

**PALESTINE
REFUGEES
TODAY
NEWSLETTER No. 78**



UNRWA AT THE UNITED NATIONS



UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY
FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

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Ramallah Women's Training Centre, north of Jerusalem, has places for 660 vocational and teacher trainees. Two courses, the Assistant Pharmacist and the Laboratory Technician courses, are co-educational.

Opened in 1962, the Centre is one of eight UNRWA centres providing vocational and/or teacher training for Palestine refugees.

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UNRWA AT THE UNITED NATIONS

FOREWORD

Each year an issue of the Newsletter is devoted to the proceedings of the General Assembly session relating to the work of UNRWA. This year, Newsletter No.78 reproduces relevant documents arising from the General Assembly's twenty-eighth session, statements by the Commissioner-General of UNRWA at the United Nations, and a subsequent appeal by the Secretary-General.

The Commissioner-General's Annual Report for the 12 months ending 30 June 1973 was considered under General Assembly agenda item 43(a). In his Report, the Commissioner-General stressed the Agency's desperate financial plight and warned of the serious consequences, for the Palestine refugees and for the Middle East as a whole, of reductions in services. (For details, see Newsletter No.77).

Further emphasizing the gravity of the Agency's financial problems was the report of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA. The report expressed the Working Group's conviction that, to avoid reductions in UNRWA's services, Member Governments, particularly those which had not contributed in the past or had not contributed adequately, must be willing to reconsider their position.

In a 5 November statement to the General Assembly's Special Political Committee to introduce his Report, the Commissioner-General sought guidance from the Committee as to what course of action UNRWA should follow in its present financial crisis. This question was again raised when the Commissioner-General made a further statement to the Committee on 14 November. In his opinion, a decision to reduce UNRWA's services for the refugees, which could not fail to have political consequences, should be made on a governmental level rather than by an appointed official such as himself.

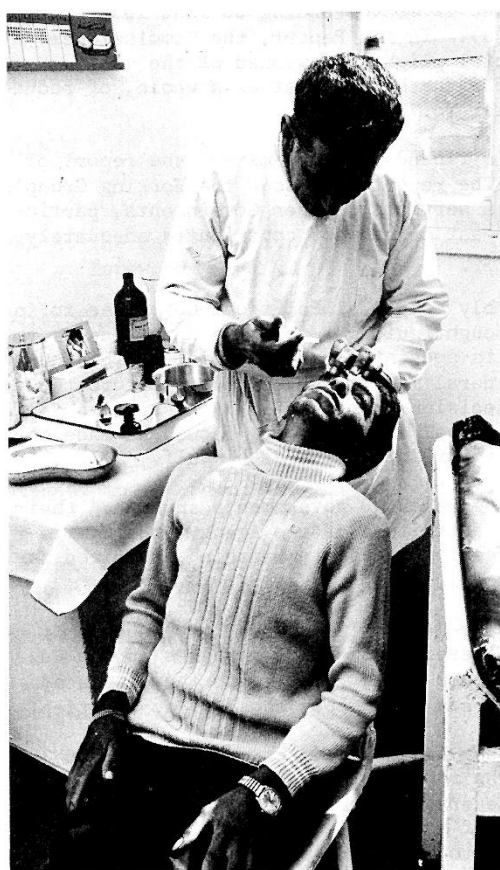
At the 30 November "Pledging Conference", during which 40 governments announced their financial contributions in support of the 1974 activities of the Agency, the Commissioner-General appealed to the "humanitarian feeling and statesmanship" of United Nations members, and asked them to respond generously.

Also in this issue are summaries of the Secretary-General's reports in pursuance of resolution 2963 C (XXVII) of 13 December 1972 concerning Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, and of resolution 2963 D (XXVII) of the same date, relating to the displaced inhabitants who had fled the Israeli-occupied areas since the June 1967 hostilities.

The complete texts of two resolutions also appear in this Newsletter. Resolution 3089 (XXVIII), adopted by the General Assembly on the report of the Special Political Committee, reaffirms earlier resolutions of the General Assembly relating to the rights of the Palestine refugees, including the right of the displaced inhabitants to return to their homes and camps, and notes the failure to implement paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) which, inter alia, provides for repatriation or compensation of the refugees. Resolution 3090 (XXVIII), also adopted on the report of the Special Political Committee, expresses the General Assembly's concern at UNRWA's financial situation, and commends the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA for its work.

Despite efforts on behalf of UNRWA during the General Assembly session, the Agency's financial situation worsened, as inflation wiped out whatever gains had been made in increased contributions, and on 1 February UNRWA's budget deficit for 1974 was estimated at \$12 million. Responding to the crisis, on 11 February the Secretary-General issued an urgent appeal to Member States for further contributions.

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP



Treating a patient at Deir el Balah Health Centre in the Gaza Strip. Ninety-five Agency health units and a further 24 run by voluntary organizations or governments provide medical services for the Palestine refugees.

Since its inception in 1950, UNRWA has been financed by voluntary contributions from governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, corporations and private individuals. In recent years this total dependence on voluntary contributions, in combination with rising costs, has resulted in recurring financial troubles for the Agency.

To report on possible measures to prevent the reduction of the Agency's services in 1971, to assist the Secretary-General and UNRWA's Commissioner-General in reaching solutions to the problems posed by the Agency's financial crisis, and to present a comprehensive report on all aspects of the financing of the Agency to the General Assembly at its next (twenty-sixth) session, the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA, consisting of nine Member States, was established by the General Assembly, under resolution 2656 (XXV) of 7 December 1970. The Working Group produced an interim report before the end of the 1970 session and reported again to the General Assembly in 1971 and 1972. In 1973, the Working Group met several times to discuss the Agency's financial problems, which were seriously aggravated by the devaluation of the US dollar and rapid inflation in the Middle East.

As a result, the Chairman of the Working Group (the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations) addressed a letter of appeal on 21 June 1973 to all Member States of the United Nations and members of specialized agencies. In his appeal, the Chairman stressed the urgent need for additional financial contributions. (The text of this appeal was printed in Newsletter No.77.)

At the time of the presentation of the Working Group's fourth report(*) to the General Assembly on 19 October 1973, the results of the appeal were not completely known, but were described as "not encouraging". The Working Group further expressed itself as "deeply concerned about the prospect for 1974", and made the following concluding remarks :

"As stated in previous reports, the Working Group continues to assume that, as long as a just and lasting settlement of the problem of the Palestine refugees has not been achieved, UNRWA's services in the form of relief assistance, health care and education must be maintained at least at their present minimal level.

The Working Group has to emphasize that the financial crisis of UNRWA, particularly the prospect of a deficit of more than \$10 million for 1974, is more alarming than ever before (**). According to information received from the Commissioner-General, the Agency would be forced to consider and eventually implement reductions in its services during 1974, unless substantial increases in voluntary contributions were forthcoming in the near future. The Working Group considers that such a course of action would be most regrettable.

The Working Group continues to believe that the continuation of the present services rendered by UNRWA is dependent on voluntary contributions from Governments.

However, in order to ensure that no reduction in UNRWA's present services has to be envisaged in the immediate future - if that is the wish of the General Assembly - the Working Group is convinced that Member Governments, and particularly those Governments which have not contributed in the past and those Governments which have so far contributed inadequately, must be willing to reconsider their position and contribute generously."

In resolution 3090 (XXVIII) adopted on 7 December 1973, the General Assembly expressed its deep concern at UNRWA's financial situation, commended the Working Group for its work and requested it to continue its efforts for the financing of UNRWA for a further period of one year. (E)

(*) General Assembly document A/9231.

(**) See Report of the Commissioner-General for the period 1 July 1972 - 30 June 1973 Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/9013).



In 1974 UNRWA will allot some 45% of its \$78.3 million budget to education services. Expenditure must continue to rise if it is to keep pace with the growing demand for education.

COMMISSIONER-GENERAL'S 5 NOVEMBER STATEMENT TO THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to present my report as Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. My report covers the period 1 July 1972 to 30 June 1973 and was, of course, written before war broke out on 6 October 1973. I should therefore begin by letting the Committee have such information as is available to me on the effects of the war on the Palestine refugees registered with the Agency and on the Agency's operations.

So far the Agency has been notified of eight refugees killed and twelve injured among the civilian casualties, all of them in Syria and most of them in Sbeineh camp on the outskirts of Damascus. One refugee camp, Khan Esh Shieh, between Damascus and Quneitra had to be evacuated by the 7,000 refugees residing in it, but they are now beginning to return. About 700 refugees have been displaced from Sasa Village and have taken shelter with relatives and friends, mainly in the camps in the Damascus area. I have no figures for displaced Syrian citizens, who are being cared for by the Syrian Authorities as in 1967. UNRWA's assistance has not been sought, but if there is any help our services can give, we shall, of course, be ready to cooperate with the Government to the best of our ability. I should explain that no Palestine refugees remained in the Golan Heights after their occupation by Israel in 1967 and that the Agency does not operate there or in occupied Sinai or Egypt.

As regards damage to Agency installations, both the central warehouse and the vocational training centre in the vicinity of Damascus were hit and a provisional

estimate of the cost of repair is \$25,000. Despite the outbreak of war, ration distribution was carried out in Syria in October to the extent of about 95% and health services were maintained, but schools were closed. Fortunately, communication between Beirut and Damascus by telephone was almost always possible and the Agency's Field Director in Damascus reported daily and paid one visit to Headquarters. I might mention here that the restoration of the separate post of Field Director for Syria referred to in paragraph 19 of the report proved of great benefit in this crisis.

In other fields than Syria, services were maintained throughout the war with the exception of some interruption of education through temporary closure of schools.

Delay in shipment of supplies for basic rations had already caused problems this year and they were aggravated by the diversion of shipping from Aqaba and Ashdod and the off-loading of flour at other ports. Apart from the delay in delivery, extra transport costs to the Agency of the order of \$100,000 will be incurred. Local borrowing of flour and its replacement in wheat to maintain West Bank ration distribution will add from \$40,000 to \$50,000 to costs and a rise in fuel prices by 40% will increase annual expenditures by about \$100,000. The further delay in shipping caused by the war will prolong the reduced issue of sugar in all fields of operation, and in east Jordan shortage of flour and oil will reduce issues in November and possibly in December also.

To turn now to the report before the Committee in document A/9013, I have



Inside the UNRWA ration distribution centre in Baqa'a emergency camp, east Jordan. Basic rations of flour, sugar, rice and edible oil are distributed monthly to eligible refugees, providing a daily average of 1,500 calories per person in summer. The ration is increased slightly in the winter months to provide about 1,600 calories.

sought in it to give an account of the Agency's operations between 1 July 1972 and 30 June 1973, to give some indication of the conditions in which they were carried out, and to give special attention to matters which have been the subject of resolutions of the General Assembly.

I hope the report brings out adequately the scale and range of the Agency's activities. There are three main programmes: relief, health and education. The main activity of the relief programme is the distribution of a basic ration of flour, cooking oil, rice and sugar, amounting to 1500 calories a day in the summer and 1600 in winter, to about 820,000 persons. It has been possible to maintain supplementary feeding for small children and other vulnerable groups by means of a special contribution in cash and in kind, but rising prices for local food stuffs are impoverishing the content of the hot meals included in this activity.

The health programme concentrates on preventive medicine through environmental health measures, such as sanitation in camps, and a network of clinics which place special emphasis on maternal and child welfare. With two exceptions, hospital treatment is provided in governmental or private institutions with which arrangements are made by the Agency. Once again, despite over-crowding in many camps and poor living conditions for refugees outside camps, there was no major epidemic, a state of affairs for which the health programme may take some credit.

The education programme is now the largest programme, absorbing about 48% of the total budget of \$63 million in 1973 and an even higher percentage of cash income, since basic rations are all donated in kind. The school population is growing at the rate of 12,000 children a year, the number of teachers - virtually all Palestine refugees - exceeds 7,000, and places in vocational, technical and

teacher training centres exceed 4,000, of which just over a quarter are for teacher training.

In connection with the education programme, I would invite the attention of the Committee to the development of the work of the UNRWA/Unesco Institute of Education as an example of inter-agency cooperation. It is referred to in paragraph 35 of the introduction and described more fully in paragraph 166 of the report. These extension services to Government Ministries of Education cost the Agency nothing and the Institute still provides its usual services for the Palestine refugees. Almost the entire cost of the Institute is now met by special contributions, as the Institute's extension work has justified a UNDP project for which Unesco is the executing Agency and UNRWA is sub-contractor and which provides funds to supplement the continuing contribution from Unesco and the Swiss Government. These extension services could not be



Inside a refugee shelter in Baka'a camp. The over-crowded and poor conditions in which many refugee families still live pose a constant threat to their health and well-being.

provided otherwise than through the UNRWA/Unesco Institute of Education, since they depend on the existence of a programme of in-service training within a school system which can be observed and used as illustration and model. The Agency welcomes this cooperation with three other UN organizations, Unesco, UNDP and UNICEF, and also the opportunity it has afforded to make more widely known the scope and the achievements of the UNRWA/Unesco education programme for the Palestine refugees.

As regards the conditions in which UNRWA's operations have been carried on during the year of report, they have again been characterized by periods of strain, tension and even fighting. In a footnote to the section on camps on page 18 of the report, I have invited attention to paragraphs of a previous report in which the origin and nature of the Palestine refugee camps and UNRWA's relationship and limited responsibilities towards them are explained. I would only repeat here that about 60% of the refugees live outside camps and that UNRWA has no police or comparable administrative functions in regard to the camps. There are, I find, many misconceptions about the Palestine refugee camps: may I say therefore that they are not surrounded by barbed wire; that they are not under perpetual curfew, that the refugees can normally enter or leave them at will.

There have been repeated UN resolutions calling for the return of those refugees - and also those other persons - who were displaced in 1967 from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights. This matter has been the subject of a report by the Secretary-General (Document A/9156) and is also dealt with in paragraph 4 of my report. In case there should be any misunderstanding of the last sentence of that paragraph I should like to make clear that when I refer to refugees who have been allowed "to return for residence" I mean that they have been able to exercise their right to return, not under paragraph 11 of Resolution 194 (III) to Israel, but under Resolution 2252 (ES-V) of 4 July 1967 and other resolutions to the same effect to the West Bank or the

Gaza Strip - no refugees, so far as I know, have returned to the Golan Heights.

I hope that my report leaves the Committee in no doubt about the seriousness of the Agency's financial situation and that the disastrous consequences that may ensue if it is not remedied are fully appreciated. The causes of this situation are by now well known: inflation, aggravated by the devaluation of the US dollar against three of the local currencies in which expenditures are incurred, and an annual rise in school population of about 12,000. There is before the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions a report from the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the effects of currency instability on United Nations organizations, but it deals only with those organizations financed by mandatory assessment and it makes no mention of the problems of organizations financed on a voluntary basis. Of these latter organizations I think it fair to say that UNRWA is in the most difficult position because of the scale and nature of its operations and because of the concentration of its activities in countries or territories in which currencies did not devalue with the US dollar or which are subject to a continuing high rate of inflation.

In Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, the Agency's costs went up at once when the dollar was devalued, in the occupied territories, which have been assimilated to the Israeli economy since 1967, the Israeli pound followed the dollar, but inflation has recently been running at an annual rate of about 14%. On an annual basis the net adverse effect of devaluation of the United States dollar on the Agency in 1973 was in excess of three million dollars. I invite the attention of the Committee to paragraphs 224 to 226 of Chapter II of the report, which show in detail how expenditures have increased as a result of the factors I have mentioned. For 1974 budget their combined effects account for some \$7.3 million of the increase of \$8.7 million in increased expenditure.

I also invite attention to paragraphs

183 and 219 of the report, which deal with the repercussions of dollar devaluation on the Agency's Provident Fund scheme for its local employees. For these employees, who number over 14,000, the Provident Fund scheme provides their main retiring benefit. They have naturally been alarmed at the situation that has arisen, and it has caused me much concern. The ILO Study referred to in paragraph 183 has taken place, the report and recommendations are awaited, and an early decision on them will be desirable in the interest of staff morale. The decision will not be made easier by the Agency's financial situation, but the Agency's obligations to its staff in regard to superannuation must be given proper consideration.

In circumstances in which United Nations organizations incur deficits and must seek increased income, a prompt reaction is to look for economies in expenditure. In the case of UNRWA, it must be borne in mind - and I apologize for repeating what must be obvious - that the Agency is engaged in the provision of services of a quasi-governmental nature which cannot simply be expanded or contracted in accordance with the flow of funds. Its major activities are not conferences, investigations or studies, and the compilation of reports, however valuable. Nor is it engaged in providing financial and technical assistance for a series of projects of limited duration which offer the possibility of early termination or of postponement at a time of financial stringency. It is entirely an operational agency, running its own services directly through its own staff, providing food, medical care and education for a community dependent on it for these services. This is what, I believe, distinguishes UNRWA from all other United Nations organizations, in degree if not in kind, and this is also why the precariousness of its voluntary financing must cause so much anxiety.

Paragraph 19 of the latest report of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA (Document A/9231 of 19 October 1973) recalls how the indirect or common costs of UNRWA's programmes have been compressed and refers to footnote 8 to paragraph 46 of the previous report of the Working

Group to the 27th Session (Document A/8849) in which details are given. As regards international staff, table 22 of my report shows that on 30 June 1973 they numbered 120 out of a total staff of 14,859. 34 of the international staff were provided by other UN organizations on a non-reimbursable basis and only 86 were thus a charge on UNRWA's budget. There is, I believe, little scope for further reduction in the number of international staff after the substantial reduction of one-third since 1963. Indeed, the process of reduction has gone rather too far and I have been greatly concerned about the strain on the small top management of the Agency which results from the conditions in which we operate - and I include here the strain imposed by financial conditions. I therefore recently consulted the Under Secretary-General for Administration and Management and we were able to prevail on the Assistant Secretary-General for General Services, who was formerly Director of the Administrative Management Service, to pay a brief visit to Beirut and to give me the benefit of his advice on staffing and the allocation of functions at the top level. I am most grateful to the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Ryan, for undertaking this assignment at some personal inconvenience. I should, however, make clear that what is likely to be involved is marginal and of no financial significance in relation to the size of the Agency's budget and of its deficits.

If the deficit for 1974 cannot be eliminated by increases in contributions, there will be no real alternative to reductions in programmes, but given the size of the deficit these reductions will have to be substantial, and I must warn the Committee that the consequences will be very serious. It may appear unthinkable that at this juncture in the Middle East UNRWA should be allowed to disintegrate before the expiration of its current mandate at the end of June 1975 but this may well be the result if reductions are forced on the Agency. I have given an indication in the last sentence of paragraph 46 of the kind of reductions that will be necessary to save as much as three-

fourths of the estimated deficit for 1974: the elimination of the preparatory cycle of education, that is to say the last three years of the normal nine years of compulsory education in the area. This reduction would affect about 56,000 children and involve the termination of the contracts of over 2,000 teachers. To eliminate the deficit entirely will require, in addition, significant reductions in the health services.

I have explained that since ration items at present are donated, a reduction in them would release no cash and the main weight of reductions must therefore fall on the education programme as the main user of cash income. If cash were to be substituted for commodities in contributions in kind, reductions in the basic ration programme could be considered as an alternative to all or some of the reductions that would otherwise have to be made in education and health services. But if reductions in basic rations were to replace, for instance, the elimination of the preparatory cycle of education, they would have to be on a very large scale. It must not be imagined that reductions on such a scale could take place without severe hardship among the refugees, turmoil in the host countries, and adverse effects on the United Nations and the international community as a whole.

The alternative to reductions is an increase in contributions. The Working Group has recommended that the financing of UNRWA should remain on a voluntary basis. I understand very well why this recommendation has been made but I hope it will be understood by the Group and the Committee why I must comment that voluntary financing is a most unsatisfactory basis for running UNRWA's operations. I am sorry that the Working Group did not find it possible to reconsider the possibility of transferring the cost of UNRWA's international staff to the UN regular budget, I must confess I do not altogether understand, in view of the precedents why there should be such a strong objection of principle; the transfer would demonstrate the interest of the United Nations as a whole in the

Agency's humanitarian work, it would enable the voluntary contributions to be devoted entirely to operational programmes, and it would make a significant contribution of over \$2 million towards the elimination of the deficit for 1974.

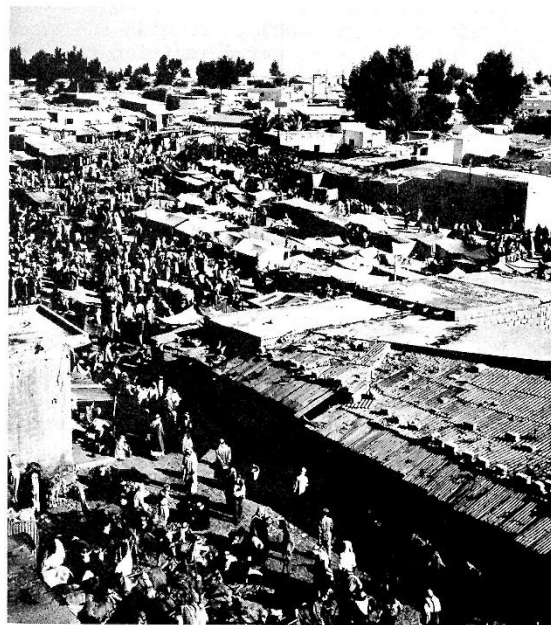
Given the financial situation I have outlined and the consequences I foresee, what is then to be done? The Working Group, for whose support I am most grateful, has done what it could. So have my colleagues and I in UNRWA, with the help and encouragement of the Secretary-General. But we have been unsuccessful in closing the gap between income and expenditure; the forces beyond our control which make for increases in expenditure have proved too strong. And so, in the aftermath of yet another war in which hundreds of millions of dollars have been dissipated in a few weeks, we must contemplate a reduction in the United Nations programmes for the Palestine refugees for lack of \$10 million a year. It may seem unfair to put it in these terms but the comparison is inescapable.

I have said in the final paragraph of the introduction to my report on page 14, that I must seek and receive guidance from the General Assembly, that is to say, in the first instance from this Committee. Whether, for lack of funds, I am to make reductions in programmes of the kind in view, very possibly against the wishes of the host governments and therefore without any assurance of their full co-operation: and if not, whether I am to take an even more drastic course: these are questions I must put to the Committee. It does not seem to me proper that these decisions should be made by an appointed official; they are not simply administrative but essentially political decisions in view of the consequences that may follow. I must add that as far as I am concerned, an unacceptable course would be to continue to maintain programmes in full regardless of the financial situation until the Agency collapsed in chaos.

It may be, of course, that out of the present tragic, dangerous tangle of events in the Middle East, there will emerge in the course of the next few months the

shape of a lasting settlement. It is what, I am sure, we all hope; but there must be few who can believe it will be lasting if it does not include "a just settlement of the refugee problem", in the words of sub-paragraph (a) of paragraph 2 of Security Council Resolution 242 for the implementation of which Security Council Resolution 338 has just called with urgency. Nor, may I add, can anyone in my position fail to recognize the existence of a political dimension to the problem.

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that you and your Committee will agree on the importance of maintaining UNRWA's programmes in the meantime and of avoiding a further grave complication of the situation; and that if you do, your governments will provide the additional funds required, failing which, as I have said, I must have your guidance on the course I am to follow. (c)



Market day in Rafah camp in the Gaza Strip. The 53% of registered refugees who receive UNRWA rations supplement them with fresh food from the market when they can afford it.

COMMISSIONER-GENERAL'S 14 NOVEMBER STATEMENT TO THE SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

I should like first of all to thank the delegations that have expressed appreciation of the work that the Agency carries out. I shall convey that appreciation to my staff, who I believe richly deserve it.

I do not propose to deal with points that have been raised in statements made by delegations because the debate has been long and I should not like to take up more of the time of members of the Committee. I think that the report and my statement convey the facts of the situation adequately, but of course I and my staff are very ready to furnish additional information to any delegation that requires it.

I feel that I should, however, say a further word about the financial situation of the Agency and its likely consequences. I hesitated whether to speak before the resolutions were taken or afterwards, but on reflection it seemed to me that it might be useful to the Committee if I spoke briefly now.

I made plain in my report, and also in the statement I made, how very serious the financial situation was and how drastic the consequences of reductions might be for the refugees, and for the host Governments, and, I think, for the situation in the Middle East generally. What I said was echoed by a number of speakers, and notably by the Chairman of the Working Group, who is very well placed to know exactly how difficult our financial circumstances are.

I, too, have noted, like the Representative of Kuwait, that there is no resolution about the Working Group. I do not know whether this lack of a resolution on this subject indicates some dis-

illusionment about the effectiveness of appeals for voluntary contributions, despite the insistence there has been on the continuation of financing in this way. There are, however, amendments to the principal resolution on UNRWA that seem to suggest that the General Assembly is going to assume the role of the Working Group in soliciting contributions from individual Governments, though in a rather more formal and in a very much more selective way. It would not be proper, I think, for me to speculate on the effectiveness of this approach - whether it would be successful or the reverse - but no doubt the point is one that the Committee will take into consideration when deciding on the amendments.

There is also an amendment proposed by the distinguished delegate of Colombia which would transfer part of the cost of the Agency to the regular budget of the United Nations. I have, of course, myself made quite clear that I should welcome the transfer of the cost of the international staff of UNRWA. I think that there are good precedents and that, for a variety of reasons, it would be preferable to have the international staff financed in this way. I would only point out that, at least - leaving aside any objection of principle - it is a means of financing from the regular budget that would be easily regulated. The proposal made by the delegation of Colombia is rather open-ended in that it would be a percentage of the total budget that would become a charge on the regular budget of the UN. Now, unless the whole of the budget of UNRWA were to be examined by the institutions of the UN, there would be no control over the amount contributed by the UN budget. I think there would be practical and technical difficulties in having the

whole of the Agency's budget examined by the ACABQ and the Fifth Committee. There would be no such difficulty, of course, in having an administrative budget for the international staff so examined. I make these observations simply in the hope that they may be of some assistance to the Committee in reaching conclusions.

I sought the guidance of the Committee on what course I should follow as Commissioner-General if voluntary contributions do not provide sufficient funds to maintain the Agency's programmes. I said, and I repeat - as I repeated in my statement - that it seems to me that decisions of such consequence - such political consequences - should not be left to someone who is, as I am, merely an appointed official.

It seems to me they ought to be made on a government level. So far, while there has been much encouragement for the Agency's work, there has been much concern expressed about the financial situation, there have been some generous response announced already in this Committee, and there have been appeals for more contributions, I have not received any guidance on the course I should follow.

In these circumstances I propose to consult the Secretary-General and possibly, as a result, to make known to the Committee or to the General Assembly in some appropriate manner what contingency plans I intend to make to meet such an eventuality. (6)



UNRWA Headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon. These premises have been placed at UNRWA's disposal by the Lebanese Government. Throughout the region, UNRWA employs some 120 international staff, 34 of whom are loaned by other United Nations organizations on a non-reimbursable basis. UNRWA's local staff, numbering about 15,000, are virtually all Palestine refugees.

COMMISSIONER-GENERAL'S STATEMENT TO THE PLEDGING CONFERENCE



UNRWA Commissioner-General, Sir John Rennie (left) addressing the Pledging Conference. He is seen with two advisers and, at right, His Excellency, Señor Jaime de Pinnies (Spain), Chairman of the Conference.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make a statement at the outset of this meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee which we regard as our "Pledging Conference". I must begin by expressing my appreciation of the support from contributing governments that had enabled the Agency to maintain its programmes despite the financial pressure of recent years. This support demonstrates both a concern for the situation of the Palestine refugees and an informed understanding of the scope and the nature of the services the

Agency provides for them.

It is no easy task to carry out, not a series of separate finite projects, but continuing programmes that cannot be interrupted without most serious consequences. It is especially difficult to do so in a period of currency instability and inflation, and it is these twin factors that are responsible for the Agency's relapse into acute financial distress in the course of 1973 after an encouraging start to the year.

On the best estimate available to me at present, with some uncertainty about contributions still persisting even so late in the year, the deficit for 1973 will be about \$2.6 million. If this figure proves correct, it will bring the working capital on 1 January 1974 to about \$3.2 million, which will be less by about \$2 million than at any time in the Agency's history, will be less than one month's expenditure, and will be less than half of the amount the Agency ought to have to finance its pipe-line of supplies.

For 1974 my report forecast a deficit of about \$10.2 million, and reductions in programmes are therefore inevitable unless there is a very substantial increase in income of about the same amount. Basic rations are all donated in kind under the present pattern of contributions and because the education programme absorbs nearly half the budget, and, more significant in this context, represents about 65% to 70% of cash expenditure, the main weight of reductions will fall on the education programme. It is for this reason also that the Agency's need is primarily for increased contributions of cash. I have already stated in my report that to save as much as \$7.5 million in the education programme will involve the elimination of the last three years of normal schooling in the area for all children and will affect over 50,000 children and their teachers in the UNRWA/Unesco schools.

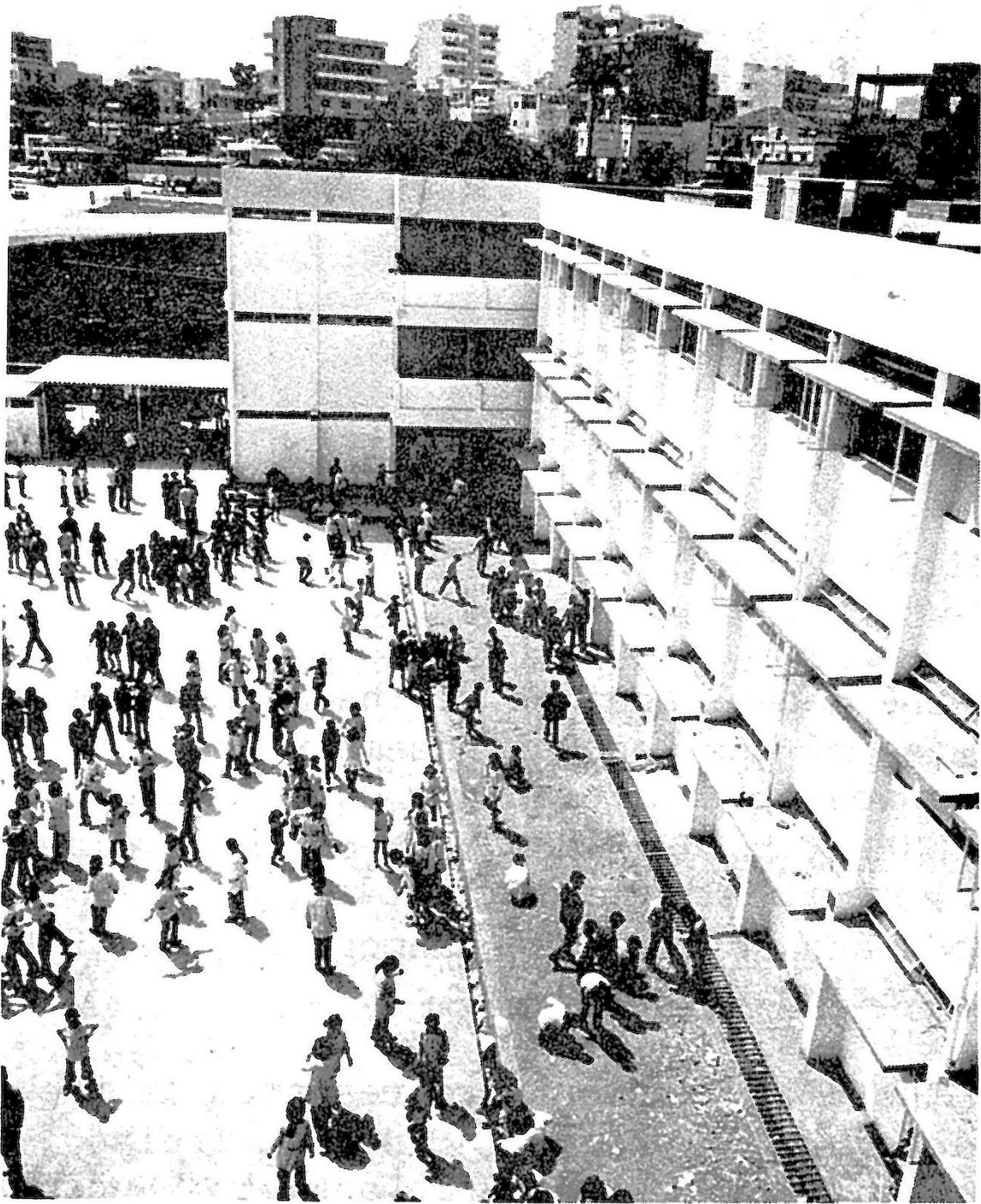
It would be tragic if this were to happen. It would also, I believe, be folly to allow it to happen, especially at this time when it is so important to do nothing to hinder the efforts currently in progress to reach a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East. There is widespread recognition that any such settlement must take account of the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Palestinians, indeed that in many respects they are at the heart of the matter: for the United Nations simultaneously to derogate by default from the right to education of those Palestinians for whom it has, through UNRWA, a responsibility, is, or should, surely be inconceivable.



Burj Hammoud School in Beirut, Lebanon, which has classes for both elementary and preparatory pupils.

And yet, if funds are insufficient, the Agency cannot carry on as at present. I have made my position in this respect clear in my statements in the Special Political Committee: beyond a certain point, which would occur early in 1974, I cannot maintain the programmes in full regardless of the financial situation and precipitate a financial collapse and administrative chaos. I do not propose to elaborate on this point, which I believe is well understood.

I prefer to appeal to the humanitarian feeling and the statesmanship of Members of the United Nations and ask them to respond generously, as they have done in the past, so as to enable UNRWA to fulfill, on their behalf, its obligations to the Palestine refugees, while we await with anxiety but with renewed hope the political solution which may close this sad chapter in the history of the refugees. (3)



Burj Hammoud School in Beirut, Lebanon, which has classes for both elementary and preparatory pupils.

SUMMARY OF PLEDGING CONFERENCE

At the annual meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly for the Announcement of Voluntary Contributions to UNRWA, held in New York on 30 November, 40 governments announced pledges of cash, goods and services in support of the 1974 activities of UNRWA.

Of the 47 governments represented at the "Pledging Conference", Finland, Ireland, Mexico, Oman, Qatar, Sri Lanka and Sudan deferred making pledges at this time, pending final decision by their governments. Nineteen governments to date have pledged increased contributions to UNRWA for 1974.

Since the Conference, additional pledges confirmed or received, together with estimates based on the previous year's contributions in respect of those governments which have not yet made known their intentions, allow UNRWA to estimate its 1974 income from governmental sources (including the European Economic Community) at \$65 million.

At the end of the Conference, UNRWA's Commissioner-General, Sir John Rennie, expressed appreciation of the various contributions, and especially for the increases announced, some of which were substantial. Nevertheless, it was clear, he said, that the Agency had far to go before it could be assured of sufficient funds to maintain its programmes in 1974 and he hoped that those Governments which had not yet announced their contributions would bear in mind the Agency's need for more funds to enable it to carry out the activities expected of it.

In fact, the effects of inflation have already more than offset increased pledges and the future still looks bleak for the Agency and the Palestine refugees. UNRWA's 1974 budget deficit is now estimated at \$12 million. Unless there is a corresponding increase in income, reductions in essential services to the refugees in the near future cannot be avoided. (6)



Young children are amongst those receiving a hot meal six days a week under the supplementary feeding programme, funded by the EEC.

PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE GAZA STRIP

Report of the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General's report (document A/9155), in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 2963 C (XXVII) (*) of 13 December 1972, concerning Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip, was issued on 18 September 1973. The report, prepared after consultation with the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, in pursuance of operative paragraph 5 of the resolution, also includes a note verbale from the Acting Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations.

The following is a summary of information provided by UNRWA and contained in the Secretary-General's report.

UNRWA has continued to seek specific information from the Israeli authorities on their plans for the rehousing of the 914 families found by the agency in May 1972 to be still unsatisfactorily housed as a consequence of the 1971 demolitions in Gaza (described in documents A/8383, A/8383 Add.1 and A/8814). Both the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, in a 23 December 1972 letter to the Foreign Minister of Israel, and the Deputy Commissioner-General, at a meeting with the Military Governor of Gaza and North Sinai on 28 December 1972, sought clarification of the Israeli Government's intentions in this respect. The Governor was further reminded of the Agency's claim of approximately \$417,000 in respect of the demolition of Agency-built shelters, payment of which could finance construction by the Agency of housing for these refugees.

In a letter of 11 February 1973 to the Commissioner-General, the Foreign Minister replied that he was aware of the

need that still existed for accommodation. Further meetings ensued between the Commissioner-General and Foreign Ministry officials and the Foreign Minister. On 19 March the Military Governor informed UNRWA's Field Director in the Gaza Strip that he had been authorised to re-open the joint survey of families inadequately housed. The Agency agreed to participate in this survey.

The joint survey, conducted between 28 March and 5 June 1973, and between 13 and 30 July 1973, covered a total of 942 families. Of the 706 families found to be still inadequately housed, 266 were considered to be serious cases of hardship. The Israeli authorities have been asked what action they propose to take to provide for the 706 families.

Further demolitions took place in the last quarter of 1972 in Rafah camp in Gaza. The Agency became aware of the intentions of the Israeli authorities in this regard towards the end of October 1972 and consequently made representations and enquiries about rumoured plans to construct a new road which would cut across Rafah camp, involving the demolition of a number of shelters.

According to the information available to the Agency, the refugee residents of Rafah camp whose shelters were to be affected by the construction of the new road were notified by the Governor of Rafah on 1 December 1972 that they had one month within which to demolish the shelters themselves, so that they could salvage whatever materials might



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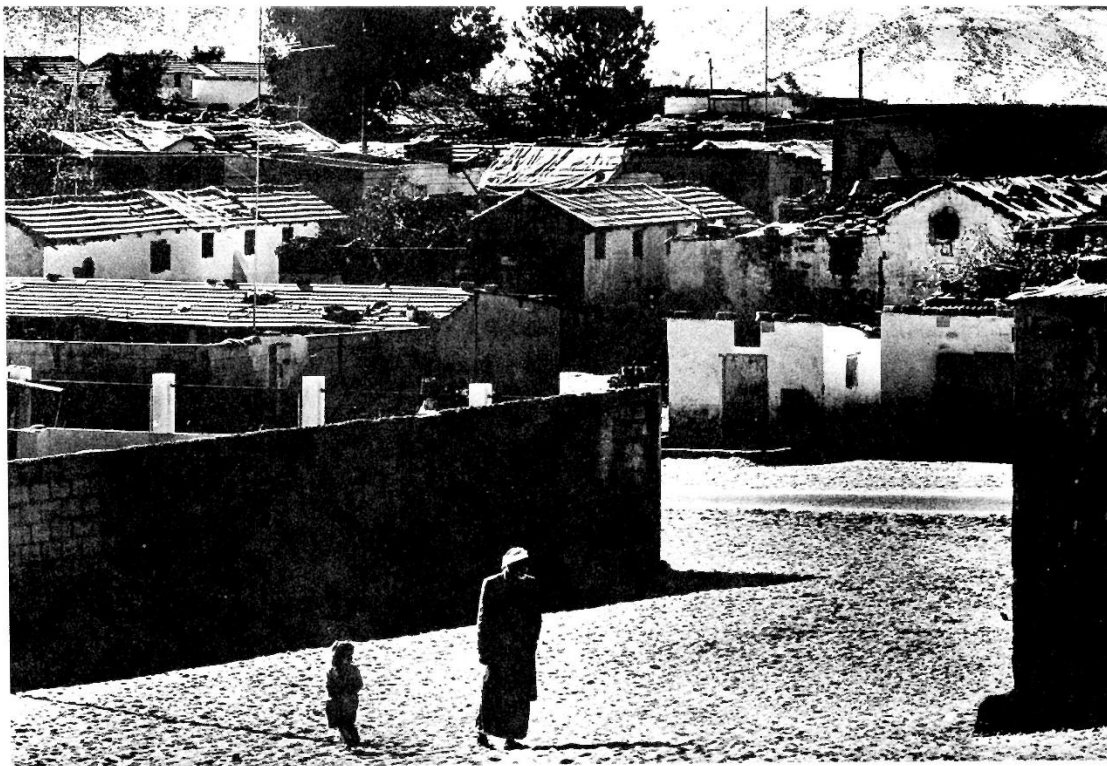
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There are 327,000 refugees registered with UNRWA in the Gaza Strip. More than half of this number live in camps like Khan Younis which is home for over 30,000 people.

be useful for them, failing which the shelters would be bulldozed.

The road construction plan was confirmed both by the Military Governor of Gaza and North Sinai and at a later press conference held on 22 December 1972 by the Israeli Co-ordinator for the occupied territories. Road construction was said to be motivated by a desire to improve living standards and the operations would be extended to all the camps in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli Co-ordinator also referred to a scheme under consideration by the Israeli authorities to sell plots of land to refugees for the construction of housing.

In March/April 1973 demolitions for the purpose of the construction of new roads took place in Khan Yunis camp. A total of 216 families in Rafah and 167 families in Khan Yunis have been affected by these demolitions, and have either moved into the new govern-

ment housing or have been provided with alternative vacant shelters in their respective camps. In the course of these operations, 39 of the families whose houses were demolished in 1971 were also rehoused.

The General Assembly, after consideration of the Secretary-General's report, adopted resolution 3089 C (XXVIII) of 7 December 1973, the text of which is reproduced later in this issue.⑤

(*) In operative paragraphs 3 and 4 of the resolution, the General Assembly called upon Israel "to desist forthwith from all measures that affect the physical structure and the demographic composition of the Gaza Strip" and "to take immediate and effective steps for the return of the refugees concerned to the camps from which they were removed and to provide adequate shelters for their accommodation".

RETURN OF PERSONS DISPLACED SINCE THE 1967 OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES

Report of the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General submitted a report (document A/9156) on 18 September 1973 to the General Assembly in pursuance of resolution 2963 D (XXVII) of 13 December 1972 referring to the displaced inhabitants who had fled the Israeli-occupied areas since the outbreak of hostilities in June 1967.

In operative paragraphs 4 and 5 of the resolution, the General Assembly called upon Israel "immediately to take steps for the return of the displaced inhabitants" and "to desist forthwith from all measures affecting the physical, geographic and demographic structure of the occupied territories". The Assembly, in paragraph 6 of the resolution, requested the Secretary-General to follow the implementation of the resolution and to report in detail thereon to the General Assembly.

The Secretary-General reported that, since September 1967, when the mission of his Special Representative on Humanitarian Questions in the Middle East was terminated, the Secretary-General had had, in the main, to look to the Government of Israel for the information required to fulfil the reporting responsibility placed upon him by the General Assembly.

The Secretary-General had accordingly requested the Government of Israel, through a note verbale of 22 January 1973 to the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations and in a second message on 28 June 1973, for any relevant information on the implementation of the provisions set forth in the resolution, and had requested the Government to make the required information available to him not later than 31 August 1973.

The Acting Permanent Representative of Israel replied to the Secretary-General's message in a note verbale of 30 August,

in which he said that the Government of Israel had "also during the last year, as in previous years, continued to facilitate the return of persons, who had been displaced in 1967. The special arrangements for family reunion and hardship cases have been maintained, and co-operation in this respect with the local Arab authorities has continued. The total figure of displaced persons who have returned to their homes since 1967 stands now at nearly 50,000".

The Secretary-General also reported :

"The Secretary-General has obtained from the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East such information as is available to the Commissioner-General regarding the return of refugees registered with the Agency. The Agency is not involved in any way in the arrangements for the return of the refugees and its information is based in the main on Agency records relating to requests by returning refugees for retransfer of rations to the areas to which they have returned. It is possible that some refugees may have returned who did not ask for the provision of rations or services by the Agency, in which case the fact of their return would not necessarily be known to it. So far as is known to the Agency, up to June 1973 about 6,200 displaced refugees returned from east Jordan to the Gaza Strip. In addition, about 1,000 displaced refugees returned to the Gaza Strip from the Arab Republic of Egypt. A breakdown of the figure of about 6,200 refugees who have returned to the West Bank shows that very few (less than 100) are from the Jericho area." (S)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS PERTAINING TO UNRWA

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

/On the report of the Special Political Committee (A/9372 and Corr.1, A/L.716)/

3089 (XXVIII). United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

A

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2252 (ES-V) of 4 July 1967, 2341 B (XXII) of 19 December 1967, 2452 C (XXIII) of 19 December 1968, 2535 C (XXIV) of 10 December 1969, 2672 B (XXV) of 8 December 1970, 2792 B (XXVI) of 6 December 1971 and 2963 B (XXVII) of 13 December 1972,

Taking note of the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, covering the period from 1 July 1972 to 30 June 1973, 1/

Concerned about the continued human suffering resulting from the June 1967 hostilities in the Middle East,

1. Reaffirms its resolutions 2252 (ES-V), 2341 B (XXII), 2452 C (XXIII), 2535 C (XXIV), 2672 B (XXV), 2792 B (XXVI) and 2963 B (XXVII);
2. Endorses, bearing in mind the objectives of those resolutions, the efforts of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to continue to provide humanitarian assistance, as far as practicable, on an emergency basis and as a temporary measure, to other persons in the area who are at present displaced and in serious need of continued assistance as a result of the June 1967 hostilities;
3. Strongly appeals to all Governments and to organizations and individuals to contribute generously for the above purposes to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and to the other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned.

B

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2963 A (XXVII) of 13 December 1972 and all previous resolutions referred to therein, including resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948,

Taking note of the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, covering the period from 1 July 1972 to 30 June 1973, 2/

1. Notes with deep regret that repatriation or compensation of the refugees as provided for in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) has not been affected, that no substantial progress has been made in the programme endorsed by the General Assembly in paragraph 2 of resolution 513 (VI) of 26 January 1952 for the reintegration of refugees either by repatriation or resettlement and that, therefore, the situation of the refugees continues to be a matter of serious concern;
2. Expresses its thanks to the Commissioner-General and to the staff of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for their continued faithful efforts to provide essential services for the Palestine refugees, and to the specialized agencies and private organizations for their valuable work in assisting the refugees;
3. Notes with regret that the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine was unable to find a means of achieving progress in the implementation of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) and requests the Commission to exert continued efforts towards the implementation thereof and to report thereon as appropriate, but no later than 1 October 1974;
4. Directs attention to the continuing critical financial position of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, as outlined in the Commissioner-General's report;
5. Notes with concern that, despite the commendable and successful efforts of the Commissioner-General to collect additional contributions to help relieve the serious budget deficit of the past year, contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East continue to fall short of the funds needed to cover essential budget requirements;
6. Calls upon all Governments as a matter of urgency to make the most generous efforts possible to meet the anticipated needs of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, particularly in the light of the budgetary deficit projected in the Commissioner-General's report, and therefore urges non-contributing Governments to contribute and contributing Governments to consider increasing their contributions.

C

The General Assembly,

Recalling Security Council resolution 237 (1967) of 14 June 1967,

Recalling also its resolutions 2252 (ES-V) of 4 July 1967, 2452 A (XXIII) of 19 December 1968, 2535 B (XXIV) of 10 December 1969, 2672 D (XXV) of 8 December 1970, 2792 (E) (XXVI) of 6 December 1971 and 2963 D (XXVII) of 13 December 1972, calling upon the Government of Israel to take effective and immediate steps for the return without delay of those inhabitants who had been displaced since the outbreak of hostilities in June 1967, and its resolutions 2792 C (XXVI) of 6 December 1971 and 2963 C (XXVII) of 13 December 1972, calling upon the Government of Israel to take immediate and effective steps for the return of the refugees concerned to the camps from which they were removed in the Gaza Strip, and to provide adequate shelters for their accommodation,

Emphasizing the necessity of full implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions,

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General of 18 September 1973, 3/

Noting that the Israeli occupation authorities have persisted in adopting measures that obstruct the return of the displaced population to their homes and camps in the occupied territories - including changes in the physical and demographic structure of the occupied territories, by the displacement of inhabitants, the transfer of population, the destruction of towns, villages and homes, and the establishment of Israeli settlements - in violation of the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, 4/ as well as the pertinent United Nations resolutions, and reaffirming that it considers those measures null and void,

1. Reaffirms the right of the displaced inhabitants, including those displaced as a result of recent hostilities, to return to their homes and camps;
2. Considers that the plight of the displaced inhabitants continues because they have been prevented from returning to their homes and camps;
3. Deplores the refusal of the Israeli authorities to take steps for the return of the displaced inhabitants in accordance with the above-mentioned resolutions;
4. Calls once more upon Israel immediately:

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/9013).

2/ Ibid.

3/ A/9155 and A/9156.

4/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, No. 973, p. 287.

- (a) To take steps for the return of the displaced inhabitants;
 - (b) To desist from all measures that obstruct the return of the displaced inhabitants, including measures affecting the physical and demographic structure of the occupied territories;
 - (c) To take effective steps for the return of the refugees concerned to the camps from which they were removed in the Gaza Strip and to provide adequate shelters for their accommodation;
5. Requests the Secretary-General, after consulting with the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to report as soon as possible, and whenever appropriate thereafter, but in any case not later than the opening date of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, on Israel's compliance with and implementation of paragraph 4 of the present resolution.

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that the problems of the Palestine Arab refugees has arisen from the denial of their inalienable rights under the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Recalling its resolution 2535 B (XXIV) of 10 December 1969, in which it reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine, and its resolutions 2649 (XXV) of 30 November 1970, 2672 C (XXV) of 8 December 1970, 2787 (XXVI) and 2792 D (XXVI) of 6 December 1971, 2955 (XXVII) of 12 December 1972 and 2963 E (XXVII) of 13 December 1972, in which it recognized inter alia that the people of Palestine is entitled to the right of self-determination,

Bearing in mind the principle of equal rights and self-determination enshrined in Articles 1 and 55 of the Charter and more recently reaffirmed in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations S/ and in the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, S/

1. Reaffirms that the people of Palestine is entitled to equal rights and self-determination, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;
2. Expresses once more its grave concern that the people of Palestine has been prevented by Israel from enjoying its inalienable rights and from exercising its right to self-determination;
3. Declares that full respect for and realization of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine, particularly its rights to self-determination, are indispensable for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East; and that the enjoyment by the Palestine Arab refugees of their right to return to their homes and property, recognized by the General Assembly in resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, which has been repeatedly reaffirmed by the Assembly since that date, is indispensable for the achievement of a just settlement of the refugee problem and for the exercise by the people of Palestine of its right to self-determination.

The General Assembly,

Considering that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East is in dire need of additional funds to meet its minimal annual expenses,

Noting that many Member States are not in a position to make any contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East,

Noting also that many States, instead of contributing to the budget of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, prefer to extend direct aid to the Palestine refugees,

Taking into account that the contribution of the United States of America to the regular budget of the United Nations has been reduced to 25 per cent by General Assembly resolution 2961 B (XXVII) of 13 December 1972 on the understanding that the United States will endeavour to maintain and possibly increase its voluntary contributions to the various agencies and other organs of the United Nations,

Considering further the deep interest which certain Western European and other States have manifested in the Middle East for many years,

1. Expresses its gratitude to all States which have in the past generously contributed to the budget of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;
 2. Appeals to Member States, especially those with \$1,500 or more per capita income, to consider increasing their contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.
- S/ See resolution 2625 (XXV), annex. S/ See resolution 2734 (XXV).

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[On the report of the Special Political Committee (A/9372 and Corr.1)]

3090 (XXVIII). Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2656 (XXV) of 7 December 1970, 2728 (XXV) of 15 December 1970, 2791 (XXVI) of 6 December 1971 and 2963 (XXVII) and 2964 (XXVII) of 13 December 1972,

Having considered the report of the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, 1/

Taking into account the annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, covering the period from 1 July 1972 to 30 June 1973, 2/

Deeply concerned at the financial situation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, which continues to be serious, thereby endangering the essential services being provided to Palestine refugees,

Convinced of the continuing need for extraordinary efforts in order to maintain, at least at their present minimum level, the activities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East,

1. Commends the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for its work;
2. Notes with appreciation the report of the Working Group;
3. Requests the Working Group to continue its efforts, in co-operation with the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General, for the financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for a further period of one year;
4. Requests the Secretary-General to provide the necessary services and assistance to the Working Group for the conduct of its work.

1/ A/9231.

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No.13 (A/9013).

2193rd plenary meeting
7 December 1973

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S APPEAL FOR FUNDS FOR UNRWA

On 11 February 1974, the Secretary-General of the United Nations issued an appeal to Member States for further contributions. The text of this appeal is reproduced below.

I appeal most urgently to your Government for additional help to overcome the major financial crisis now facing the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and to make it possible for the Agency to cover the minimal needs of the Palestine refugees.

You will recall that the General Assembly at its last session expressed its concern over the serious financial situation and requested the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA to continue its efforts, in co-operation with the Secretary-General and the Commissioner-General of the Agency, to help meet UNRWA's financial needs.

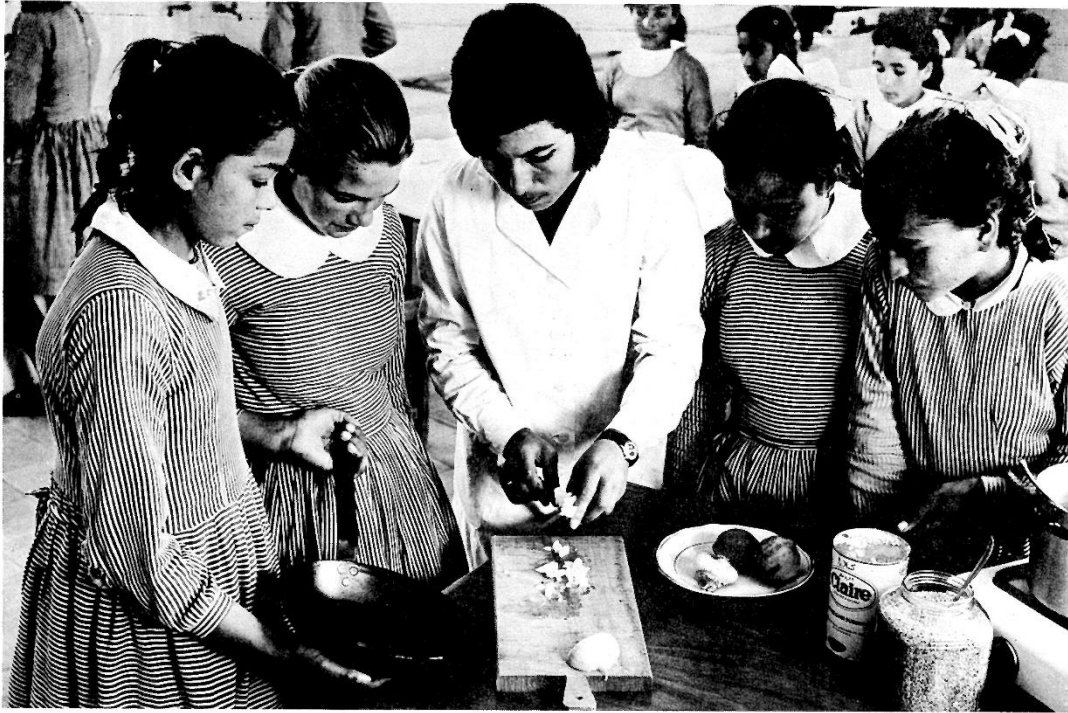
The Commissioner-General of UNRWA has now informed me that, despite some substantial increases in contributions, the Agency is faced in 1974 with a massive deficit of some \$12 million, as a result of currency realignments, accelerated inflation in UNRWA's area of operations and an increase in the school population. The working capital reserves have now fallen to the lowest level in the history of the Agency and stand at only \$1.5 million. Cash in hand was down to \$1.8 million at the beginning of 1974. One month's cash requirements alone is \$4.5 million.

Unless additional contributions amounting to \$12.5 million can be assured by the middle of March 1974, severe curtailments in essential services such as the closing of schools and the reduction of rations will have to be made. The Governments that are hosts to the refugees are alarmed at this prospect and have expressed their deep concern.

It is a matter of dismay to me that just at the moment when some real prospect of peace in the Middle East has at last arisen, the services of UNRWA to the Palestine refugees may have soon to be sharply reduced. Such a reduction would inevitably entail severe hardships for over a million Palestine refugees and the adverse effects would undoubtedly be felt not only in the area, but also at the Geneva Peace Conference, on the United Nations and the international community as a whole.

I urge your Government to give immediate consideration to this important matter and earnestly hope that it will find it possible to respond generously and speedily to this appeal. (S)

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Young students at UNRWA's preparatory school in Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza Strip prepare to try out their culinary skills.

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Further information, copies of UNRWA publications and audio-visual materials, including prints of photographs appearing in this issue of the Newsletter, may be obtained from :

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United Nations camp, east Jordan,
winter 1974, January 1974.
Photo: John Burt