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**Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights  
of the Palestinian People****Draft programme of work for 2005****I. Mandate of the Committee**

1. The mandate of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for the year 2005 is contained in General Assembly resolutions 59/28, 59/29 and 59/30 of 1 December 2004.

2. In its resolution 59/28, entitled "Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People", the General Assembly expressed its appreciation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its efforts in performing the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly and took note of its annual report, including the conclusions and recommendations contained in chapter VII thereof,<sup>1</sup> requested it to continue to exert all efforts to promote the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, to support the Middle East peace process and to mobilize international support for and assistance to the Palestinian people, and authorized it to make such adjustments in its approved programme of work as it may consider appropriate and necessary in the light of developments and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session and thereafter. It also requested the Committee to continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine and to report and make suggestions to the General Assembly, the Security Council or the Secretary-General, as appropriate. It requested the Committee to continue to extend its cooperation and support to Palestinian and other civil society organizations in order to mobilize international solidarity and support for the achievement by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights and for a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, and to involve additional civil society organizations in its work. The Assembly requested the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine and other United Nations bodies associated with the question of Palestine to continue to cooperate fully with the Committee and to make available to it, at its request, the relevant information and documentation which they had at their disposal. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to circulate the report of the Committee to all competent bodies of the United Nations, and urged them to take the necessary action, as appropriate.



3. In its resolution 59/29, entitled "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Division with the necessary resources and to ensure that it continued to carry out its programme of work as detailed in the relevant earlier resolutions, in consultation with the Committee and under its guidance, including, in particular, the organization of meetings in various regions with the participation of all sectors of the international community, the further development and expansion of the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL), the preparation and widest possible dissemination of publications and information materials on various aspects of the question of Palestine and the provision of the annual training programme for staff of the Palestinian Authority.

4. In its resolution 59/30, entitled "Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat", the General Assembly requested the Department, in full cooperation and coordination with the Committee, to continue, with the necessary flexibility, as may be required by developments, its special information programme for the biennium 2004-2005, and outlined a number of specific activities to be carried out under the programme.

## **II. Priority issues in the programme of work of the Committee for 2005**

5. The Committee has reviewed the various aspects of its own programme of work and that of the Division for Palestinian Rights, as well as of the mandates governing them. It will continue to make adjustments in this programme in order to enhance its responsiveness to developments in the peace process and the situation on the ground, as well as to raise its effectiveness in promoting the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights.

6. The Committee welcomes the successful conclusion of the Palestinian elections, held on 9 January 2005, for the Presidency of the Palestinian Authority, and affirms its support for the new Palestinian leadership. The Committee looks forward to the convening of the Palestinian legislative elections, and expresses its hope for the continued unity and success of the Palestinian people in their democratic process and in their endeavour to develop and strengthen national institutions. The Committee expresses its hope for the immediate resumption of negotiations between the two parties and for the full implementation of the Quartet's road map for the achievement of the two-State solution and the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine. In its activities, the Committee will continue to support all efforts by the parties towards fulfilling that goal and will mobilize all sectors of the world community with a view to assisting the Palestinian people to attain its inalienable rights.

7. The Committee maintains that the continuing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, is at the core of the conflict. The occupation is marked by the expansion of settlement activities and is greatly exacerbated by the continued construction of the wall on Palestinian land. The Committee remains much concerned about the actions and policies of the occupying Power, including the disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force, the practice of collective punishment and extrajudicial assassinations and the imprisonment of

thousands of Palestinians. A negotiated solution that would end the occupation, ensure security and enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights is urgently needed. As requested by the General Assembly, the Committee will continue to keep the situation under review and promote a constructive analysis and discussion of these issues by the international community.

8. While welcoming the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice and the position of the General Assembly in that regard, the Committee remains concerned that the illegal construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, has not stopped. Its detrimental effects, including the confiscation of land, the destruction of property and the imposition of severe restrictions on movement by means of the "permit system", continue to plague the daily lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians and to deepen the ongoing humanitarian crisis. The existence of the wall on the Palestinian land, as well as the continuing illegal settlement activities being carried out by Israel throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, are seriously hampering efforts to resolve the conflict and may render the prospect of a two-State solution physically impossible to implement. The Committee's position is that the international community must ensure that the occupying Power abides by the provisions of the Court's ruling, as demanded by resolution ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and subsequent General Assembly resolutions, and immediately cease the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, dismantle forthwith the structure situated therein, repeal or render ineffective all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto and make reparation for all damage caused by its construction of the wall.

9. The Committee continues to believe that the road map remains the most viable means of achieving the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting resolution of the conflict through the implementation of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine, based on the pre-1967 borders. This settlement must conform with international law and with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and other relevant United Nations resolutions. The parties should refrain from any unilateral measures that would undermine efforts to achieve a final peace settlement. The Committee is hopeful that the Quartet will intensify its work towards the achievement of this goal.

10. The Committee is of the view that its programme of activities, mandated by the General Assembly, continues to make a positive contribution to heightening international awareness of the root cause of the conflict — the occupation by Israel of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Throughout 2005, its work will remain focused on promoting a better understanding, as gauged by international public opinion, of the importance of the achievement by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights, namely the right to self-determination, the right to an independent, sovereign State and the right of return, as well as the urgency of achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine.

11. As in previous years, the Committee will maintain its support of the Palestinian people and the political process through a variety of activities. In 2005, the Committee will pay special attention to assessing the situation on the ground and supporting the creation of conditions conducive to the resumption of peace negotiations, including the complete cessation of all acts of violence, such as military attacks, destruction and acts of terror. The Committee will highlight the

specific responsibility of the occupying Power for ending its illegal policies and practices, such as the settlement activity, the construction of the wall, and various measures of collective punishment. The Committee will maintain its support for revitalized and active international involvement aimed at encouraging both parties to overcome the current impasse in the peace process, including through the Quartet and the continued personal engagement of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process. The Committee will also focus on issues relating to the Palestinian economic recovery and the urgency of providing international assistance to the Palestinian people. It will lay special emphasis on raising to a greater extent international awareness of the plight of Palestinian women and children — the most vulnerable segment of the Palestinian society — who are suffering as a result of the occupation.

12. The Committee attaches great importance to enhancing cooperation and coordination between the Department of Public Information and the Division for Palestinian Rights in the implementation of their respective mandates. In its resolution 59/30, the General Assembly requested the Department, *inter alia*, to expand its collection of audio-visual material on the question of Palestine and to continue the production and preservation of such material and the updating of the exhibit in the Secretariat. The Committee will continue to cooperate with the Department in carrying out the various mandated activities.

### **III. Activities of the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights**

#### **A. Action by the Committee**

13. In pursuance of its mandate, the Committee will continue to keep under review the situation relating to the question of Palestine and participate in relevant meetings of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Committee will also continue to monitor the situation on the ground and draw the attention of the international community to urgent developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, requiring international action.

14. The Committee, through its Chairman, will continue to participate in relevant intergovernmental and other conferences and meetings, as necessary. The Committee considers this activity an important aspect of its work in promotion of international support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

15. In cooperation with the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations, the Committee will continue to maintain contacts with the Palestinian Authority and other institutions, including civil society, in the areas under its jurisdiction and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Following the practice of previous years, the Committee will continue to invite Palestinian officials and other Palestinian personalities to meetings with members and observers of the Committee and the Secretariat, as required.

16. The Bureau of the Committee will continue consultations with Governments and intergovernmental organizations interested in its programme of work, including members of the European Union and the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as the

African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and others. These exchanges should help to promote understanding of the Committee's mandate and objectives and would lead to greater participation in its activities.

## **B. Meetings and conferences**

17. The Committee considers that its programme of international meetings and conferences facilitates discussion and analysis of the various aspects of the question of Palestine. The meetings highlight the most pressing issues, such as the root cause of the conflict, as well as the need to end violence and settlement activities and to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian population. They also mobilize international support for efforts to resolve the conflict and implement the road map. The Committee highly appreciates the involvement in these meetings of Governments, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations entities and civil society. The Committee expresses its satisfaction with the level of engagement of the international community achieved at those meetings and its support. It will continue this programme to foster support for the attainment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights in accordance with international legitimacy. In its meetings this year, the Committee intends to address such issues as the application of international law to all aspects of the question of Palestine; the significance and impact of the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice; the resumption of the political process and the implementation of the road map; the effects of the settlement policy and the construction of the wall on efforts to achieve a two-State solution; the need to protect the Palestinian people; the humanitarian and socio-economic situation, including the plight of Palestinian women and children; and the further involvement of civil society.

18. In 2005, the Committee, in cooperation with prospective host countries, organizations, and relevant Secretariat services, will do its utmost to ensure the success of its programme of meetings and conferences. In so doing, it will keep in mind the need for economy and the most cost-effective utilization of resources. The Committee will continue to make an effort to encourage participation by countries and organizations, which so far have not engaged fully in its programme of work.

19. The Committee intends to organize the following meetings in 2005:

- United Nations International Meeting on the Question of Palestine.
- United Nations International Meeting in Support of Middle East Peace. The meeting will be followed by an NGO event in support of the Palestinian people.
- United Nations Latin American and Caribbean Meeting on the Question of Palestine. The Meeting will be followed by an NGO event in solidarity with the Palestinian people.
- United Nations International Conference of Civil Society in Support of the Palestinian People.

## **C. Cooperation with civil society**

### **Civil society organizations**

20. The Committee commends civil society organizations for their work in upholding international legitimacy with regard to the question of Palestine through advocacy and mobilization of public opinion, as well as for their humanitarian and assistance initiatives aimed at alleviating the suffering of the Palestinian people and improving their living conditions. The Committee encourages civil society organizations to focus their advocacy efforts at the local, national, regional and international levels, on the legal obligations of Governments, as emphasized in the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, and to coordinate their activities. It also welcomes initiatives promoting the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions.

21. The Committee intends to continue to invite civil society organizations to all international meetings and conferences organized under its auspices. At these events, it will encourage them to discuss their own initiatives and campaigns and to exchange views and ideas on issues of mutual interest. The participation of Governments and intergovernmental and civil society organizations in such meetings and conferences should offer a unique opportunity to develop and strengthen initiatives by all strata of the international community with a view to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

22. The Committee will maintain and further develop its liaison with national, regional and international coordinating mechanisms on the question of Palestine accredited to it, in addition to the already established liaison with a large number of individual civil society organizations. It will continue to accredit new organizations. Periodic consultation with civil society representatives will contribute to a further enhancement of the Committee's programme of cooperation with civil society.

23. The Committee is of the view that regular exchange of information on respective current and planned activities is crucial to its cooperation with civil society. The guidelines for accredited NGOs call for periodic reports on their activities. The Committee requests the Division to continue to develop and regularly update its Internet web site on NGO activities on the question of Palestine ([www.un.org/depts/dpa/ngo](http://www.un.org/depts/dpa/ngo)) as a central tool for the exchange of information and communication between the United Nations and civil society. It also requests the Division to report periodically on civil society initiatives in order to enhance the interaction between civil society and the Committee.

24. In 2005, the resources available for cooperation with civil society will be used for the following activities:

- (a) Organization, whenever appropriate and feasible, of meetings of civil society organizations in conjunction with international meetings and conferences held under the auspices of the Committee;

- (b) Participation of representatives of the Committee and the Division in important forums and other events worldwide organized by civil society organizations;

(c) Periodic meetings of consultations with various civil society organizations with a view to briefing them on the activities of the Committee and assessing their needs that can be met through the Division's programme of work;

(d) Providing assistance to Palestinian organizations in sending their representatives to meetings held under the auspices of the Committee or supported by the Committee.

#### **Parliaments and inter-parliamentary organizations**

25. The Committee strongly believes that the role and contribution of national parliaments and inter-parliamentary organizations in shaping public opinion and formulating policy guidelines constitute an important source of international legitimacy in support of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine. It is of the view that the experience and political weight of lawmakers and their international organizations will be instrumental in following up on the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice. The Committee reaffirms the continuing importance of developing closer cooperation with parliaments and representatives of inter-parliamentary bodies in order to encourage the discussion within the respective parliaments and among all strata of society of ways of supporting peace in the Middle East and resolving the question of Palestine. To that end, the Committee will strive to involve parliamentarians and representatives of inter-parliamentary organizations in international conferences and meetings organized under its auspices. Consultations between the Committee and representatives of parliaments and inter-parliamentary organizations, notably the Inter-Parliamentary Union, should improve cooperation between the two sides.

### **D. United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine**

26. The Committee requests the Division for Palestinian Rights to continue its work on the further development, expansion and administration of the United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine featured on the "Question of Palestine" web site. The Division will launch the site's portal, designed under the guidance of the Bureau, and will continue to redesign and visually enhance the various related web pages of the site. The Division will continue to make the UNISPAL collection of United Nations and related documents comprehensive as well as up to date and its access modalities and displays user-friendlier. The Committee requests the Division to report periodically to the Bureau on the status of UNISPAL work accomplished and on progress achieved in the system's development.

### **E. Publications programme**

27. The Committee considers that the Division's publications programme contributes to heightening international awareness of the various aspects of the question of Palestine, involvement of the United Nations and the work of the Committee, its mandate and objectives. The Division should continue this important information and outreach activity, under the guidance of the Committee, and issue the following programmed publications in a timely manner:

- Monthly bulletin on action by the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations relevant to the question of Palestine
- Periodic review of developments relating to the Middle East peace process
- Monthly chronological review of events relating to the question of Palestine
- Annual compilation of resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council relating to the question of Palestine
- Reports of international meetings and conferences held under the auspices of the Committee
- Annual bulletin on the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People
- "NGO Action News", a bimonthly summary of information on civil society activities on the question of Palestine.

28. The Committee believes that the Division, in consultation with the Bureau, should continue to review the existing publications and make proposals with regard to those that require updating.

## **F. Other activities of the Division for Palestinian Rights**

### **Training programme for staff of the Palestinian Authority**

29. The Committee considers that, in light of its importance and usefulness to the Palestinian Authority, the Division should continue the training programme in 2005. The Committee is of the view that, in selecting candidates for this annual programme, special consideration should be given to achieving gender balance.

### **Observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People**

30. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/40 B of 2 December 1977, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People will be observed on Tuesday, 29 November 2005. It is envisaged that solemn meetings in observance of the Day will take place at United Nations Headquarters, at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna and elsewhere, in accordance with established practice.

31. The Committee will again commemorate this anniversary with a solemn meeting and other activities. During the week beginning on 29 November, a Palestinian exhibit or a cultural event will be organized at United Nations Headquarters in cooperation with the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations.

32. The Committee will continue to review and assess its programme of work in the light of the situation on the ground and new developments in the political process, and will make adjustments, as necessary.

### *Notes*

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 35 (A/59/35).*