to keep checks on the wage rates actually paid; these include the various bonuses stipulated by collective agreements, the supervision of which is more a matter for the Histadrut. The latter recently decided that the branch federations and labour councils should communicate any information concerning the remuneration rates established by collective agreement and any subsequent adjustments to the Employment Service so that the payment offices might be in a position to carry out the necessary checks. For its part, the Employment Service declared that it was willing to provide the trade union federation with the wage slips of undertakings suspected of not strictly applying the wage scales established by collective agreement. It is therefore apparently considered that by improving co-ordination, the official principle of equality of treatment with respect to wages will be more fully applied in practice. In any case, such a step should contribute towards identifying the causes of inequalities—which have been hinted at in this report—and finding appropriate remedies.

61. In the past, the mission had noted that the special system under which wages and social benefits are paid not directly by the employer but through the employment services tended to delay payment to workers from the occupied Arab territories. This time, it observed that this system, which is a possible source of inequality of treatment, does not seem to satisfy the undertakings, which are against the assumption by a third party of responsibility for something they consider a basic aspect of the employer-employee relationship. This observation raises doubts as to the advantage of this separate system of payment, especially in view of the fact, mentioned earlier in the text, that the checks on wages carried out by the payment offices of the Employment Service have so far been limited to ensuring that the minimum wage as established by collective agreement is respected.

62. One aspect of the employment conditions of the Arab workers in the occupied territories is that more than 80 per cent of them return home at the end of each working day. It is generally acknowledged that travelling time, although usually more than that spent by Israeli workers, is nevertheless within reasonable limits. However, the mission was informed of some disturbing practices—referred to above—consisting of charging travelling expenses to the worker. Indeed, in some cases, especially in the metal trades sector, undertakings take it upon themselves to deduct a sum amounting sometimes to as much as two or three daily working hours from the wages of the workers concerned, to cover the transport costs they have to bear. When this situation was brought to the attention of the Israeli Employers' Association, the latter informed the mission that it entirely disapproved of such a practice, which is contrary to the provisions contained in collective agreements; it maintains that this practice is only justified in rare cases, provided for in the national agreement on the minimum income, when travel expenses are deducted, within specific limits, from the allowance granted to those workers whose wage is lower than the minimum income. Consequently, the Employers' Association declared its intention to take

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the necessary steps to remedy the situation. At this point, it should also be recalled that it was recommended last year that appropriate ways should be sought to take into account the time and expenses involved in travelling, when these are excessively high.

63. As regards the regulations governing work permits, there have been no special developments to follow up the recommendation made last year to continue with the policy of flexibility, which had resulted in the validity of work permits for the industrial sector being extended to six months in 1982; last year, this new system had been extended to other sectors. The authorities merely referred to the flexibility of procedures for renewing work permits. Similarly, no further information was received on permission for workers to stay overnight; although this is freely granted according to the authorities, in its last report the mission had recommended that it should be improved to take into account the needs of the workers as well as those of the employer. Finally, the possibility of adopting legislation and procedures to guarantee and promote equality of opportunity and treatment was once again raised with the authorities; the latter referred to the setting up, announced last year in this context, of workers' assistance bureaux at the regional level and to their intensive efforts to train specialised staff for these bureaux.

64. On the whole, the measures taken in the field of occupational safety and health still seem to be effective, as mentioned in the previous report. The mission was provided with statistics showing that, during the 1982-83 period, the occupational accident rates amongst the Arab workers from the territories were lower than the national average. However, these figures do not take irregular work into account and, in view of the fact that this is prevalent in the building sector and smaller undertakings, where there is often a poor working environment, there are bound to be—as was confirmed by information received by the mission—a number of occupational accidents for which no compensation is paid, except perhaps the hospital bill by an employer who is threatened with legal action by the worker concerned; this is yet another example of how vital it is to reduce irregular work. Moreover, although many undertakings make serious attempts to inform workers from the territories on occupational safety, information from trade union sources reveals that some establishments employing large numbers of these workers still pay inadequate attention to safety and health conditions and fail to warn them in their language of the occupational hazards to which they are exposed; this shows to what extent continuous supervision in this field is important. Finally, the mission was informed that the regulations about to be adopted in accordance with a 1982 amendment to the labour inspection legislation should in future permit safety and health committees to meet during working hours, thus making it possible for the Arab workers from the occupied territories to participate more fully in their activities.

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The right to social security

65. There have been no changes in the situation of workers from the occupied Arab territories with respect to social security, in so far as the residence requirement for entitlement to certain benefits under the National Insurance Scheme (old-age and survivors' benefits, invalidity benefits, unemployment benefits and child allowances) still holds; previous reports have advocated that these workers should be entitled to these benefits without such a requirement. Because of the Israeli legislation on social security the workers from the territories employed in Israel are therefore still unable to receive benefits corresponding to the contributions they are under the obligation to pay in conformity with the principle of levelling labour costs, adopted long ago by the Government and the Histadrut. Since there seem to be no plans to amend these regulations and principles, which prevent the entitlement of these workers to the above-mentioned benefits from being acknowledged, the authorities would do well to recall the possibility, raised in the 1979 report, of granting benefits on the sole basis of contributions paid; this could be done by reimbursing the accumulated contributions in the event of the corresponding contingency arising or by making special lump-sum payments based, for example, on the number of years in employment. At the same time, there is still the question of how surplus funds are used; the authorities recalled that they are paid into the budget of the occupied territories without being allocated for any specific purpose. The mission requested information on the use of these funds, which must amount to a large sum, and was promised by the authorities that it would receive a statement of the projects financed under the above-mentioned budget. At this point the mission must reiterate its opinion that it would be appropriate to re-establish the fundamental principle that the contributions should be used for the original and specific purpose for which they were collected, in other words for the payment of social security benefits, and not for welfare, social assistance or any other purposes. It follows from this rule, as the mission has already pointed out, that the workers must be entitled to the benefits which correspond to the contributions paid in respect of their employment in Israel. The mission also received information that Israeli nationals residing in the settlements in the occupied territories belong to the insurance scheme, with corresponding entitlements to all the benefits; objectively speaking, this suggests an anomaly in the situation of residents in the territories, depending upon whether they are Israelis employed in the settlements or Arabs employed in Israel—with the latter being at a disadvantage—since it is inconsistent with the principle of residence established by the Israeli social security legislation for the branches under consideration. Finally, concerning the benefits to which workers from the territories employed in Israel are normally entitled, the mission was informed by official sources that these benefits—sickness and leave allowances, compensation for dismissal, clothing allowance, allowance for a spouse, provident fund insurance, and pensions payable under the Histadrut's supplementary retirement scheme—were only indexed in 1982 and that in the

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meantime they were paid at a depreciated value. The mission was provided with statistical data concerning the number of the benefits paid between April and November 1983 to workers employed in the agricultural, building, industrial and services sectors, showing that 298 pensions were paid during this period under the Histadrut's supplementary scheme.

The trade union situation

66. The trade union membership of Arab workers from the occupied territories still constitutes a problem. As far as trade union coverage is concerned, these workers are at a disadvantage for reasons of a political nature. The Histadrut, which has informed them of their right to organise in Israel, reiterated its position that it did not encourage their membership. For their part, the Arab workers from the occupied territories do not seem any more prepared now than in the past to join the Israeli federation or anxious to set up their own trade unions in Israel. However, without actually belonging to the Histadrut, they benefit from its services through the compulsory "union contribution" deducted from their wages (corresponding to about 1 per cent of the monthly wage). In the past, the mission report had concluded that, ultimately, it was for the workers concerned themselves to decide which method they considered most suitable for the effective exercise of their right to establish and join trade union organisations of their own choosing. Two solutions had been envisaged on these lines: on the one hand, the setting up of "quasi trade union" organisations such as groups, associations or other committees for defending workers' rights and, on the other hand, the membership of trade unions operating in the occupied territories. As far as the latter is concerned, the trade union situation in the territories, especially in Gaza (as described earlier), makes it difficult to draw up any positive assessment of the present possibilities for the trade union organisations operating in the territories to defend the interests of the Arab workers employed in Israel. Moreover, it does not appear that any "quasi trade union" organisation of the type mentioned above has been created. The way out of a situation apparently so little amenable to change would seem above all to lie in the development of trade unions in the occupied Arab territories, which would then take care, with all the difficulties this implies, of the interests of residents of the territories employed in Israel; however, this brings us back to the problems of conditions for union development.

67. Concerning the participation of Arab workers from the occupied territories in works committees in Israel—for which they are eligible and in which they may vote—the mission noted last year that the Histadrut's policy was to encourage this participation; it had subsequently recommended that arrangements should be made to ensure that these workers took part in works committees in practice. This year, however, it observed that on the whole very few of these workers, if any, took part in the works committees, as was the case in the two large undertakings it visited, and that this still represents a disturbing problem. A survey on the attitudes of workers from the territories concerning

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employment in Israel shows that they feel neglected by the works committees, as well as by the labour councils. This situation seems to have been brought about by the Histadrut itself, the behaviour of some Israeli workers and the attitude of some managements subjected to pressures and faced with the prospect—either real or imaginary—of tensions which they are trying to avoid. These obstacles are therefore much more deep-rooted than the difficulties, previously mentioned by the mission, with which the workers concerned have to cope, such as working hours and daily commuting, making them little inclined to take part in these committees. On this subject, the Israeli trade union federation referred to its recent decision to step up the effective implementation of the right of these workers to elect representatives to the works committees and to be elected themselves. In some undertakings it was suggested as an alternative that a separate committee of the workers from the territories might be elected or that a delegate might be elected from their midst and then appointed as a member of the works committee. If any progress is to be achieved in this field, it is vital that there should be strong union support to encourage workers from the territories to take part in the elections of the works committees and to sit on these committees themselves. An effort on the same lines—as the trade union federation itself acknowledges—must also be taken to ensure that union members with special competence for issues affecting workers from the territories are appointed to and serve on the labour councils; at present there are representatives on only 42 of these councils, which number 73. The Histadrut intends, as is clear from the decision recently endorsed by its executive, to appoint a permanent official within each labour council, entrusted with matters concerning the workers from the occupied territories. In this way, and provided all these measures bear fruit, the equal rights policy declared by the trade union federation, which has established special machinery for supervising the implementation of these rights, might finally carry more weight in practice.

REVIEW OF THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

68. An examination of developments since the last report of the Director-General suggests that, as the state of occupation continues, there is growing cause for concern over the situation of Arab workers in the occupied territories, whether they are employed in Israel or in these territories. The measures suggested below should make it possible to improve their position in the various fields under consideration.

Employment and manpower situation in the occupied Arab territories

(1) Three basic recommendations were made by the Director-General in 1982, and again in 1983, on the implications of the establishment of Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories. These concerned, respectively: (i) the review of the appeals procedure against decisions to declare land state

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property; (ii) the involvement of the local population or authorities in the implementation of water utilisation policies; (iii) the fostering of the rights of the local population to equal opportunity and treatment as regards their possibilities to work their land and to increase their production without any discrimination. The mission was unable to note any marked improvements in any of these three spheres; however, the possibility of carrying out a survey on the socio-economic implications was raised. It is also relevant to recall the recommendation contained in the previous report, which advocated that an inquiry should be carried out into the conditions of work in Israeli undertakings established in the occupied territories or subcontracted work performed at home and that information should be supplied on these subjects.

(2) Three other general themes contained in previous recommendations should be recalled at this point, in view of the lack of any visible improvements in the overall situation in the occupied territories from the point of view of (i) the promotion of investment, both public and private, and productive employment, in the light of the needs expressed by the population; (ii) the participation of the population, in one way or another, in decisions concerning development activities under way or in the planning stage and (iii) the possibility for the authorities and institutions which really represent the interests of the local population to have access to the necessary resources for carrying out their projects in the economic and social fields. The dependency of the occupied Arab territories and especially the fact that the state of their economy does not enable them to use fully their human and natural resources adds to the many obstacles continuing to hamper the development of the region; as these obstacles are of a varied nature, the ways to deal with them should also vary according to each specific case, taking the form not only of direct encouragement but also of refraining from intervention.

(3) The activities noted in the field of vocational training, the positive aspects of which have been underlined, should continue to be strengthened; at the same time, an effort should be made to adapt the structure of programmes in the best interests of the development requirements of the occupied Arab territories themselves. Excessive attention to security requirements should not be allowed to jeopardise the normal functioning of the educational system, since it may have a lasting negative effect on the quality of education in the area. As a general rule, all measures should be taken to preserve the cultural identity of workers from the occupied territories.

(4) The impact of the state of occupation, with its inherent concern for public order and security, on the exercise of trade union activities should be reduced to a strict minimum, respecting the guarantees on which freedom of association is based and thus ensuring that Arab workers from the occupied territories enjoy effective trade union coverage in accordance with the basic principles of the ILO in this field.

(5) With respect to working conditions, it should be stressed once again that the supervision of the application of labour regulations, especially the

ordinances concerning the minimum age for admission to employment, should be pursued, in order to consolidate the results already achieved.

(6) Concerning the state of medical coverage in the occupied Arab territories, ways should naturally be sought to extend the coverage of the care already dispensed and to improve the quality of services, as well as to work out arrangements by which the most disadvantaged categories of the population, more especially those workers who receive limited pensions upon terminating their period of employment in Israel, may have access to subsidised care.

The situation of Arab workers from the occupied territories employed in Israel

(7) The extent of the phenomenon of irregular employment in Israel of Arab workers from the occupied territories remains disturbing, casting a doubt on the aptness of the measures already adopted to combat it. There should be a reassessment of the efficacy of the preventive and repressive action taken so far and the necessary additional resources should be set aside for this purpose, especially with regard to the illegal employment of young Arab workers from the occupied territories.

(8) As regards improvements in conditions of employment, there has been no follow-up to two of the recommendations made in 1983, which should therefore be reiterated: the need to follow a flexible policy in extending work permits and to take into account, within the system governing permits to reside in Israel, not only the requirements of the employers but also those of the workers. Special attention should also be paid to the need to avoid any direct or indirect discrimination in the dismissal of Arab workers from the occupied territories employed in Israel. Furthermore, suitable investigations should be conducted on the practices of some undertakings, which consist of making cuts in wages to compensate for transport costs.

(9) Measures should also be taken to ensure that the occupational qualifications of Arab workers employed in Israel are duly recognised, implying also equality of opportunity in employment; if these measures are not taken, the achievements noted in vocational training given in the occupied territories will be cancelled out.

(10) As regards entitlement to social security benefits, the significance of the problem of equality of treatment between Israeli workers and Arab workers from the occupied territories employed in Israel should finally be duly recognised, especially in the light of the general objective of non-discrimination to which the Israeli authorities affirm they are committed; at the same time, the principle of using social security contributions for the original and specific purpose for which they are collected should be applied.

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(11) Ways should be sought to improve upon the results already achieved in the field of occupational safety and health and to encourage the participation of Arab workers from the occupied territories in the safety and health committees of the various undertakings.

(12) A far-reaching effort should be undertaken to implement in practice the still theoretical right of workers from the occupied Arab territories to elect representatives to the works committees and to be elected themselves; this participation is even more vital in view of the fact that these workers do not enjoy the full exercise of trade union rights in Israel, which in turn depends to a great extent to the state of the trade union movement in the occupied territories themselves.

(13) The development of assistance activities to workers, especially borne out by the recent setting up of regional bureaux for this purpose, should be continued, especially with a view to examining the desirability of adopting specific legislation and procedures to guarantee and promote equality of opportunity and treatment, which the mission has long been advocating.

Technical assistance

(14) Finally, concerning the development of technical co-operation to the benefit of the populations of the territories concerned, the present report shows that some activities have been undertaken and successfully implemented, whereas others have met with delays or been confronted with obstacles of a varied nature, while closer and more active co-operation between the ILO and the UNDP came about. In order to further the necessary implementation of an extended technical assistance programme in this field, the Director-General would like to recommend to the various parties concerned that all measures should be taken with a view to implementing proposals based on the suggestions outlined in this report, as well as to make funding available so that these objectives may be achieved.

Geneva, 12 April 1984

ANNEX II



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTÉ

A37/13

7 May 1984

THIRTY-SEVENTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Provisional agenda item 31HEALTH CONDITIONS OF THE ARAB POPULATION IN THE
OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINEReport of the Special Committee of Experts appointed to study
the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Historical background

The Thirty-sixth World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA36.27 on 16 May 1983 which inter alia requested the Special Committee of Experts "to continue its task with respect to all the implications of occupation and the policies of the occupying Israeli authorities and their various practices which adversely affect the health conditions of the Arab inhabitants in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine, and to report to the Thirty-seventh World Health Assembly, bearing in mind all the provisions of this resolution, in coordination with the Arab States concerned and the Palestine Liberation Organization".

The Committee consisted again this year of Dr Traian Ionescu (Romania), Dr Soejoga (Indonesia) and Dr Madiou Touré (Senegal).

On 26 January 1984, the Chairman of the Committee, Dr Ionescu, met with representatives of the Israeli Government to discuss the arrangements for the visit, the methodology to be followed and the territories to be visited.

In order to comply with resolution WHA36.27 the Committee also had meetings in Geneva with the representatives of the Governments of Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization, to obtain relevant information before carrying out its visit to the territories. The Committee then proceeded to Amman and Damascus to meet with the competent authorities. In Damascus the Committee was unable to meet representatives of the Palestine Red Crescent Society.

The Committee's visit took place from 5 to 14 April 1984. The Committee visited the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and, as in previous years, authorization was given for it to visit the Golan Heights on the express condition that the Committee again take note of the reservation expressed by the Israeli Government and mentioned by the Committee in its reports of 1982 and 1983, namely: "The WHO Mission is meant to collect material for a report on health in the administered areas. It is the position of the Government of Israel that the Golan, to which Israel law, jurisdiction and administration have been applied, is not now such an area. In view of this consideration, approval for a visit of the WHO Mission to the Golan is given as a gesture of goodwill without prejudice. The decision to facilitate the visit shall not serve as a precedent and does not contravene the Israel Government's position". The Committee appreciated the arrangements made by the Government and all the facilities granted to it. However, it notes that contacts with the directors of the two UNRWA field offices, particularly in Gaza, were not so easily established as in the past. The Committee thanks the two directors and their staff for the assistance provided. With regard to the programme of the visit, the Government took into account most of the suggestions put forward by the Committee, but the Committee notes that it was not able to visit the Hospice Hospital in Jerusalem.

1.2 Persons providing information during the visit

1.2.1 Israeli authorities

- The Director-General of Health and his staff.
- The directors of health of the occupied territories.
- The civil administrators responsible for administering the occupied territories.
- The director, medical officers and nurses of Nablus prison.
- The director of the rehabilitation centre for the handicapped in Gaza.
- A hospital architect.

1.2.2 Local sources

- The directors of health of the districts visited.
- The directors of the hospitals and institutions visited.
- The Arab doctors and health personnel working in the hospitals and other institutions visited.
- Patients encountered in health units.
- Local doctors.
- Mayors and officials of some localities in Gaza and the Golan Heights.
- The directors and doctors of UNRWA responsible for the occupied territories.

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1.3 Places visited (in chronological order)

Rehabilitation Centre (Welfare Ministry) (Gaza)
Sheefa Hospital (Gaza)
Tel Sultan Clinic (Gaza Strip)
Khan Younis Hospital (Gaza Strip)
Caritas Baby Hospital (Bethlehem)
Beit-Jallah Hospital
Mount David Orthopaedic Hospital (Bethlehem)
Terre des Hommes Nutritional Rehabilitation Centre (Bethlehem)
Kalkilia Clinic and MCH Centre
Girls' secondary school (Tulkarem)
Boys' primary school (Tulkarem)
MCH Centre, Sick Friends' Association (Nablus)
Wahtani Hospital (Nablus)
Nablus public health office
Nablus prison
Rafidiyeh Hospital (Nablus)
Bakata clinic and MCH centre (Golan Heights)
Masada clinic and MCH centre (Golan Heights)
Majdal Shams clinic and MCH centre (Golan Heights)

1.4 General considerations

The "technical" agencies such as WHO are all too often criticized for interfering in political fields which are the responsibility of other authorities, and this inevitably has repercussions for the committees appointed by these agencies to undertake special missions. The Special Committee of Experts appointed to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories cannot escape such criticism, guard against it as it will. There are a variety of reasons for this, including two main ones: first of all the Committee operates within a very specific and highly political context where every act is regarded as political; and secondly it deals with health problems which are not defined solely in terms of the physical condition of the individual, but are seen in a general socioeconomic framework. Everything which affects this framework automatically has repercussions on the population, both as individuals and as a community.

The health system as such consists of a group of internal components: the populations, the pathogenic agents, the health services and the resources. Between these components there are epidemiological, technological, social, economic and operational relationships; out of the last of these relationships arise concepts of accessibility and acceptability.

Within this context the evaluation of health programmes calls for open-mindedness and a sense of constructive criticism, which can lead to useful proposals for subsequent action. On account of the very nature of the activities governing the health of a population, one of the constraints of health evaluation is that results have to be measured in terms of predetermined quantified objectives; it is therefore necessary to make a qualitative judgement on the nature of the activities involved.

In order to do this the Committee reviews the situation and trends, basing its examination of programmes on the "Indicators for monitoring progress towards health for all by the year 2000" and on the "Seventh General Programme of Work covering the period 1984-1989" ("Health for All" Series, Nos. 4 and 8). The Committee points out that this review covers all the observations it has made during its six visits to the occupied territories.

For the sake of clarity the Committee has taken as a basis the framework contained in the Seventh General Programme of Work. It considers the following items in turn: situation and trends in the health field and in related socioeconomic sectors; health protection and promotion; and diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitative technology.

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2. SITUATION AND TRENDS IN THE HEALTH FIELD AND IN RELATED SOCIOECONOMIC SECTORS

The Committee adopted the three major categories contained in the Seventh General Programme of Work, i.e. direction, coordination and management; health system infrastructure; and health science and technology.

2.1 Direction, coordination and management

2.1.1 Management of health programmes in the occupied territories is the task of the Israeli authorities. In the Gaza and the West Bank regions the Arab directors of health have only partial responsibility for certain aspects of public health in these territories. In the Golan, on the other hand, the system is integrated into the Israeli system. In such a context, despite the implementation of a certain number of health programmes and the development of services, it is difficult to achieve genuine health promotion unless the populations concerned themselves have responsibility for drawing up socioeconomic plans in accordance with their interests, supported by an appropriate strategy for mobilizing the entire community.

The Israeli authorities have realized this, because in the occupied territories they are beginning to set up health programming committees which include Arab physicians. In its previous reports, moreover, the Committee pointed out the absence of medium-term and long-term planning, while noting the attempts made in Gaza and on the West Bank.

The operation of a managerial process, the formulation of a policy and appropriate plans, collaboration with other sectors concerned, programme budgeting - in short the entire dynamics of development - can be achieved only to a limited extent within the present context; it is therefore not surprising that the principles laid down by WHO concerning the Global Strategy for Health for All cannot be applied in their entirety in the occupied territories.

2.1.2 The management of the health budget in the occupied territories is in the hands of the central authority, without any participation by those who are directly concerned by it. The Committee was unable to determine the structure of the health budget in Gaza since - contrary to what was done for the West Bank - it was not disclosed to them by the Israeli authorities.

In any case the galloping inflation in Israel has far-reaching implications for the health budget for the population; at the same time, political considerations are restricting the extrabudgetary funds provided from private sources, and this is producing frustration among the local health personnel and the public.

2.2 Health system infrastructure

2.2.1 Health system development

In previous years the Committee saw a large number of structures, and made repeated visits to the same type of unit. On the West Bank, for example, the hospitals at Ramallah, Bethlehem, Hebron and Nablus were visited five times; the Tulkarem hospitals four times; the Jericho hospitals twice; while in Gaza the Sheefa hospital was visited five times. Other health units or premises of social or economic interest (schools, markets, rehabilitation centre) were also visited.

In analysing the health system infrastructure, it is noted that it is developing in accordance with a system which, so the Arab doctors claim, would have been quite different if they had been making the decisions. From the medical and technological viewpoints, according to these same sources, the West Bank hospitals 30 years ago were among the leading establishments in the area, whereas they have now fallen behind those of neighbouring countries.

In its previous reports the Committee described the infrastructure of the occupied territories in detail. In substance, there has been no significant increase in the number of beds; new services have been created through the redistribution of beds; the bed utilization indices are still low in many hospital units. Although some units have recently acquired sophisticated equipment, the diagnostic equipment is on the whole still antiquated. The old buildings (Tulkarem, Hebron, Jericho, Nablus) are still experiencing problems with electrical equipment, heating and laundry facilities. In particular, the Committee noted that the old Nablus hospital, which it visited this year, urgently requires improvements.

The increase in the day charge for hospital accommodation, when set against the limited number of quality services that the hospitals can provide on account of the present status of their facilities, places the hospitals in the occupied territories in an inferior position to the units of the same level in Israel and neighbouring countries. In order to obtain paraclinical examinations or certain prescribed drugs, patients are sometimes obliged to apply to health units located outside these territories.

The district hospitals which are designed to provide the basic specialities operate on a territorial basis and in accordance with the "centrifugal" principle; they provide specialist consultations for outpatients, either in the hospitals themselves or in clinics attached to them.

The patients treated in the clinics and the maternal and child health (MCH) centres may be referred to the hospitals. On the West Bank, for example, the hospitals are supported by 141 clinics, 58 of which carry out MCH activities, while 18 engage exclusively in curative care; in the Gaza region the activities are carried out in five hospitals and 21 clinics. In the Golan the clinics regularly visited by the Committee, i.e. Bakata, Masada and Majdal Shams, show no major new features; they are linked to Kiryat Shmona and to Sfat hospital as referral units.

In the course of the Committee's discussions with the health programming committees mentioned above, a project for the restructuring of hospitals was described by the Israeli directors responsible for health development in the occupied territories. On the West Bank three structural levels are planned. There will be two hospitals of the highest level in the health hierarchy of the region: Ramallah hospital, which will increase from 124 to 160 beds, and Beit Jallah hospital. At this level there is also the psychiatric hospital in Bethlehem, where the new section can accommodate 82 beds. At the second level there is Hebron hospital, which has four central departments but is less developed than the first-level establishments. Finally, the third level comprises the Tulkarem, Jenin and Jericho hospitals; the first two will be regarded as small level I hospitals (four basic departments receiving regular visits from specialists), while the last-named (Jericho) is a secondary hospital of level II (low level of activities, 48 beds shared among four small basic departments). It is planned to convert Jericho hospital into a public health centre, keeping a few beds for emergencies; its largest section, the orthopaedic department, will probably be converted into a physical rehabilitation centre. In Gaza the project in progress, scheduled for completion in 1986, is the large Sheefa hospital which should constitute a high-technology referral centre. It covers an area of 6000 m² and has four storeys: on the ground floor will be the anaesthesia/resuscitation department; the first floor will accommodate the administrative offices and reception, with a small operating theatre; the second floor will consist of hospital wards; and the third floor will contain five operating theatres, one of which has already almost been completed. Alongside the hospital, the former maternity centre is undergoing substantial alterations.

As can be seen, the health system in the occupied territories is becoming increasingly complex with the addition of a new type of health unit to the chain. The appearance of first- and second-level health centres or hospitals introduces new links into the organizational system, which is a move towards decentralization; however, an essential driving component is missing, i.e. deconcentration. If decentralization within a pyramidal system is to be viable and operational, it has to assume complementarity of skills; this means that each level should be effectively equipped and sufficiently responsible to solve the problems within its area of competence. In the present state of affairs the operation of

the system is suffering at all levels on account of numerous restrictions which prevent the various units from rising above a modest level of quality. This forces the patients themselves to go to Israeli hospitals and in some cases to Jordanian hospitals. Moreover, it sometimes happens that the hospitals in the occupied territories, realizing that it is impossible for them to provide the necessary services, themselves send patients to external hospitals, since within this pyramidal and hierarchical system in the occupied territories there is no referral unit capable of providing the population with the services they need at an adequate level of quality.

Besides the government health units, the Committee visited private hospitals of a different type and standing: the Caritas Paediatric Hospital of the Swiss German Catholic Society, the Mount David Orthopaedic Hospital run by the Holyland Christian Medical Mission (USA), the Terre des Hommes Nutritional Rehabilitation Centre, and the St John Ophthalmic Hospital, all located on the West Bank.

2.2.2 Health manpower

The successive reports of the Committee have drawn attention to the problems regarding health personnel, stressing the need to improve the quality of their training and their socio-occupational conditions.

Activities have been undertaken in this respect. In Gaza: postgraduate training; two types of training programmes for nurses - for qualified nurses (one year's duration) and postgraduate courses; traditional nurses can become qualified after two years of practice; training of nurses in intensive coronary care; courses for sanitary engineers. On the West Bank there are plans for a nursing school at Bethlehem, to be sponsored by UNDP; two courses in resuscitation have been given and a further course will start later. Because of the lack of anaesthetists UNDP is encouraging the training of physicians in this field in the United States: 10 candidates have been selected; continuous medical training is provided by Israelis; fellowships have been requested from WHO and other organizations, but are very limited; the training of specialists in Israel is under consideration; however, 12 candidates were selected for a five-year period and all of them withdrew. In this respect the Committee received complaints from Arab physicians during its visit to Rafidieh concerning promises made by UNDP to grant 35 fellowships for physicians and nurses. It is alleged that, after interview of the candidates, some of whom occupied relatively high hospital posts, none were selected. It is intended to convene a committee to settle the question of the training of local specialists in Israel; this training is not yet recognized by the competent Israeli authorities. Although many activities have been undertaken, the following problems remain in the foreground: living conditions; private practice; postgraduate training in specialist subjects; unemployment of doctors; award of fellowships; training of nursing and technical staff; and working conditions, particularly the inadequate salaries.

2.3 Health science and technology: research promotion and development

"The health system infrastructure provides the human and material means for delivering health care, but its impact on health depends on the substance of what is delivered".¹ The techniques for the prevention and treatment of disease include diagnostic, treatment and rehabilitation techniques, together with methods for the prevention and reduction of specific groups of diseases.

¹ Seventh General Programme of Work, paragraph 195.

In Gaza the health programming committee described to the Special Committee its study programme on the prevalence of coronary diseases, arterial hypertension, respiratory diseases, evaluation of prenatal care, and head injuries caused by road accidents. The Israeli authorities indicated their interest in WHO support, but stated that a research project submitted to the Organization was rejected last year. According to these same authorities a request for a consultant, Dr Cook, submitted six months ago met with no response. The Special Committee asked the Israeli authorities what had been done in response to its recommendations concerning the sending of consultants in certain fields. It was told that, besides the above-mentioned case, three other requests had been submitted; for epidemiological surveillance to evaluate the immunization status of children; for the study of the causes of diarrhoeal diseases; and for mental health. In the first two cases the requests do not seem to have been followed up. As regards the third case, it seems that it was decided to send a consultant, Dr Harding, but the Israeli authorities subsequently stated that his visit was completely unnecessary.

3. HEALTH PROTECTION AND PROMOTION

3.1 General health protection and promotion

There are many factors which have a favourable or unfavourable effect on behaviour and life style; among the specific activities necessary for ensuring health protection and promotion the Committee considered those relating to nutrition, which is regarded as one of the most important factors affecting the quality of human life; the Committee paid much attention to this problem in its previous reports. Although the latest official statistics show that agricultural production has increased, and despite the observations made on the adequate stocking of markets, particularly as regards fruit and vegetables, inflation is making it difficult for ordinary people to obtain essential foods (animal proteins). In the absence of statistics analysing family budgets or medical surveys of individual or collective nutrition, the Committee was unable to make an objective evaluation of the nutritional status of the population. The visit to schools, where the general appearance of the children indicates satisfactory nutritional status, could not be backed up by indicators of physical development. Nevertheless, it was noted that the patients hospitalized at the Terre des Hommes Nutritional Rehabilitation Centre include many premature infants and marasmus cases, mainly from the Arab populations of Jerusalem but some also from the Gaza hospitals. In addition to food supplements for children, health and nutrition education is provided for mothers. Birthweight, the principal indicator of the nutritional status of a community, has been recorded only in the hospitals; according to the figures for previous years, birthweight was below 2500 g for 9.3% of children born on the West Bank in 1982, and for 6.8% in 1983; the figure for Gaza in 1983 was 5.2%. Information collected and visits to clinics which provide medical assistance in the refugee camps indicate that protein-calorie malnutrition affects 7% of children aged 0 to 3 years. Finally, as a result of the uneven distribution of protein consumption in the various social strata of the local population, protein-calorie malnutrition is commonly encountered in paediatric practice and in many cases requires hospitalization (report A35/16 of the Committee).

3.2 Protection and promotion of the health of specific population groups

Health protection and promotion for mothers and children occupy a special place.

3.2.1 Maternal and child health: The number of maternal and child health (MCH) centres has increased. A number of programmes have been set up for the care and surveillance of children, despite budgetary restrictions and the shortage of health personnel. The vaccination programme occupies a leading place among these disease control programmes and has produced substantial results. On the basis of an evaluation of the medical care provided for mothers and children, and disregarding the inadequacies noted in the territories as a result of economic, political or administrative restrictions, it may be said that from the viewpoint of the strategy applied basic health care has been essentially directed towards mothers and children.

3.2.2 Health of schoolchildren: The surveillance of the health status of schoolchildren is carried out as part of everyday medical care; in the schools visited, despite the fact that hygiene seemed good and the health status of the children seemed satisfactory, there is virtually no school health service to carry out specific surveillance of the development of the children. Consequently there is no dynamic control or evaluation of the children's growth. The Committee enquired about the after-effects of the phenomenon which occurred in the girls' schools last year, particularly at Jenin; the trouble seems to have abated and there are no obvious sequelae among the people concerned.

3.2.3 Workers' health: In the occupied territories no code of occupational medicine has been issued to deal with hygiene problems affecting agricultural or industrial workers (construction industry and small companies), the sectors in which the majority of the local labour force is employed.

3.2.4 Prisoners' health: Nablus prison was visited on a number of occasions, and the Committee has nothing to add to the statements in its previous reports. The Committee was informed that a new and more modern prison is being built alongside the one visited, which is overcrowded.

3.2.5 Mental health: The economic situation, emigration, changing life styles and above all the latent tension within the community, claimed by the Palestinians to be a consequence of the occupation, are all exerting unfavourable effects on Palestinian society which take the form of the deterioration of mental well-being, not only in the individual but also within the community.

The mental diseases produced by this situation, in particular the neuroses, have raised the problem of the revision of structures and of the system of providing care for such diseases.

On the West Bank the Bethlehem Psychiatric Hospital is being extended and a new building has been assigned to it; a psychiatric clinic has been set up and the mental health society is very active. Medical consultations for this category of diseases are also provided in Gaza.

Problems remain, however, such as the situation of the health personnel, especially their further training, and the need to draw up a systematic health programme which can cope with the increasingly complex problems arising in the mental health field.

3.3 Disease control

Disease control activities were described at length in reports A35/16 and A36/12. There has been no significant change in the situation. The incidence of the diseases which can be eradicated by vaccination (diphtheria, pertussis, measles, poliomyelitis) is decreasing. At the same time the respiratory diseases, particularly in Gaza, are replacing the diarrhoeal diseases as the leading cause of morbidity and death among children.

The health authorities are continuing to pay attention to the intestinal parasitic diseases, malaria, tuberculosis and leishmaniasis, and to the chronic noncommunicable diseases, the most important of which are cancer, cardiovascular diseases, kidney diseases, blood diseases and mental diseases.

A problem which local physicians continue to mention is the long waiting list of patients who require special examinations or surgical operations.

A more detailed analysis of the epidemiological situation revealed the following points:

3.3.1 The chronic diseases are increasing from year to year to become the leading cause of morbidity and death among adults. The authorities are undoubtedly paying more attention to data collection and recording in an attempt to obtain more precise statistics. Nevertheless, data on mental diseases are very scarce. The Committee was unable to obtain any figures on their prevalence in 1983.

3.3.2 As regards the infectious diseases, attention is drawn to infectious hepatitis, diseases preventable by vaccination, and gastroenteritis.

The incidence of infectious hepatitis fluctuated between 1967 and 1983, but was always high. In 1983 369 cases were recorded in Gaza, while there were 522 cases on the West Bank, including 100 in October, 100 in November and 67 in December. Consequently this disease should be subjected to special surveillance in order to improve the epidemiological knowledge of its extent, its geographical distribution, and its distribution among the population. Collaboration with the appropriate international agencies in this respect is necessary. In the meantime vaccination against hepatitis B could be undertaken among high-risk groups, such as people working in blood banks or operating theatres and patients receiving dialysis. However, the cost is too high, amounting to US\$ 100 per person.

In Gaza and on the West Bank over 90% of the population have been vaccinated against diphtheria, tetanus, tuberculosis and measles. Among school-age children, 96.6% had antibodies for poliomyelitis, 48.8% for German measles, 90.6% for measles and 91.4% for tetanus. Most of the diseases covered by the EPI are on the decline, except for measles: 77 cases were recorded in 1983 in Gaza and 54 cases on the West Bank. Special attention should be paid to the cold chain in order to improve the storage of vaccines, ensure a proper supply of vaccines, and train staff in vaccination strategy. Reference should be made to German measles, 22 cases of which were reported among young girls in Nablus district, where antibodies are present in 60% of the population. The disease follows a cyclical pattern in this region (every 10 years) and an epidemic is predicted, probably in 1985 (the last major epidemic was in 1975). The authorities are requesting WHO support for a vaccination campaign against this disease.

Gastroenteritis remains a public health problem. On the West Bank in 1983, 84 cases of typhoid fever and 266 cases of dysentery were recorded, and there were 173 deaths from gastroenteritis; in Gaza there were 50 cases of typhoid fever and 25 cases of cholera. These diseases are linked to environmental sanitation, drinking-water and community behaviour. It is therefore essential to improve drinking-water supplies, sewage and waste disposal, and all these activities need to be backed up by appropriate health education.

3.4 Promotion of environmental health

Despite the noteworthy efforts to promote environmental health made by the municipalities and the Israeli authorities - sanitation, drinking-water supply (clinical and bacteriological control of central sources, control of the salinity of water from underground sources), inspection of markets and food stores - some crucial problems remain, especially in Gaza: rodents (rats), despite effective control with anticoagulants, are still causing the authorities concern; the salinity of water and the insufficient water supplies are worrying the municipalities, which would like to use their own budget to dig wells but are refused permission to do so by the Israeli authorities; the chronic problem of the Rafah pond, for which UNRWA has allocated funds, has still not been solved.

The shortage of specialist personnel for the control of hygiene, the lack of a systematic plan for environmental control, the modest quality and level of the few public health laboratories, the need to extend the range of services provided by these laboratories and to improve the legal system and information are all problems which are awaiting appropriate solutions.

4. DIAGNOSTIC, THERAPEUTIC AND REHABILITATIVE TECHNOLOGY

4.1 Diagnosis

Clinical, radiological and laboratory techniques are essential for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and injuries and hence for primary health care.

There is a variety of medical equipment in the occupied territories, but it is inadequate in some health units (Ramallah public health laboratory, which is currently being restructured) and adequate in others (Gaza public health laboratory).

In examining the types of equipment in the laboratories the Committee noted the presence of a large quantity of sophisticated equipment in the hospitals visited, together with an acceptable amount of essential equipment for carrying out basic examinations (leucocyte count, blood sugar level, nonprotein nitrogen level, routine urine tests).

Although the laboratories have the techniques to meet the clinical needs for diagnostic assistance, particularly in support of primary health care, the equipment for diagnosis and functional exploration available to the services is for the most part antiquated, although modern equipment is to be found here and there.

The basic inadequacy, particularly in a health system which sets out to be decentralized, with hierarchical units and specific skills for each level, is reflected negatively in the planning of medical equipment. The unequal distribution and the inadequate utilization of the modern equipment available in the health units, which are unable to use it to the required extent, increases still further the feeling of poverty of resources and dissatisfaction among the patients, not to mention that the growing complexity of clinical care backed up by laboratory tests and radiological examinations is leading to an increase in the cost of disease when patients are transferred to the Israeli hospitals.

In order to make use of laboratory and radiology equipment and technology, and especially in order to maintain this equipment, it is necessary to train appropriate health personnel. The local doctors are aware of this and urge strongly that WHO should assist in such training by sending out experts or awarding fellowships for doctors and nurses.

4.2 Essential drugs and vaccines

The supply of drugs for hospital units is carried out in accordance with a list decided on by the Ministry of Health. The hospitals and dispensaries in the occupied territories have most of the drugs contained in this list, but that does not prevent patients from acquiring some specialties which do not appear on the list.

On the West Bank there are seven small pharmaceutical companies manufacturing drugs for local needs. Since 1967 some 650 drugs have been produced. Unfortunately quality control leaves something to be desired; in the occupied territories there is no reference laboratory to carry out such control. It is important to note that, in accordance with the decision of the World Health Assembly, WHO "will continue to recommend to Member States that they apply the requirements for Good Practices in the Manufacture and Quality Control of Drugs and that they participate in the Certification Scheme on the Quality of Pharmaceutical Products moving in International Commerce" (Seventh General Programme of Work 1984-1989, paragraph 313).

The lack of a list of essential drugs based on the recommendations of a local committee consisting of doctors familiar with the morbidity pattern and the health care needs of the majority of the population is clearly felt. This partly explains the absence of effective management of the supply, storage and general distribution of drugs. There is no doubt that, by selecting essential drugs appropriate to the pattern of disease in the occupied territories, it would have been possible to regulate local production so that it made up for the shortcomings.

4.3 Rehabilitation

Only incomplete information is available on the prevalence of the most common disabilities and infirmities. Nevertheless, activities to promote the concept of physical, mental and social rehabilitation have been observed, particularly at the rehabilitation centre for the handicapped in Gaza and at the Mount David Orthopaedic Hospital.

5. CONCLUSION

In the light of the developments described above, the Committee would have liked to evaluate the monitoring of progress in implementing the strategies for health for all by the year 2000, in accordance with the common framework and format recommended by WHO in document DGO/82.1. Monitoring and evaluation are essential components of the Global Strategy for Health for All. Monitoring implies the continuous follow-up of activities during their implementation to ensure that they are proceeding according to schedule. Evaluation is a systematic way of learning from experience and using the lessons learned to improve current and future activities. In this context the Committee endeavoured to reply to the various questions drafted by WHO so as to find out to what extent the national strategies for health for all could be applied to the territories in which the Committee has been appointed by the Health Assembly to evaluate the health situation. To its great regret, and despite sustained efforts, the Committee was unable to furnish relevant replies to the questions formulated by the Organization. It became obvious to the Committee that these questions are not applicable within the context prevailing in the occupied territories. Health promotion requires dialogue between doctor and community that is based on mutual trust; but how is it possible, in a context where relationships are governed by mistrust, to set up an effective health system to achieve the objective of health advocated by WHO? This is extremely problematical, for obvious reasons, in the present situation. However, in spite of the extent of the difficulties the Committee is convinced that the health conditions could be improved if the recommendations it made in its previous reports continue to be implemented; at the same time it is aware that there can be no genuine health promotion without peace, freedom and justice.

(signed) Dr Traian Ionescu (Chairman)
Dr Soejoga
Dr Madiou Touré

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ANNEX III

United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

Executive Board

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Hundred-and-sixteenth Session

116 EX/16
PARIS, 13 May 1983
Original: French

Item 5.1.5 of the provisional agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF 21 C/RESOLUTION 14.1
CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS
IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

SUMMARY

In accordance with decision 5.1.2 adopted by the Executive Board at its 114th session, the Director-General is submitting to the Executive Board a report on the measures he has taken to give effect to that decision in pursuance of 21 C/Resolution 14.1 concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories.

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INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with 114 EX/Decision 5.1.2, the Director-General is submitting to the Executive Board this report on the measures he has taken to implement that decision, and on certain events affecting the situation of educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories, which have been brought to his notice since the 114th session of the Executive Board. The report also contains a section on the mission sent by the Director-General to the occupied Arab territories from 21 March to 6 April 1982, and the follow-up action he has taken.

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AT ITS 114th SESSION

2. At its 114th session, the Executive Board considered the report of the Director-General entitled 'Implementation of 21 C/Resolution 14.1 concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories' (document 114 EX/13 and Add.1 and 2) submitted to it in pursuance of resolution 14.1 adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-first session. The Executive Board adopted 114 EX/Decision 5.1.2 in which it:

'Invites the Director-General to continue his action on behalf of the educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories, in particular by providing technical and financial assistance to the universities and scientific and technological institutes, in accordance with such procedures as he may judge necessary.

Invites the Director-General to undertake any action necessary to the proper functioning of the educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem and the Golan, to continue his efforts to enable the mission designated by him to fulfil its mandate without any restriction, and to communicate to the Executive Board any information and suggestions which would enable it to take, at its 116th session, such measures as it deems necessary'.

3. Under cover of a letter dated 22 September 1982 the text of this decision was transmitted by the Secretariat to the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco, to be forwarded to her Government.

I. UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

4. On 8 July 1982, Dr Hanna Nasir, President-in-exile of the University of Bir-Zeit, sent a telegram to the Director-General to inform him that the University of Bir-Zeit had just been closed for a period of three months by order of the Israeli military authorities the third such closure in that academic year (1981-1982).

Regarding the circumstances of the closure, he stated that some students and other members of the West Bank community 'did protest against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon', but pointed out that the protest was of a peaceful nature and was not held on the university campus.

Dr Nasir also pointed out that the students were in danger of wasting a whole academic year as a result of the repeated closures. He requested the Director-General to make representations with a view to having the University reopened.

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5. On 13 July 1982, the Director-General sent a telegram to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel, saying that he had just been informed of the closure of the University of Bir-Zeit for a period of three months by order of the Israeli military authorities, given on 8 July 1982. The telegram further stated that this third closure, in one academic year, of the largest higher education institution on the West Bank, coming after two other closures of two months apiece, meant that the University's students were in danger of wasting a whole year of study.

The Director-General referred to his telegram of 11 November 1981, in which he had said that at the meetings of the General Conference of Unesco and of its Executive Board, the international community had repeatedly expressed its concern that the populations of the occupied Arab territories should, like all other peoples, be provided with an education consistent with their aspirations and their cultural identity, and he once again requested the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs to intercede personally to secure the reopening of the University as soon as possible. A copy of the telegram was conveyed to the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco.

6. Referring to the telegram sent by the Director-General to the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs on 13 July 1982, the acting Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco sent a letter to the Director-General on 10 August in which he stated that 'As a part of a wave of disturbances in Judea and Samaria, influenced by recent events in the area, students of Bir-Zeit University, on 6 July, erected road-blocks on the roads leading to the University and later prevented the dismantling of the road-blocks by throwing stones and bottles' and that 'Afterwards, the students locked themselves into the campus and continued the rioting and disorder'.

The next day, he wrote, 'disturbances continued in Ramallah and in a village close to Bir-Zeit. Following the events, on 8 July, the Military Commander of Judea and Samaria issued an order declaring the University closed for three months'.

According to the letter from the acting Permanent Delegate of Israel, in May 1979, the Vice-President of the University 'undertook to ensure that the academic functioning of the institution would continue unhampered by hostile political activity both in and around the campus', but 'this undertaking was not honoured and the Israeli authorities were obliged to fulfil their responsibilities according to international law and to take measures necessary to restore and maintain public order and safety'.

The acting Permanent Delegate stated that the closure of Bir-Zeit University 'is in no way intended to affect the academic aspirations and cultural identity of the students'. He also stated that Bir-Zeit University 'enjoys complete academic freedom. There is no interference in its programme of studies and no administrative restrictions are imposed on the running of its day-to-day affairs'.

7. On 15 September 1982, the Secretary-General of the Association of Arab Universities sent a letter to the Director-General concerning the closure of Bir-Zeit University by the Israeli authorities for a period of three months as from 8 July 1982.

The letter stated that the Association of Arab Universities 'strongly condemn the continuous uncivilized Israeli acts against Arab educational institutions' and pointed out that it was the seventh time that Bir-Zeit University had been closed since the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967.

He requested the Director-General to take steps to secure the reopening of the University and 'to stop deplorable acts of aggression against Arab universities and students body in occupied territories'.

8. On 1 October 1982, the Director-General sent a second telegram to the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, informing him that the Secretary-General of the Association of Arab Universities had drawn his attention to the closure of Bir-Zeit University since 8 July 1982 by order of the Israeli military authorities. The Director-General reminded him that he had requested him, in his cable dated 13 July 1982, to intercede personally to enable the University to be reopened; he reiterated that request in the hope of a positive response.
9. On 12 October 1982, referring to the Director-General's telegram dated 1 October 1982, the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco sent a letter to the Director-General to inform him that Bir-Zeit University had been authorized to open again as from 8 October 1982. She added that, for technical reasons, the University authorities had decided to postpone that date to 15 October 1982.
10. Under cover of a letter dated 16 September 1982, the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to Unesco transmitted to the Director-General a telegram dated 13 September 1982 from Dr Hanna Nasir, President-in-exile of Bir-Zeit University. In the telegram, Dr Nasir referred to 'the very serious problems facing the universities in the occupied territories now as a result of difficulties concerning the issuance of work permits for foreign faculty'. He pointed out that the Israeli military authorities had asked foreign teachers to sign a document 'declaring their commitment "against indulging in any act or offering assistance to the organization called PLO or any other terrorist organization . . . such acts being direct or indirect"'.

He further stated that the foreign teachers regarded this document 'as a political statement' and the new procedure for issuing work permits 'as an attempt by the military authorities to coerce them into signing a political statement'.

Dr Nasir recalled that the PLO is accepted internationally as a political organization with observer or participant status in international forums. He said that the terms employed in the Israeli document referred to the PLO as a 'terrorist' organization and reflected 'an exclusive Israeli interpretation of the PLO', and that 'the foreign nationals should not be coerced to accept that interpretation'.

Dr Hanna Nasir said that following the refusal by twenty-five foreign teachers at Al Najah University and three others at Bethlehem University to sign this document, they were requested to leave the country. He added that similar measures were expected to be taken against some fifty foreign teachers in the other establishments of higher education.

Stating that 'coercion into signing a political statement, plus the actual expulsion of those who refuse to sign is one of the gravest escalations of harassment of the military authorities', Dr Hanna Nasir expressed the wish that the Director-General might make special endeavours to have this document cancelled and secure the return of the foreign teachers who had been expelled, failing which, he added, the functioning of the educational institutions in the occupied territories would be paralysed during the coming academic year. Dr Hanna Nasir's telegram also contained an English translation of the document in question issued by the Israeli military authorities.

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11. In his letter of 16 September 1982 to the Director-General, the Permanent Observer of the PLO to Unesco informed the Director-General of the expulsion by the Israeli military authorities of three teachers from Al Najah University in Nablus.

He added that a number of other teachers from Al Najah, Bir-Zeit and Bethlehem Universities were threatened with expulsion if they refused to sign the Israeli document.

The Permanent Observer of the PLO stated that 'in pursuance of Military Order No. 854, the Israeli "education officer" warned the universities of the occupied Arab territories not to admit any Palestinian students from East Jerusalem, Galilee, the Triangle¹ and the Negev without obtaining special permission from the Israeli "education officer"'.

He requested the Director-General to take urgent measures.

12. On 7 October 1982, the Permanent Observer of the PLO to Unesco, referring to his previous letter of 16 September 1982, sent the Director-General a letter informing him of the expulsion of fourteen teachers from Al Najah University in Nablus--about which the Permanent Observer himself had just been informed in a telegram from Dr Hanna Nasir.

He enclosed a copy of this telegram, informing the Director-General that 'considering the gravity of the situation', Dr Hanna Nasir hoped that 'immediate action' would be taken to 'put an end to this new violation'.

13. On 15 October 1982, the Director-General sent a telegram to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel to the effect that according to information received by the Secretariat of Unesco, new procedures were being applied for the issue of work permits to foreign teachers in universities in the occupied Arab territories, and that these permits were being issued only if an undertaking was signed concerning certain organizations, a procedure which seemed incompatible with freedom of thought, conscience, opinion and expression. The Director-General also stated that, according to the information he had received, refusal to sign such an undertaking was alleged to have led to the withholding of work permits and expulsion from the country, and that by virtue of these measures twenty-five foreign teachers from Al Najah University and three from Bethlehem University had been asked to leave.

The Director-General added that according to more recent information, fourteen teachers from Al Najah University were said to have already been expelled. He drew attention to the fact that there was no provision in international law on the occupation of foreign territories which authorized the application of measures restricting fundamental freedoms, in particular freedom of thought, conscience, opinion and expression, and that the action taken could disrupt or even paralyse the functioning of the universities concerned and could be considered a violation of the right to education. The Director-General concluded with a request 'to investigate the information received by the Unesco Secretariat and to take the necessary steps to ensure the cancellation of all restrictive measures of a nature to impede the normal functioning of the universities in the occupied Arab territories'.

A copy of this telegram was sent to the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco.

¹. Name given to a zone in the north-east of Israel, south of the Sea of Galilee.

14. On 16 October 1982, the Director-General sent a telex to Dr Hanna Nasir in reply to his telegrams dated 13 September and 7 October 1982 which had been transmitted to the Director-General by the Permanent Observer of the PLO to Unesco. In this telex, the Director-General informed Dr Hanna Nasir of the contents of the telegram sent the same day by the Director-General to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel.

A copy of this telex was sent to the Permanent Observer of the PLO to Unesco.

15. On 19 October 1982, the Secretary-General of the World Federation of Teachers' Unions sent a letter to the Director-General to inform him that 'a fourteenth teacher from Al Najah University in Nablus on the occupied West Bank, Dr Mahmud Mustafa, was dismissed by the occupying military authorities ... because he refused to sign an undertaking not to support the Palestine Liberation Organization. Several students were also expelled from the University for the same reason'.

In his view, these measures constituted 'fresh violations of trade union rights and fundamental freedoms by the occupying Israeli authorities in the occupied Arab territories', and he accordingly requested the Director-General 'to demand that the occupying authorities put an end to their repression and to request the readmission of the teachers and students concerned'.

16. On 20 October 1982, Dr Hanna Nasir sent a telegram to the Director-General, thanking him for his telegram of 16 October 1982 and expressing his gratitude for the Director-General's efforts to ensure the normal functioning of the establishments of higher education in the occupied Arab territories and to guarantee the necessary academic freedom. Dr Nasir also informed the Director-General that the occupying authorities had suspended implementation of Military Order No. 854 for a period of one year. He said that this was a positive step but that it was not sufficient because of its provisional nature. What was sought was total annulment, in conformity with Unesco resolutions and decisions.

In addition, Dr Hanna Nasir pointed out that the occupying authorities had made a slight, but insufficient alteration to the declaration to be signed by foreign teachers by deleting the word 'terrorist' from its text. Dr Nasir said that, even in its modified form, the declaration was still unacceptable to the teachers and continued to be regarded by them as 'a political blackmail' and 'an attempt by the Israelis to infringe on their academic freedom'. The teachers, added Dr Nasir, saw absolutely no reason why they should sign any document whatsoever that might be used against them by the occupying authorities.

Dr Hanna Nasir informed the Director-General that that situation had led to the expulsion of fifteen teachers from Al Najah University and that the expulsion of the President of that University was expected the same day, i.e. 20 October 1982. He stated that teachers in the other institutions would have to face similar measures on the part of the occupying authorities when their residence permits expired a few weeks later.

Because of the gravity of the situation, Dr Hanna Nasir hoped that urgent appropriate action would be taken to halt the expulsion of foreign teachers who had refused to sign the 'declaration', and to secure total annulment of the declaration.

17. On 6 November 1982 referring to the letters dated 16 September and 7 October from the Permanent Observer of the PLO to Unesco concerning the new formalities required of foreign university teachers in the West Bank by the Israeli occupying authorities, the Director-General sent the Permanent Observer

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a letter to inform him that the Director-General had cabled the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, requesting him to take steps to have these measures annulled.

The Director-General also referred to Dr Hanna Nasir's telegrams dated 13 September and 7 October 1982, which had been transmitted by the Permanent Observer of the PLO, and enclosed a copy of the telex sent to Dr Hanna Nasir to inform him of the Director-General's action.

18. On 8 November 1982, the Director-General sent a telegram to the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs. Referring to the telegram he had sent to the Minister on 15 October 1982, the Director-General said that he had been informed that the requirement to sign a commitment continued to be applied as a pre-condition for the issue of work permits to foreign teachers in West Bank universities.

The Director-General added that that requirement was considered an encroachment on academic freedom and pressed the Minister to take urgent steps to have any restrictive measures annulled.

A copy of this telegram was transmitted to the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco.

19. On 25 November 1982, the Director-General sent a letter to the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco, in which he referred to the letter dated 19 October 1982 from the Secretary-General of the World Federation of Teachers' Unions concerning the dismissal and expulsion, by the Israeli military authorities, of teachers and students from Al Najah University in Nablus who had refused 'to sign the undertaking not to support the Palestine Liberation Organization'.

The Director-General informed her that he would be referring to that letter in his report to the Executive Board at its 116th session, and requested the Permanent Delegate of Israel to convey to him any comments her Government might wish to make on the matter.

20. On 29 November 1982, at the fourth extraordinary session of the General Conference, referring to the undertaking that the Israeli authorities required of foreign teachers in the occupied Arab territories as a pre-condition for the issue of work permits, the delegation of Israel stated: 'A separate declaration which foreign lecturers were asked to sign to the same effect, has been withdrawn because it caused some consternation among members of the academia'.

21. On 2 December 1982, the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco sent a letter to the Director-General in which she referred to the telegrams sent by the Director-General on 15 October and 8 November 1982 to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel, and to the letter the Director-General had sent her on 25 November 1982.

She informed the Director-General that 'the separate declaration that foreign lecturers were required to sign has been withdrawn by my authorities', and that a new procedure had been instituted.

The Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco specified that, in accordance with the new procedure, 'any alien wishing to obtain a permit for work in these areas, including lecturers, must fill in a form which comprises in addition to the necessary personal data, a number of provisions', and that that procedure 'is in conformity with prevailing requirements in democratic countries and is intended to bring to the attention of the applicant his duty to observe, during his period of work in the area, the laws and regulations prevailing there'.

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Furthermore, she said that Military Order No. 854 had never been enforced and was now suspended.

22. In a letter to the Director-General dated 2 December 1982, Dr Hanna Nasir, recalling that Israel had announced an amendment to the terms of work permits for teachers, pointed out that the amendment affected only the form and could lead to the same objections as the original version, for 'inherent in the request is a political statement concerning a specific organization, rather than matters related to law and order'.

He said that the teachers in West Bank universities were refusing to sign the new version, which they continued to regard as 'a political blackmail', and that some 100 foreign teachers were threatened with expulsion or were prevented from teaching. He drew attention to the fact that twenty-six teachers had already been expelled following their refusal to sign the first declaration.

Dr Nasir said that the political statement, namely the reference to the PLO, should be removed, and that reference should only be made to matters concerning law and order. The expelled teachers would thus be able to return to their universities and the others would no longer be threatened with expulsion or prevented from teaching. He stressed that deleting the reference to the PLO on no account meant requesting support for the PLO, but merely removed the political implications of the document.

Dr Nasir requested the Director-General to take steps to ensure the normal functioning of the universities.

Three documents were attached to this letter viz. the first version of the undertaking required in order to obtain a work permit, dating from the beginning of September 1982, the second version dating from the end of September, from which the word 'terrorist' and the phrase 'such acts being of a direct or indirect nature' had been deleted, and lastly the third and final version dating from the end of November 1982.

23. On 19 January 1983, the Director-General sent a letter to the Permanent Delegate of Israel in which he referred to her letter of 2 December 1982 informing him of the suspension of Military Order No. 854. Noting with satisfaction the effort made by the Government of Israel 'towards ensuring greater respect for the right to education and academic freedom', the Director-General nevertheless drew the Permanent Delegate's attention to the fact that the General Conference had expressed the wish for the Order to be repealed. In addition, he noted with interest, that a decision had reportedly been taken to alter the provisions governing the issue of work permits to foreign teachers on the West Bank, and requested details regarding the procedure applied so that, among other things, he could provide the Executive Board with the necessary information.

24. On 27 January 1983, the Director-General sent a letter to Dr Hanna Nasir informing him that he had considered very carefully Dr Nasir's letter of 2 December 1982 and that he had received a letter from the Permanent Delegate of Israel informing him of the cancellation of the declaration to be signed by foreign teachers and advising him of the introduction of a new procedure for obtaining work permits by foreign teachers. The Director-General also informed him that he had details of the new procedure. He expressed the hope that a way would be found to enable foreign teachers in the West Bank universities to continue to exercise their profession normally. Lastly, the Director-General told Dr Hanna Nasir that the Permanent Delegate of Israel had informed him of the suspension of Military Order No. 854.

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25. In a letter dated 14 February 1983, the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco confirmed to the Director-General that Military Order No. 854 had been suspended and was not being enforced.

In addition, she informed him of 'a substantial increase in the number of institutions of higher education in Judea, Samaria and the region of Gaza: four universities--Bir-Zeit, Beit-Lehem, El-Najah and the Sharia University in Hebron, and seven colleges: the Polytechnical of Hebron, the Science College in Abu-Dis, the college for paramedical studies in Ramalla and the theological colleges in Abu-Dis, Kalkilia and in Gaza. All in all there are eleven institutions of higher learning serving a population of about 1,250,000. This does not include teachers' and agricultural colleges'.

With regard to the work permits, the Permanent Delegate of Israel pointed out that, as in many other countries, 'all foreign workers in the administered territories, including lecturers, are in need of such a permit', and stated that 'some lecturers have in the past abused the free access accorded to them by the Israeli authorities by participating in illegal subversive activities, sometimes being instrumental in causing riots and violence which have cost human lives'. She said that 'The abstention from such illegal activities is one of the prerogatives specified in the application for a working permit submitted by any foreign worker in the administered territories' and that 'It is much narrower in scope than the conditions listed in the application forms for an entry visa in many enlightened countries'.

II. UNRWA/UNESCO EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

26. The reports submitted to the Secretariat by the Director of the UNRWA/Unesco Department of Education through the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, and received between the end of the 114th session of the Executive Board and the date on which this document was drafted, reveal a number of events which have affected the functioning of the UNRWA/Unesco educational institutions in the occupied Arab territories.
27. These reports showed that in the Gaza Strip, the date on which schools were due to open had had to be put back from 4 April to 19 April 1982. This was initially as a result of demonstrations and then because of the curfew decided on by the Israeli military authorities for the refugee camps following the intensification of demonstrations on 11 April 1982 after the incident in the old city of Jerusalem in which an Israeli soldier had opened fire on Muslims at prayer. Three girls were injured on 4 May 1982 in front of Khan Yunis secondary school in the course of confrontations between pupils and Israeli soldiers, and one of them died of her injuries shortly afterwards, causing many pupils to stay away from school in the Gaza Strip on 5 May 1982. The functioning of the schools was also interrupted for several days in September 1982 following the news of the Sabra and Chatila massacres. It was also disrupted on 6 February 1983 by demonstrations in the Jabalia Camp following the explosion of a car bomb in Beirut, which had killed several people.
28. On the West Bank, following the demonstrations and because of the curfew, sixty-four out of ninety-nine UNRWA/Unesco schools lost between five and twenty-one school days, and thirty-five schools between one and four days. After the holidays, the date on which schools were due to open had to be put back from 21 September to 2 October 1982 because of the general situation in the territory. In January 1983, twelve schools in Nablus, Balata and Askar remained closed for between one and three days on account of the curfew decided on by the Israeli military authorities. The Kalandia Vocational Training Centre was closed by the

Israeli military authorities from 14 February 1983 until the end of the month after stones had been thrown at cars near the Centre.

29. The reports submitted by the Director of the UNRWA/Unesco Department of Education further state that Israeli soldiers have entered UNRWA/Unesco schools and that teachers and pupils have been arrested. The reports indicate that three pupils from the UNRWA/Unesco school at Jalazone were arrested on 21 April 1982, twenty-three pupils from the Kalandia Vocational Training Centre on 23 April 1982, four pupils from the UNRWA/Unesco girls' school at Jalazone on 11 May 1982, and two teachers and 104 pupils from the Kalandia Centre on 14 February 1983. According to these reports, from 4 to 8 April 1982, three UNRWA teachers and on 12 April 1982, five other UNRWA teachers at the Dheisheh Camp schools were likewise arrested and provisionally detained; the latter five for refusing to remove stones which were obstructing traffic. In addition, the reports state that on 2 May 1982, some teachers from the UNRWA/Unesco boys' school in Shu'fat Camp refused to obey an order by the border police to remove stones obstructing the road in front of the school, saying that what happened outside the school grounds was not UNRWA's responsibility. The border police later returned, chased the pupils and fired several shots, wounding one of the pupils in the leg. According to the same reports, a fourteen-year old pupil from the school at Arrub in the Hebron region was seriously injured by Israeli soldiers on 2 May 1982 during a demonstration against the bombings by the Israeli Air Force in Lebanon, and she died of her injuries in hospital on 5 May 1982. As a result of this incident, a very large number of pupils stayed away from school in the region of Hebron from 2 to 5 May 1982. Still according to these reports, on 19 May 1982, five armed persons, including two Israeli soldiers, claimed to have been stoned as the bus in which they were travelling drove past the UNRWA/Unesco boys' school at Dheisheh, and they entered the school and struck the principal of the school and the caretaker, who was seriously injured.

III. UNESCO MISSION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

30. The Director-General provided the Executive Board at its 114th session with some details on the mission he sent to the occupied Arab territories from 21 March to 6 April 1982, and brought some of the mission's findings to the attention of the Board. These details and findings are summed up in the following paragraphs.

31. The mission was composed of five members of the Secretariat: Mr. Soler Roca, Head of the mission, Mrs. Salem, Mr. Balbir, Mr. Botti and Mr. Taha Hussein, and a consultant, Mr. Flandre, until very recently a member of the Organization's staff. The mission stayed in the occupied Arab territories from 21 March to 6 April 1982.

The mission's mandate, as the Director-General had informed the Permanent Delegate of Israel in his letter to her on 4 April 1980, was 'to ascertain the unsatisfied needs of the population of the occupied Arab territories in regard to education and to make suggestions concerning measures to be taken in that respect'. The mission was also required to conduct more searching studies and submit proposals to him concerning technical and vocational education, the improvement of teachers' qualifications and status, the needs of higher education institutions and the situation of cultural institutions.

Before leaving Paris, the mission examined the documentation available at the Secretariat and contacted the Permanent Delegates of the Member States concerned (Arab Republic of Egypt, Israel, Jordan and Syrian Arab Republic), and the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

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32. With regard to the mission's actual work, an agreement was reached with the Israeli authorities on the procedures to be followed during visits to educational and cultural institutions and in private talks with leading Palestinian figures. These procedures made it possible for the mission to carry out as it wished the work entrusted to it. The Director-General is grateful to the Israeli authorities for accepting the working methods proposed by the mission.

The Director-General would like to draw attention to the fact that the mission was unable to go to the Golan as the authorization of the Israeli authorities was withdrawn at the last minute, the reason given being the situation prevailing there. The mission was also unable to pay an official visit to government educational institutions in East Jerusalem. It was finally unable to visit any of the four universities on the West Bank because of the events in the occupied Arab territories towards the end of March and beginning of April 1982.

33. In considering the educational and cultural situation, the members of the mission endeavoured to take into consideration the main demographic, economic, socio-cultural, legal and administrative factors having a direct bearing on the situation.

With regard to the overall development of the education system, the members of the mission noted that between 1967/1968 and 1980/1981, pre-university school enrolments increased by 4.8 per cent per year and that the proportion of girls rose from 41 per cent in 1967/1968 to 45 per cent in 1980/1981. The mission also noted, however, that this growth had not been accompanied by measures making it possible to provide education under satisfactory conditions. In particular, the standard of the initial training received by many of the teachers is inadequate. There is an obvious shortage of teaching materials at all levels, workshop equipment for technical education is very inadequate and often out of date, classes are often overcrowded, particularly in secondary schools in the Gaza Strip (an average of 40 pupils per class), and premises are often unsuitable or in poor condition. The situation of the teaching staff is becoming precarious since their salaries are not increasing in proportion to the rising cost of living and, in addition, they cannot set up their own professional organizations.

The standard of teaching is suffering as a result of this situation. Furthermore, the mission reports that there is no explicit policy or clear programme in the occupied Arab territories to direct the education and training system towards meeting the social, cultural and economic needs of the people living there. Added to this lack of an explicit education policy is the fact that there are no practical arrangements providing any satisfactory linkage between the various types and levels of education.

The members of the mission examined the various levels and types of education and considered the problem of the resources needed for them. On the basis of information supplied at the mission's request by the Israeli authorities--to whom the Director-General expresses his gratitude for their efforts to obtain for the mission the information required--and taking into account a wide variety of evidence and documents from leading Palestinian figures, as well as its own on-the-spot observations, the mission drew up its conclusions, the main points of which the Director-General would like to recapitulate:

The unsuitability of teaching methods and the shortage of appropriate teaching materials are affecting the standard of general education in government schools. The normal learning process is also being affected at the three levels of general education by delays in the distribution of textbooks.

Technical and vocational education account for an extremely small proportion of secondary school enrolments (4.3 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 5.2 per cent in the West Bank), and lack adequate equipment and facilities.

The system of vocational training set up by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs aims at the rapid training of a semi-skilled Palestinian work-force that can be used immediately and is, as a rule, recruited by firms located in Israel.

Initial training for teachers in government schools is handicapped by a lack of precision in the programmes to be applied and by a lack of clear instructions concerning the methods to be used in teacher-training centres, the shortage of teaching materials, the disorganized distribution of textbooks, a lack of appropriate reference works and a lack of interest in innovations being made in the rest of the world. There is no systematic approach to in-service training.

The inadequate salaries often compel teachers to take on some other employment, which is prejudicial to the standard of their teaching and to their social image.

Establishments of higher education have difficulty in getting the educational, scientific and technical materials they need because of high taxes and censorship on imported books. They also encounter a great many obstacles when it comes to obtaining the authorizations that would enable them to use their funds for improving and expanding their facilities.

Educational services do not give sufficient attention to the various forms of out-of-school education, and the problem of adult illiteracy appears to be totally overlooked. The shortcomings and unsuitability of the education system contribute to a great many young people remaining unprepared for working life.

The deficiencies referred to above stem mainly from the inadequacy of funds for government schools. In the Gaza Strip, where textbooks are not issued free of charge, it is sometimes difficult for families to buy the books their children need, even at the elementary and preparatory levels. To improve the system's efficiency and to make some headway towards free education, there is no doubt that the funds available for the running of government schools need to be increased.

34. On the basis of these conclusions, the members of the mission drew up a series of recommendations concerning more particularly:

the establishment of a technical and educational research centre to improve curricula at the various levels and to help to introduce young people to the world of work, to organize school and vocational selection and guidance and to identify new subject-matter and methods for technical education;

a series of measures to develop initial teacher training, to organize in-service training for teachers on a systematic basis and to improve their status, especially with regard to salaries and the exercise of union rights,

the provision of teaching aids and materials for educational institutions;

training of documentalists and librarians for establishments of higher education;

- improvements to school buildings and facilities and construction of new premises,
- increase in the funds set aside by the Israeli occupation authorities for educational institutions;
- linkages between non-formal vocational training activities and the formal technical and vocational education programme;
- inclusion of socially relevant productive activities in the curricula of establishments of higher education;
- a precise assessment of the extent of adult illiteracy and, on the basis of this assessment, formulation of measures to support adult literacy and adult education activities.

With regard to the present state of culture in the occupied Arab territories, it appears that the number of cultural institutions is declining and that no funds have been set aside to encourage the development of reading (books, the press), the arts or sport, or for the preservation of the cultural heritage.

The members of the mission suggested a series of measures to improve the situation of cultural institutions, in particular by removing the obstacles to their development; the adoption of measures to safeguard the Palestinian cultural heritage (monuments and sites or written documents) cultural exchanges between the population of the occupied Arab territories and the outside world, in particular by removing censorship, and support to the preservation and development of the various aspects of its cultural identity, especially through the publication of books on folk art and culture, translation and publication of contemporary literary works in widely used languages, travelling exhibitions of reproductions of works of art, musical recordings, and so on.

Some of the conclusions reached by the mission are more general in scope. The mission pointed out, in particular, that there has been no tangible improvement in the situation as described in documents 18 C/16, 19 C/73, 20 C/113 and 21 C/18; if anything, it appears to have become worse. The recommendations made by the Director-General in 1978 and approved by the Executive Board at its 104th session and by the General Conference at its twentieth session have had no effect.

35. After making a detailed examination of the report submitted to him by the members of the mission, the Director-General sent a letter to the Permanent Delegate of Israel on 19 February 1983. He drew her attention to the mission's terms of reference and to the fact that for certain reasons it had been unable to carry out all the tasks assigned to it. He informed her that the mission had none the less made recommendations concerning measures which, in the view of its members, might improve the present situation of educational and cultural institutions. The Director-General then outlined these practical recommendations, which deal with the following matters:

Planning and co-ordination of educational activities

There should be some way by which the inhabitants of the occupied Arab territories could examine their own needs, so that they can decide what they consider to be the most appropriate priorities with regard to education and training, planning, and resource allocation. In that connection, the mission suggested that the Council of Higher Education for the occupied Arab territories and the educational institutions of these territories should be given the means

to undertake planning and co-ordination studies and projects covering all educational services, and to set up any machinery they considered appropriate for that purpose.

Content and methods of teaching

The setting up of a technical body to be responsible for the pedagogical aspects of teaching seems necessary in order to help ensure that the curricula for general education are more effectively applied, that the curriculum for technical and vocational training is better planned, and that it is possible to take greater account, at all levels of education, of the situation and needs of the population. A technical and educational research centre might be the answer.

Training and status of teaching staff

It appears that several measures need to be taken to improve the standard of education, e.g. reorganization of initial and in-service training for teachers in general education; establishment of an institution specializing in initial and in-service training of staff in technical and vocational education; and the introduction of an equitable policy for teachers' pay. The mission pointed out that these various measures call for participation by those involved, which means that teachers should be able to organize themselves into professional associations.

Teaching materials and facilities

Government schools should be able to acquire the teaching materials they need--particularly textbooks--in order to provide teaching of a high standard, and special emphasis should be placed on improving school buildings and on constructing functional premises to replace rented premises. Steps must also be taken to ensure that establishments of higher education are able to use their funds for improving and extending their facilities.

Out-of-school education

Adult literacy and adult education programmes should be drawn up and put into effect, based on an assessment of the extent and characteristics of illiteracy and with the support of radio and television. Special measures should be taken to prepare young people for working life. In addition, it would be desirable for the non-governmental organizations and educational institutions in the occupied Arab territories to be in a position to carry out their activities effectively.

Financial resources

An increase in financial resources is needed to carry out these various measures. For instance, teachers' salaries should be reassessed on the basis of salary scales used by UNRWA for educational activities.

The Director-General concluded his letter with a request to the Permanent Delegate of Israel to convey to him any comments made by the Government of Israel on the various points set out in his letter, so that he could take whatever action is required for the proper functioning of the educational and cultural institutions of the occupied Arab territories, in accordance with decision 5.1.2 adopted by the Executive Board at its 114th session.

36. In a letter dated 4 March 1983, the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco, referring to the Director-General's letter of 19 February 1983 concerning the recommendations of the mission he had sent to the occupied Arab territories, informed him that his letter had been forwarded to the appropriate Israeli authorities and that she would naturally inform him of their response as soon as it had been communicated to her.

United Nations Educational,
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IMPLEMENTATION OF 21 C/RESOLUTION 14.1
CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS
IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

CORRIGENDUM

In the middle of paragraph 24, replace the sentence 'The Director-General also informed him that he had details of the new procedure.' by the sentence:

'The Director-General also informed him that he had asked for details of the new procedure.'.

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United Nations Educational,
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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

ADDENDUM

SUMMARY

In this addendum, the Director-General submits a summary of communications received by the Secretariat referring to cases of poisoning of schoolchildren on the West Bank in March and April 1983.

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1. At the end of March and in April 1983, the Secretariat received communications from the Director-General of ALECSO, the Chief of the Education Department of the PLO in Damascus, the National Office of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign in the United States, the National Office of the Moroccan National Teachers' Association and the Commission on Arab Women, which was holding its tenth session in Tunis, referring to numerous cases of poisoning of Palestinian schoolchildren, especially girls, in Jenin, Arraba, Tulkarm and the Hebron region on the West Bank.
2. The communications stressed the gravity of the cases of poisoning and requested the Director-General 'to intervene and find ways and means of rapidly putting an end to the new and terrible ordeals inflicted on Palestinian young people'. Some communications called for the setting up of an international commission of inquiry to investigate the matter thoroughly.
3. The Director-General of ALECSO said in his telex message of 31 March 1983 that 'schoolchildren, especially girls, in the Arab occupied territories, particularly in Jenin, have been the victims of duly attested acts of poisoning, to which the media of the occupying power itself have drawn attention'.
4. The participants in the tenth session of the Commission on Arab Women held in Tunis said in their telex message of 30 March 1983 that they were 'convinced that the responsibility lay entirely with the Israeli authorities' and requested the Director-General to intervene 'to put a stop to this genocide and protect the life of the Palestinian people'.
5. The Permanent Delegate of Israel sent a letter, Ref/205 dated 2 May 1983, to the Director-General stating that 'the media and certain political spokesmen, mostly Arab, have recently launched a campaign alleging so-called poisoning of high-school students, most of them girls, in Judea and Samaria'.
6. According to the letter from the Permanent Delegate of Israel, this phenomenon had been looked into by Israeli medical experts, who had concluded 'that there was no evidence to indicate that there was any poisoning in the area'. Nevertheless, the letter continued, the Minister of Health of Israel had invited a team of researchers from the Public Health Service, Centers of Disease Control, in Atlanta (Georgia) in the United States 'to conduct an independent assessment on the spot'. The Permanent Delegate of Israel said that the analyses and examinations carried out by this team, which had just published a summary of its report, 'have failed "to detect the consistent presence of any environmental toxin"' and that 'this phenomenon "was induced by anxiety"'.
7. She enclosed with her letter a copy of the summary of the report by the Public Health Service, Centers of Disease Control, in Atlanta, dated 4 April 1983, in which its authors state, inter alia:

We conclude that this epidemic of acute illness was induced by anxiety. It may have been triggered initially either by psychological factors or by sub-toxic exposure to H2S. Its subsequent spread was mediated by psychogenic factors. Newspaper and radio reports may have contributed to this spread. The epidemic ended after West Bank schools were closed. We observed no evidence of malingering or of deliberate fabrication of symptoms. We observed no evidence of reproductive impairment in affected patients.

8. In a letter to the Permanent Delegate of Israel dated 7 June 1983, the Director-General acknowledged receipt of her letter Ref/205 and of the enclosure. The Director-General enclosed with his letter copies of the communications received by the Secretariat on the subject and requested the Permanent Delegate to let him have any comments the Government of Israel wished to make on the matter. In addition, he informed her that the content of the two documents and of the other communications on the subject received by the Secretariat would be summarized in an addendum to document 116 EX/16.
9. The Director-General was further informed that the members of the United Nations Security Council met informally on 4 April 1983 and asked the Secretary-General to carry out independent inquiries into the causes and effects of the grave problem of reported cases of poisoning in the Arab occupied territories of the West Bank.
10. The Director-General was also informed that the World Health Organization had sent a mission to the Arab occupied territories on 4 April 1983 to conduct an independent inquiry. At the Thirty-sixth World Health Assembly, which was held in Geneva from 2 to 18 May 1983, this matter was discussed under item 32 of the agenda 'Health conditions of the Arab population in the Arab occupied territories, including Palestine' and referred to in the resolution adopted on that item on 16 May 1983.

United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

Executive Board

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Hundred-and-sixteenth Session

116 EX/16 Add.2
PARIS, 13 June 1983
Original: French

Item 5.1.5 of the agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF 21 C/RESOLUTION 14.1
CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS
IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

ADDENDUM 2

SUMMARY

This addendum contains a letter dated 7 June 1983 which was sent to the Director-General by the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco in reply to a letter from the Director-General dated 19 February 1983, of which a detailed summary is given in paragraph 35 of document 116 EX/16.

Permanent Delegation of Israel
to Unesco

Paris, 7 June 1983

Sir,

I wish to refer to your letter reference 1.4/9010/17.13 dated 19 February 1983.

Before commenting on the various points raised in it, I should like to point out that the education system, the curriculum, the teaching methods and the textbooks in Judaea and Samaria are identical to those used in Jordan and, in the case of the Gaza Strip, identical to those used in Egypt.

Thus, candidates for the secondary school leaving certificate examination in Judaea and Samaria receive the examination papers from Jordan. The papers are distributed by the local teaching staff and sent back to Jordan. The results are published and the certificates awarded by the Jordanian Government. The same procedures are followed in the Gaza Strip with the leaving certificate examinations of the Egyptian Ministry of Education.

Whenever reforms are introduced in Jordan and Egypt, they are automatically applied in Judaea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip.

I should also like to draw attention to the increase in the number of pupils sitting the final secondary school examinations. In Judaea and Samaria, there was an increase from 2,132 for the school year 1967/1968 to 8,315 for the school year 1981/1982. In the Gaza Strip, the corresponding figures were 3,654 and 5,475.

With regard to the planning and co-ordination of educational activities, I should like to point out that a Board of Education composed of ten local educationists and teachers operates in Judaea and Samaria. This Board co-ordinates education activities and adapts them to the specific needs of the population, taking care to remain within the framework laid down by the Jordanian education system.

I am satisfied that this Board of Education will find ways of stepping up its activities in the light of your suggestions in order to identify priorities for education as a whole and for technical education in particular.

As far as the content and methods of teaching are concerned, the Board of Education and local teachers endeavour, with the assistance of the Israeli authorities, to review the application of curricula continuously with a view to bringing them into line with modern ideas.

The suggestion regarding the establishment of a technical and educational research centre for vocational training will be submitted to the competent educational authorities, who will look into the possibility of setting up such a centre with the assistance of UNDP.

The UNDP has, in fact, investigated development needs on the spot and has already drawn up a number of projects, some of which are now being implemented. The projects include, inter alia, centres for children to be used for extra-curricular activities, a technical institute providing specialist training for women in various fields, a community centre in the Qasbah of Nablus and a series of technological and vocational specialization projects.

With regard to the training of teachers, further training courses, in Arabic and English, are held regularly during the summer holidays for teaching staff in Judaea and Samaria and in the Gaza Strip. Most of these courses take place in those areas, although a number are held in Israeli universities which have the necessary facilities, experience and administrative structures. Arrangements for these courses are made in accordance with the recommendations of local inspectors of education and approved by the board of education. Thus, this year, training courses will be held in fourteen centres spread throughout all the districts of the territories in question and will be attended by 1,120 primary, preparatory and secondary-school teachers from Judaea and Samaria and 710 from the Gaza Strip in such subjects as mathematics, the natural sciences, art education, languages, sport, domestic science and technical education. In addition, during the present school year, 340 preparatory and secondary-school teachers have attended further training courses in Israeli higher education institutions, specially in mathematics, the natural sciences and English. A hundred-and-fifty teachers will take part in similar courses during the coming summer holidays.

The directors of the district offices of the educational services, the education director and his deputy and two officials responsible for the organization of examinations regularly attend working meetings and seminars together. At these meetings there is discussion of such problems as textbooks, the curricula, training courses, appointments, teaching material, the level of studies, etc. The inspectors of education have monthly meetings in their different fields in order to discuss specific matters concerning the teaching of the subjects in their particular field. Twenty meetings of this kind have been held during the present school year.

The administrative staff of the educational system meets at least once a year to attend short study courses and refresher courses. For their part, the inspectors organize, within each district, short refresher courses for the teachers. These meetings, organized according to the different subjects, take the form of discussions which provide useful educational and pedagogical information. Approximately 120 meetings of this kind have taken place this year.

Another innovation has been the organization of summer camps, which started eight years ago. This year twenty-two summer camps will be held in all the districts and will be attended by 4,000 pupils under the supervision of about 300 local monitors.

I should be grateful if you would be so kind as to circulate this letter as an addendum to document 116 EX/16.

Accept, Sir, my thanks and the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ya'el VERED
Ambassador
Permanent Delegate

United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

Executive Board

EX

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IMPLEMENTATION OF 21 C/RESOLUTION 14.1 CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL
AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES: REPORT
OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

ADDENDUM 3

SUMMARY

In this addendum, the Director-General informs the Executive Board of two communications received by him concerning the closing of Al-Najah University and of the telegram he sent to the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs in this regard.

1. On 8 and 9 June 1983, the Permanent Observer of the PLO at Unesco sent the Director-General two letters informing him that the Israeli military authorities had ordered the closing of Al-Najah University for the period 4 June to 1 September 1983. He requested the Director-General to intercede in order to 'put an end to this new infringement of academic freedom'.
2. With his letter of 9 June 1983, the Permanent Observer of the PLO at Unesco enclosed a copy of the telex he had received on 8 June from Mr Munthir Salah, President of Al-Najah University, containing the text of an official announcement issued by the University.
3. This announcement reads as follows:

'AN- NAJAH NATIONAL UNIVERSITY WAS ORDERED TO BE OFFICIALLY CLOSED FROM 4TH JUNE, 1983 UNTIL 1ST SEPTEMBER, 1983. THE FORMAL MILITARY CLOSURE NOTIFICATION WAS HANDED TO UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS ON 5TH JUNE, 1983.

/...

ON 4TH JUNE, 200 AN- NAJAH STUDENTS STAGED A RELATIVELY PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION AT THE UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE TO MARK THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE ISRAELI INVASION OF LEBANON.

THE ISRAELI SOLDIERS WHO SURROUNDED THE UNIVERSITY FIRED RUBBER BULLETS, TEAR GAS AND, IN SOME CASES, USED REAL BULLETS.

MORE THAN THIRTY STUDENTS WERE TAKEN TO HOSPITAL AFTER THE DEMONSTRATION SUFFERING FROM THE EFFECTS OF ASPHYXIATION.

LATER IN THE AFTERNOON OF THE SAME DAY, ISRAELI SOLDIERS INVADED THE UNIVERSITY AND ENTERED CAMPUS.

THE OFFICIAL CLOSURE OF THE UNIVERSITY IS THE LATEST IN A LINE OF ISRAELI MEASURES AIMED AT PREVENTING THE UNIVERSITY FROM PURSUING ITS ACADEMIC MISSION. LAST YEAR 28 PROFESSORS FROM AN- NAJAH UNIVERSITY, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT AND THE VICE-PRESIDENT, WERE DEPORTED AFTER REFUSING TO SIGN THE LOYALTY OATH PRESENTED AT THE TIME BY THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES. IN THE COURSE OF THIS YEAR, MEMBERS OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL WERE TWICE ARRESTED. THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES ALSO CLOSED THE UNIVERSITY BY MEANS OF ERECTING ROAD-BLOCKS, MANY TIMES AND WITHOUT GIVING REASONS.

THE OFFICIAL CLOSURE OF THE UNIVERSITY MEANS THAT 3,500 STUDENTS WILL BE UNABLE TO CONTINUE THEIR STUDIES. THE 700 STUDENTS WHO WERE DUE TO GRADUATE THIS SEPTEMBER FACE A LONG PERIOD OF DELAY. THE FACULTIES WILL BE UNABLE TO GO ON WITH THEIR DAILY DUTIES.

THUS WE CALL UPON ALL PARTIES CONCERNED ABOUT THE ACADEMIC FREEDOM OF PALESTINIAN STUDENTS TO PROTEST AGAINST THIS DECISION AND TRY TO HAVE IT REVOKED'

4. On 11 June 1983, the Director-General sent a telegram to the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs stating that he had just been informed that the Israeli military authorities had ordered the closing of Al-Najah University from 4 June 1983 to 1 September 1983. The Director-General also noted that this closure, occurring just before the end of the academic year, would mean a delay for 700 final-year students in obtaining their diplomas, and would, at the same time, disrupt the academic schedule of the student body as a whole. Recalling that, on a number of occasions, the international community, during the proceedings of the General Conference of Unesco and the Executive Board, had voiced concern in regard to the need to ensure that the populations of the occupied Arab territories received education in keeping with their aspirations and cultural identity, in the same way as all other peoples, the Director-General requested the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs to intercede personally with a view to the reopening of the University as soon as possible. A copy of this telegram was sent to the Permanent Delegate of Israel to Unesco.
