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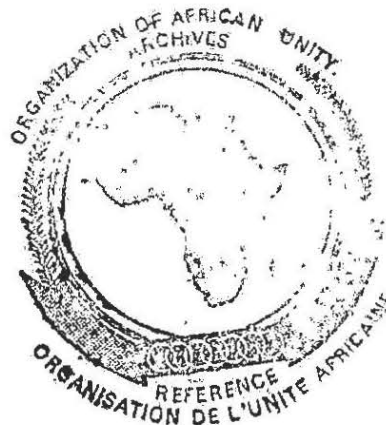
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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE



CM0973

MIGROFICHE

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

In pursuance of resolution CM/Res.632 (XXXI) adopted by the OAU Council of Ministers in its 31st Ordinary Session in Khartoum, July 1978, the General Secretariat has followed-up closely developments of the Palestinian question. In its previous resolution, the Council would recall that it decided to maintain the Palestinian issue as an agenda item in the meetings of the Council of Ministers. Following these directives, the General Secretariat wishes therefore to submit this report on the question of Palestine for the consideration of the Council of Ministers.

2. The 31st Session of the Council of Ministers held in Khartoum decided (CM/Res.630 (XXXI)) that the General Secretariat as well as OAU Member States should observe 29 November of every year as a day of solidarity with the Palestinian people. On the basis of this decision the General Secretariat in commemoration of 29 November of last year, issued a press statement in which it reaffirmed its support for the people of Palestine as well as for the Arab countries in their legitimate struggle. The General Secretariat also called upon the OAU Member States to observe 29 November as a day for demonstrating their support to the Palestinian people in compliance with the decision of the OAU Council of Ministers.

3. The issue of the national rights of the Palestinian people still remains the corner stone of the Palestinian question. Resolution 3236 (XXIX) adopted by the UN General Assembly on the national rights of the Palestinian people underscores this point. The recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people

as well as the withdrawal by Israel her forces from all Arab occupied territories as were provided in previous resolutions of the OAU constitute essential elements in search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

4. The most important development as far as the question of the natural rights of the people of Palestine is concerned was the signing of Peace-Treaty between Egypt and Israel under which proposals for autonomy for the Palestinians were made.

5. In the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty which the two countries signed on 26 March, 1979, in Washington, under the auspices of the President of the USA, the two countries agreed to start negotiations on the nature of the autonomous regime to be established for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip one month after the treaty is signed.

6. Egypt and Israel will enter into negotiations within a period of one month as from the date of exchange of the instruments of ratification of the Peace Treaty, in order to reach an agreement on the holding of elections for the establishment of a Palestinian government in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and that the period of such negotiations should not exceed one year and elected authorities would assume office within one month of holding of the elections. The transitional period of five years takes effect on the assumption of office by the newly elected government, while on the other hand, negotiations continue to give the West Bank and Gaza, their final national sovereignty.

The Egyptian delegation to the negotiations could also include representatives of the Palestinian people and that invitation is offered to Jordan to participate.

7. On the assumption of office by the newly elected Government, the Israeli military control and its civilian administration shall be terminated in the area and during the period of transition, a greater number of her forces be withdrawn to some specific agreed areas.

Furthermore, Israel has agreed to take steps aiming at improving political situations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This will include lifting of ban on political activities, releasing of political detainees and permitting return of some refugees back home.

Furthermore, Egypt has in supplementary note on the Camp David Accord, maintained that Jerusalem remains an indispensable part of the West Bank and that the Palestinians should exercise their legitimate and national rights over it.

The instruments of ratification were exchanged between Egypt and Israel on 25th April, 1979, following the approval of the Peace Treaty by the Egyptian and Israeli Governments.

8. At the beginning of May 1979, Egypt and Israel with the participation of the USA have commenced talks on the Palestinian question.

9. The Camp David Accord was rejected by a number of Arab States during their recent meeting in Baghdad. Among other things, these Arab States maintain that the Accord is deficient in that it does not provide for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank.



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