



General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 March 2015

Original: English

Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Summary record of the 368th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 10 February 2015, at 10 a.m.

Temporary Chair: Mr. Eliasson (Deputy Secretary-General)

Chair: Mr. Seck (Senegal)

Contents

Adoption of the agenda

Election of officers

Update on developments since the previous meeting of the Committee

Draft programme of work for 2015

Report on the International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society
Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights, held in Seville, Spain, on 2 and
3 December 2014

United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, to be held in Cairo
on 23 and 24 February 2015

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent as soon as possible to the Chief of the Documents Control Unit (srcorrections@un.org).

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org/>).

15-01756 (E)



Please recycle



The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda (A/AC.183/2015/L.1)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Election of officers

2. The Temporary Chair invited the Committee to consider nominations for the posts of Chair, Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur of the Committee.

3. **Mr. Lasso Mendoza** (Ecuador) nominated Mr. Seck (Senegal) for re-election to the office of Chair, Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan), Mr. Reyes Rodríguez (Cuba), Mr. Percaya (Indonesia), Mr. Emvula (Namibia) and Ms. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) for re-election as the five Vice-Chairs, and Mr. Grima (Malta) for re-election to the office of Rapporteur.

4. **Mr. Raja Zaib Shah** (Malaysia) seconded the nominations.

5. *Mr. Seck (Senegal), Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan), Mr. Reyes Rodríguez (Cuba), Mr. Percaya (Indonesia), Mr. Emvula (Namibia), Ms. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) and Mr. Grima (Malta) were elected by acclamation.*

6. *Mr. Seck (Senegal) took the Chair.*

7. **Mr. Eliasson** (Deputy Secretary-General), speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, said that the Committee, which was in its fortieth year, was to be commended for its resolute work. The General Assembly had designated 2014 as the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, with the aim of catalysing global action on the question of Palestine in the context of the direct peace negotiations that the United States had been brokering at the time. Instead, the year had been grim for all parties. The talks had broken down and violence had escalated. Hostilities between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza had claimed the lives of nearly 2,200 Palestinians and 72 Israelis. Gaza remained a desolate place under blockade, with much human suffering. In that regard, he urged donors to fulfil the pledges they had made to reconstruct Gaza at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine, held in October 2014. Violence had also engulfed the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Israel. The increased hostility and incitement in and around the Haram al-Sharif, the Temple Mount, threatened to inflame religious tensions in the region and beyond.

8. It was regrettable that the parties to the conflict had taken unilateral steps that had deepened mutual distrust and distanced them from a prospect of a negotiated settlement. They were urged to refrain from any action that could further exacerbate the situation and to demonstrate the necessary leadership for reaching and implementing the difficult decisions that lay ahead. The international community also bore responsibility for the collective failure to advance a political solution. The United Nations system, the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Human Rights Council, the Committee and other concerned bodies must strive to revive negotiations for a two-State solution. At a time when the entire region faced the threat of terrorism and violent extremism, resolving the conflict was critical to international peace and security.

9. Member States and regional groups, including the League of Arab States, had intensified the search for a way out of the impasse. The engagement of the Quartet and other stakeholders offered a chance in 2015 to address issues that seemed intractable. He called on the Committee to exert all efforts to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights and reiterated the commitment of the United Nations to help achieve a just and durable peace, end nearly a half century of occupation and establish a sovereign and independent State of Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security.

10. **The Chair**, speaking in his capacity as the representative of Senegal, said that the Committee had once again demonstrated its faith in his country. He reaffirmed his Government's full commitment to helping the Palestinian people exercise their legitimate rights. The presence of the Deputy Secretary-General was evidence of the importance the Secretary-General attached to the Committee and to a just and peaceful resolution to the question of Palestine. In that regard, he recalled the Secretary-General's participation in activities in observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People in 2014. Indeed, the support of the United Nations for international political and diplomatic efforts to steer Israel and Palestine towards the path of dialogue dated back to 1945, when the organization was created. It was in that spirit, and in the hope of bolstering opportunities to reach a peaceful solution to the conflict that the General Assembly had declared 2014 the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. The Committee had organized 17 events in observance of

the Year, including meetings in Cairo, Quito, Geneva, Ankara and Seville. Together with the Mission of the State of Palestine, it had also organized activities showcasing the vibrant culture of Palestine.

11. Despite the efforts of the international community, the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem remained critical, while millions of Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Libya and Syria faced deplorable conditions; a peaceful solution, which had seemed possible in early 2014, appeared to slip further out of reach every day. Nevertheless, the Committee would not be deterred from its mission. In line with its mandate, which had been renewed by the General Assembly in November 2014, the Committee would continue to urge all members of the international community to respect their shared responsibility towards building lasting peace in the region. In that regard, the Committee would be holding meetings in Cairo, The Hague and Moscow and organizing a joint event with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The challenges were great, but with the engagement of all, the establishment of a sovereign State of Palestine could be achieved.

12. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that his delegation was grateful to the United Nations for its principled call for the lifting of the blockade in Gaza and its support for the rights of the Palestinian people. He noted that the President of the Palestinian Authority was meeting that day with the Prime Minister of Sweden, the Deputy Secretary-General's home country, and welcomed the courageous decision of the Swedish Government to recognize the State of Palestine.

13. He hoped that in 2015, in line with the will of the international community, the Security Council would adopt and seek the implementation of a resolution on the Palestine question that would include three key elements. First, the resolution should establish a time frame for ending the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Second, it should set out the parameters for the state of Palestine, which had been established through global consensus. Those parameters included borders based on those of June 1967, with modifications agreed to by the parties; the establishment of East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine and West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel; and a just and mutually-agreed solution for Palestine refugees, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 (III). Third, the

resolution should outline a collective effort that included the two parties involved in the negotiations, the five Permanent Members of the Council, relevant Arab States and other key States, in order to contribute to the success of negotiations and guarantee the implementation of the agreement. The international community must strive for a negotiated solution in order to avoid further confrontation and a religious war with Israel, in particular over the question of Jerusalem. An environment of despondency fostered extremism on both sides, which was detrimental to the entire region.

14. The international community had failed to bring Israel in compliance with international law and end its settlement activities. For that reason, Palestine had acceded to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. That was a legal, peaceful and civilized means of seeking accountability for Israel's illegal activities, which constituted a major obstacle in the peace negotiations. The State of Palestine, its people and leadership would continue to cooperate with the United Nations and the Committee. The efforts of the international community must go beyond simply reaffirming established principles; there must be concrete progress towards a two-State solution.

Update on developments since the previous meeting of the Committee

15. **The Chair** said that, since the previous meeting of the Committee, on 24 November 2014, the General Assembly had adopted the four resolutions submitted by the Committee, thus reaffirming the United Nations commitment to the question of Palestine. On 18 December 2014, the Bureau of the Committee had issued a statement in which it welcomed the Declaration of 17 December 2014 of the Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention. Lastly, on 15 January 2014, he had delivered a statement in his capacity as Chair of the Committee at the open debate held by the Security Council on the agenda item on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestine question.

Draft programme of work for 2015 (A/AC.183/2015/CRP.1)

16. **The Chair**, introducing the Committee's draft programme of work for 2015 (A/AC.183/2015/CRP.1), said that section I summarized the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth

session, while section II briefly reviewed developments since the submission of the Committee's report, in particular the continued expansion of Israeli settlements, the financial crisis besetting the government of Palestine and its effects on the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Section III indicated the Committee's priorities, which included addressing obstacles to peace, such as the situation in Jerusalem, the blockade of Gaza and Palestinian political prisoners. Section IV described the planned activities of the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights, which included meetings and conferences, the issuance of publications, a training programme for Palestinian officials and public information activities. The Bureau would revise the programme of work throughout the year, as necessary.

17. He took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft programme of work.

18. *It was so decided.*

19. **Mr. Ramírez Carreño** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that, having been elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Venezuela would be in a position to advance any initiatives the Committee deemed conducive to the exercise of the Palestinian people's right to sovereignty and self-determination.

Report on the International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights, held in Seville, Spain, on 2 and 3 December 2014

20. **Mr. Tanin** (Afghanistan) said that the International Conference of Local Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights had been organized by the Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity (FAMSI), the Andalusian regional government, the non-governmental organization United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the Committee; the Parliament of Andalusia had provided the venue. He and the Ms. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua), Vice-Chair, had attended on behalf of the Committee. The opening session had included statements by the President of the Parliament of Andalusia, the Vice-President of the Junta of Andalusia, the President of FAMSI, the President of the Network for Decentralized Cooperation for Palestine, the Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Spain and himself. A representative of the Palestinian

Ministry of Foreign Affairs had delivered a keynote presentation on the Palestinian strategy at the United Nations, including within the Security Council.

21. Some 90 participants had attended the highly interactive conference, which had included five panel presentations and 19 speakers. UCLG had announced that it would convene the first World Forum of Local Governments for Palestine in 2015; the Committee had been asked to support the initiative. Speakers had highlighted the initiatives of local authorities to assist Palestine as well as their potential contributions to advancing the peace process. Over the course of five sessions, conference participants had discussed issues ranging from decentralized cooperation and the role of local governments to the challenges of working with traditional and social media to mobilize support for Palestinian rights. A session on ending Israeli impunity touched on the parallels between the Israeli occupation and apartheid; examined the accountability instruments under the European Union; and identified corporations profiting from the occupation, including G4S, a private security contractor. Civil society representatives had expressed concern that G4S also had contracts with the United Nations in other parts of the world. A panel on the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement had discussed the strategy of linking Palestinian rights to a global struggle for human rights and had identified progressive trends in support of Palestine on university campuses. During a session on Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention centres, the Committee had been invited to support the campaign to free Marwan Barghouti, who had delivered a moving message during the closing sessions. The key points of the discussion were reflected in the Olive Declaration, which had been adopted by the conference.

22. The Committee's participation in the conference had strengthened its cooperation with crucial partners in civil society and established partnerships with other stakeholders, including local governments and parliaments, and organizations providing international humanitarian and development assistance. He recommended that the Committee, through the Division for Palestinian Rights, should continue those relationships and involve those organizations in the implementation of its programme of work where appropriate.

**United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the
Palestinian People, to be held in Cairo on
23 and 24 February 2015**

23. **The Chair** said that a provisional programme of the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People had been distributed to the Committee as a working paper. The objective of the Seminar was to identify the immediate and long-term humanitarian and development needs in the Gaza Strip. In that regard, the role of intergovernmental organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors, and the private sector would be examined. There would also be discussions on coordinating assistance and on obstacles to reconstruction. Internationally renowned experts, representatives of Member States and observer States, legislators, and representatives of the United Nations system, civil society and the media had been invited to attend the Seminar.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.