

Mr. Chairman, my Delegation is deeply mindful of the human aspect of the problem which now faces this Committee. It is not for us to apportion responsibility for the sad plight of these hundreds of thousands of people, but it is our responsibility to be greatly concerned about the failure to move in the direction of a solution of the refugee problem. Realistically, of course, we must recognize that the problem is not narrowly confined to the plight of the refugees but is essentially linked with the broad political picture in the Middle East. It is a problem so deeply rooted and complex that we must not be unreasonable in demanding quick solutions. The passing of time might of itself serve to produce more favourable conditions for dealing with the problem. However, our patience in this regard should not lead to indifference or any lack of vigilance in seeking and exploring opportunities for making progress.

Some of the remarks of previous speakers have encouraged us in so far as they appear to represent a desire to be constructive and to bring forward ideas which might possibly open up new avenues of approach. We have in mind particularly suggestions concerning the re-activation and expansion of the Palestine Conciliation Commission and the possibility of a special U.N. committee or organization in connection with the Palestine problem. We trust that such suggestions will be seriously considered because it is possible that there may be something here on which we can build and because such ideas may in turn encourage the exploration of other constructive approaches. My Delegation sincerely hopes that members of this committee will turn increasingly from recriminations over the past to considerations of the most practical course for the future. It has always been the desire of Canada that the Assembly should leave nothing undone which might have any prospect of bringing nearer a solution of those political and psychological aspects of the Palestine problem which the Secretary-General outlined in his report and which has necessitated the continuance of UNRWA. We urge Israel, the Arab States and all members of the U.N. to redouble their efforts to solve this problem in the knowledge that succeeding generations will not hold us guiltless if, by inaction, we perpetuate this tragedy.

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