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LETTER DATED 8 JUNE 1977 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON
THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN
PEOPLE ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to resolution 31/20 by which the General Assembly at its thirty-first session endorsed the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, as a basis for the solution of the question of Palestine. The provisions of this resolution were brought to the attention of the President of the Security Council by the Secretary-General in his letter of 21 December 1976.

As Chairman, I am authorized by the Committee to draw your attention particularly to paragraph 4 of resolution 31/20 under the terms of which the General Assembly urged the Security Council to consider the recommendations of the Committee again as soon as possible, in order to take the necessary measures to ensure their implementation.

It seems to the Committee that the discussions at the latest session of the General Assembly revealed a convergence of views to the effect that the Palestinian problem was a central element of the Middle East conflict and that, therefore, a just and lasting peace in the area could be achieved only if the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people were taken into account. In the course of the debate, it was also generally emphasized that a satisfactory and equitable solution to the question of Palestine could be achieved only within the framework of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. These trends of opinion confirm the basic considerations presented by the Committee in its report.

You will undoubtedly have noticed, Mr. President, that the recommendations of the Committee flow from the fundamental principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and from the sacred principle of the right of peoples to self-determination and national independence. Indeed, among the most basic of the recommendations was the call for urgent implementation, long overdue, of resolutions unanimously adopted by the Security Council in the past. One striking example is resolution 237 (1967), unanimously adopted a decade ago, the implementation of which remains the responsibility of the Security Council.

The Committee has pointed out several ways in which the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, could exercise an influential role in promoting and facilitating a peaceful settlement.

The Committee has also been encouraged by recent statements by leaders of States which play an important role in the efforts to achieve progress towards peace in the Middle East. In the view of the Committee, these statements indicate a general acknowledgement of the importance of the Palestinian problem and implicitly recognize the principles underlying the Committee's approach towards finding an acceptable solution to it on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

I would remind you that the report of the Committee also states clearly that its members considered "that the recommendations, in their implementation, would constitute a contribution within the framework of the United Nations and would complement efforts towards the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region".

I need hardly add that, in formulating its recommendations, the Committee acted in accordance with its terms of reference and was fully aware that not all the elements of a comprehensive settlement of the situation in the Middle East were contained in its mandate.

It is the Committee's strong belief that delay in action by the Security Council would be prejudicial to progress now being made and that the requirements of the present situation demand that at its next meeting on the question of Palestine the Council - taking into account the observations made on the Committee's recommendations at the latest session of the General Assembly and more recent developments on the Palestinian problem - should endeavour urgently to promote a positive approach which would lead tangibly towards the solution of this problem.

I wish to reiterate to you and to the other members of the Security Council that the Committee remains anxious to support any constructive efforts aimed at overcoming the present stalemate.

I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Médoune FALL
Chairman of the Committee on the
Exercise of the Inalienable Rights
of the Palestinian People
