



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CONF.114/PC/9
6 April 1983

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR
THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE
Second session, 5th meeting
8 April 1983

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Recommendations and decisions adopted by the African regional
preparatory meeting held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania,
29 March to 1 April 1983

I. ARUSHA RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AFRICAN REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

The plight of the Palestinian people is one that is viewed with profound sympathy by the independent States of Africa. A deep interest and active involvement in the search for a just, comprehensive, and lasting solution to the problem of Palestine through all means, represent the natural and understandable response of Africans who themselves have experienced colonial domination. It is therefore only logical that the African States regard as vital and timely the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, which is scheduled to be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 16 to 27 August 1983. Likewise it is fitting that the African States should fully support the Conference objective of increasing international awareness of the facts concerning the question of Palestine as a significant step to a just, durable and comprehensive resolution of conflict in the Middle East.

The African regional preparatory meeting, which was held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 29 March to 1 April 1983, cognizant of the peculiar historic conditions that led to the usurpation of the Palestinian national homeland, affirms the position reiterated by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity on the question of Palestine, and recognizes:

(a) The Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination in Palestine, including the right to an independent and sovereign State, in accordance

with United Nations General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and more recently endorsed by United Nations General Assembly resolution ES-7/2 of 29 July 1980;

(b) The inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property in Palestine, from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and the right to compensation of those choosing not to return;

(c) That the attainment of the exercise of these inalienable rights is the sine qua non for a just solution of the question of Palestine and a lasting peace in the Middle East;

(d) That the question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem;

(e) The Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people;

(f) The right of the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate on an equal footing in all international conferences, organs, agencies, and endeavours of the United Nations in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions;

(g) The illegality of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza;

(h) The imperative necessity for the total and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, for a comprehensive and just solution to the conflict in the Middle East;

(i) The legitimacy of the struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization against foreign domination and alien subjugation by all available means, including armed struggle, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 3070 (XXVIII) of 30 November 1973.

Accordingly, the African Regional Preparatory Meeting, recalling the experience of the African people in their struggle against colonialism and for self-determination and national independence, recommends that the African States:

(1) Take additional initiatives in the Organization of African Unity to support the Palestinian national struggle;

(2) Establish diplomatic relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization and accord its representatives full diplomatic status;

(3) Encourage African workers' organizations to seek ways and means to find common cause with Palestinian workers;

(4) Encourage organizations such as those of women, youth, students, and teachers, to undertake exchanges and other joint programmes of action with their Palestinian counterparts;

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(5) Urge African jurists to initiate with their Palestinian counterparts, consultations, research and investigations on the juridical aspects of problems affecting the southern African and Palestinian struggles, in particular the detention of political prisoners and the denial of prisoner-of-war status to detained members of the national liberation movements of southern African and Palestine;

(6) Encourage the formation of national support committees with the people of Palestine;

(7) Request the African news media to engage in special and extensive coverage of the Question of Palestine;

(8) Consider ways and means of meeting the threat that Israel poses to Africa's security in view of Israel's close collaboration with the apartheid régime;

(9) Participate actively and at a high level in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in support of the achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

With respect to the United Nations, after full and careful deliberation, the African Regional Preparatory Meeting:

(1) Considers the recommendations of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-first session and subsequently, to be a programme capable of enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights in Palestine as well as a firm basis for a just, comprehensive and lasting resolution of conflict in the Middle East;

(2) Calls upon the Security Council to endorse and to implement the aforementioned recommendations as a matter of utmost urgency, recalling that they have not yet been approved as a result of a negative vote by a permanent member of the Security Council;

(3) Welcomes the Arab Peace Plan adopted at the twelfth Arab summit held at Fez, Morocco, on 9 September 1982 as an important contribution to the search for a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict and considers this plan as being in conformity with the resolutions of the United Nations aimed at settling the Question of Palestine;

(4) Takes note that the Council of Europe on 22 March 1983 affirmed the disposition towards peace of the Arab Peace Plan;

(5) Urges the Security Council to consider applying sanctions against Israel in order to compel it to withdraw from all Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

(6) Requests the Security Council to take urgent action to bring about an immediate and total cessation of Israel's policies in the occupied territories, and in particular the settlements, since the policy of settlements is an obstacle to the attainment of peace in the region;

(7) Calls upon the Security Council to reactivate as a matter of priority the Commission established by its resolution 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979 to examine the situation relating to Israeli settlements in Arab and Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

(8) Considers the continued presence of Israel in the occupied Arab territories, including the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza, as exacerbating instability in the region and posing a threat to international peace and security;

(9) Urges the Secretary-General, in consultation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and pending the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, to undertake effective measures to guarantee the safety and security and legal and human rights of the Palestinian refugees in the occupied territories;

(10) Urges the United Nations to take the necessary action to ensure that all Palestinian and Lebanese political prisoners detained by Israel be accorded the status of prisoners of war in accordance with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

II. SPECIAL RESOLUTION ON LEBANON DATED 1 APRIL 1983

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting expresses its grave concern at the situation in Lebanon arising from Israel's invasion of that country and its continued occupation of the Lebanese territory.

The Meeting considers these Israeli actions in Lebanon as constituting a threat to international peace and security.

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting therefore requests the United Nations Security Council to take appropriate measures in order to compel Israel to implement the resolutions of the Security Council demanding the immediate, total and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from the entire Lebanese territory.

III. MESSAGE DATED 30 MARCH 1983 FROM THE AFRICAN REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING CONCERNING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine meeting in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, expresses its gravest concern at current developments in the Palestinian Arab Territories illegally occupied by Israel.

Particular concern is felt regarding the report of the poisoning of schoolchildren, in the Jenin and Hebron areas in the West Bank where some 300 schoolgirls have had to be hospitalized.

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting demands an immediate and impartial investigation into this incident by the World Health Organization and the International Red Cross.

The African Regional Preparatory Meeting considers such an urgent investigation necessary to establish the facts and to bring to an end a chain of events which could only exacerbate tensions and create a threat to peace and security.

Salim Ahmed SALIM
Chairman
African Regional Preparatory Meeting of
the International Conference on
the Question of Palestine
