



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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# 138<sup>th</sup> IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 24 – 28.03.2018

Assembly  
Item 2

A/138/2-P.1  
28 February 2018

## Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda

### Request for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union submitted by the delegation of Palestine

On 28 February 2018, the Secretary General received from the Speaker of the Palestine National Council a request and accompanying documents for the inclusion in the agenda of the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"The repercussions of the US Administration's announcement on Al-Quds (Jerusalem), the reduction of its contribution to the UNRWA budget and humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people".

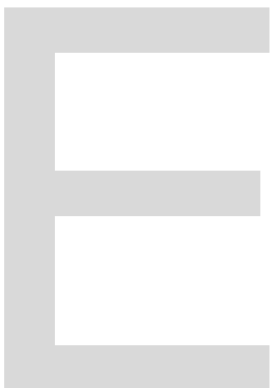
Delegates to the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request (Annex I), as well as an explanatory memorandum (Annex II) and a draft resolution (Annex III) in support thereof.

The 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of Palestine on Sunday, 25 March 2018.

Under the terms of Assembly Rule 11.1, any Member of the IPU may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. Such a request must be accompanied by a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request. The IPU Secretariat shall communicate the request and any such documents immediately to all Members.

Furthermore, Assembly Rule 11.2 stipulates that:

- (a) A request for the inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a recent major situation of international concern on which urgent action by the international community is required and on which it is appropriate for the IPU to express its opinion and mobilize a parliamentary response. Such a request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted;
- (b) The Assembly may place only one emergency item on its agenda. Should several requests obtain the requisite majority, the one having received the largest number of positive votes shall be accepted;
- (c) The authors of two or more requests for the inclusion of an emergency item may combine their proposals to present a joint one, provided that each of the original proposals relates to the same subject;
- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the request and title of the subject adopted by the Assembly.



#IPU138

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL BY  
THE SPEAKER OF THE PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL**

28 February 2018  
Ref. pnc.A.6.5.2119

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

I would like to inform you that in accordance with the provisions of Article 11 of the Rules of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference, the Inter-Parliamentary Group of Palestine requests the inclusion of a supplementary item on the agenda of the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly to be held in Geneva from 24 to 28 March 2018. The item reads as follows:

"The repercussions of the US Administration's announcement on Al-Quds (Jerusalem), the reduction of its contribution to the UNRWA budget and humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people".

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

Saleem AL-ZA'NOON  
Speaker of the Palestine  
National Council

**THE REPERCUSSIONS OF THE US ADMINISTRATION'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON AL-QUDS (JERUSALEM), THE REDUCTION OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNRWA BUDGET AND HUMANITARIAN AID TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

***Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of Palestine***

Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 to carry out direct relief and works programmes for Palestine refugees. The Agency began operations on 1 May 1950.

UNRWA provides facilities in 58 recognized refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip, and in other areas where large numbers of registered Palestine refugees live outside of recognized camps.

For nearly 70 years, UNRWA has been the lifeline to the more than five million registered Palestine refugees in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. It offers support in food supplies, access to education, healthcare, social services and employment. Today, 5.5 million Palestine refugees are eligible for UNRWA services. UNRWA operates 700 schools, serving more than 500,000 students. UNRWA also operates nine vocational and technical training colleges, two educational science faculties, and two teacher-training institutes.

Moreover, the UNRWA Health programme has been delivering comprehensive primary health care services to Palestine refugees. In addition to operating the infrastructure in the refugee camps, relief and social services programme, UNRWA takes a wide variety of actions to mitigate the effects of emergencies on the lives of Palestine refugees particularly in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The United States, which is UNRWA's largest single donor supplying almost 30 per cent of its budget, announced on 16 January 2018 that it was withholding \$65m out of a \$125m aid package earmarked for UNRWA under the pretext of the existence of what it called "the need for a deep review of UNRWA's works and funds". UNRWA, which is already facing desperate and chronic financial shortages before the US announcement, will face the most severe funding and unprecedented crisis in the history of the agency after this cut. This will undoubtedly lead to a collapse in the educational system and health care in the refugee camps and will have devastating consequences for Palestinians living in refugee camps in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon whose livelihood depend on aid by UNRWA.

The announcement came after US President Donald Trump had threatened on 3 January to cut aid to Palestinians. The threat came less than a month after his decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and to shift the American embassy to Jerusalem, a move that prompted widespread international condemnation and led Palestinians to no longer accept the United States manipulation of the peace process. This move cannot be understood but as a reaction to the UN General Assembly's vote on 21 December 2017 to reject Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital.

The US decision was officially welcomed by a number of Israeli officials who claimed that there was a need to turn UNRWA into a mechanism for the rehabilitation of Palestine refugees in their places of residence, which is a clear statement that calls to resettle Palestine refugees in the countries of their residence, while neglecting the risk of straining the political atmosphere and raising concerns in these countries. Therefore, the US seemed to be following the Israeli Government's long-term plan to gradually dismantle the one agency that was established by the international community to provide care to Palestine refugees and run the essential services targeting the most vulnerable segment of the Palestinian people.

That the Trump administration is using humanitarian aid for schools and hospitals to punish those who disagree with their policy decisions and as a tool to blackmail the Palestinian leaders to obtain political positions in accordance with US dictates, is immoral and does not bring a lasting and comprehensive peace. While the whole world is preoccupied with the fight against terrorism and when the Middle East faces multiple risks and threats, such a decision, which had cast doubt on the fate of millions of Palestine refugees will bring nothing but more poverty and hopelessness. It will create conditions that will have impact on regional security by creating fertile ground for further radicalization and consequently further terrorism.

The US decision on UNRWA and the US President Donald Trump's announcement regarding the recognition of Jerusalem expresses the first practical step in the "ultimate deal", a plan sponsored by the US Administration to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This deal appears to be in defiance of the UN GA Resolutions, even though the US itself was one of the states that was involved and agreed to them, on achieving peace and putting an end to the conflict of the Middle East, by ending the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian and Arab territories occupied in 1967, establishing an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, finding a just solution to the refugee issue in accordance with UN resolution 194 through serious negotiations, and resolving all final status issues, including Jerusalem in accordance to the peace terms of reference and the international mechanisms, foremost the principle of a two-state solution.

The Israeli Government has taken this step as a new cover to continue their expansionist Judaization plans - to forcibly displace thousands of citizens in Jerusalem, to escalate settlement construction in the occupied Jordan Valley and the designated Area C and legitimize the illegal outposts, tighten the siege on Gaza Strip, and escalate the attacks of the Israeli occupation forces by killing, arresting and using excessive force in the face of peaceful popular protest by the Palestinians to defend their rights. These attacks left more than 50 civilian martyrs, hundreds of prisoners and wounded, including dozens of children. Moreover, the Israeli government and the Knesset are racing to enact laws and legislation to consecrate and legitimize those steps in violation of international conventions and laws, particularly the Human Rights Charter and the four Geneva Conventions on protecting civilians under occupation.

The Palestine refugees, as other refugees in the world, are the moral responsibility of all countries of the world. Today, the whole world bears responsibility and will face the consequences of a humanitarian disaster facing more than five million Palestine refugees. All countries must act contingently and rapidly to enable UNRWA to carry out its humanitarian duties by covering the deficit facing its budget resulting from the American cuts and, in the meantime, urging the US to reconsider its decisions.

**THE REPERCUSSIONS OF THE US ADMINISTRATION'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON AL-QUDS (JERUSALEM), THE REDUCTION OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNRWA BUDGET AND HUMANITARIAN AID TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

***Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of PALESTINE***

The 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Recalling* that the Inter-Parliamentary Union shares the objectives and principles of the United Nations,
- (2) *Also recalling* that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 to carry and direct relief and work programmes for Palestine refugees,
- (3) *Stressing* the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from any cuts in UNRWA's funds, already facing desperate and chronic financial shortages, and that this will undoubtedly lead to a collapse in the educational system and health care in the refugee camps, in their five sites; in addition to the pressures practiced by the American administration on the Palestinian side, and the decisions of the Congress to cut aid to Palestinians,
- (4) *Following* the serious developments related to the Palestinian issue, in particular, the American administration's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, the Occupying power, and to transfer the US Embassy to Jerusalem,
- (5) *Recognizing* that the Israeli government has exploited this step to continue its expansionist Judaization plans, to escalate settlement construction, use excessive force in the face of peaceful protests by the Palestinians who defend their inalienable national and human rights, and that the Israeli Knesset has escalated its adoption of numerous unprecedented draft racist resolutions,
  1. *Refuses* to harm UNRWA, *insists* on maintaining its mission, *links* the termination of its work with the implementation of UN GA Resolution 194 which calls for the refugees' return to their homes and compensation for their losses, in accordance with UNRWA's founding decision;
  2. *Calls on* the United Nations, international community, all partners-host countries and donors to further increase their contributions to UNRWA's funds;
  3. *Also calls on* the USA, which has consistently praised UNRWA's quality, transparent and accountable services, to withdraw its decision to cut more than half of its financial contributions to UNRWA;
  4. *Rejects* the US administration's policy aimed at presenting projects deriving from ideas that are not based on the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy to resolve the Palestinian issue;
  5. *Reaffirms* the right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent State on the borders of 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital;
  6. *Calls upon* all Member Parliaments to work with their governments to boycott Israeli colonial settlements in all fields;
  7. *Condemns* and *refuses* all racist laws issued by the Israeli Knesset that contradict the rules of International Law and the relevant resolutions on international legitimacy, evoke hatred and are a serious violation of the aims and intentions of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, entailing restraining punitive measure;
  8. *Calls upon* all Member Parliaments of the IPU and their governments that have not recognized the State of Palestine to take the initiative and recognize it, and to recognize the State of Palestine's full-membership status in the United Nations.