

CANADIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

CAUTION: ADVANCE TEXT

PRESS RELEASE NO. 110

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

December 14, 1967

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Press Office
Suite 250
866 United Nations Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10017
Tel: 751-5600

UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS
AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES

Statement to be delivered by the Canadian
Deputy Permanent Representative to the
United Nations, Mr. Paul Beaulieu in the
Special Political Committee on December 14, 1967

Mr. Chairman,

We have listened with careful attention to the statement of the Commissioner General introducing his annual report on the activities of UNRWA for the period from July 1966 to June 1967, which he has augmented with more recent information. At the outset I should like to commend Mr. Michelmore and his staff on the way in which they have handled unforeseen problems in the trying and often difficult circumstances which have confronted UNRWA since the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East last June. It seems evident from the debate, Mr. Chairman, that members of this Committee share our hope that as a result of the unanimous action taken by the Security Council on November 22 progress will be made toward a just solution of the refugee problem.

For 18 years the existence of an ever-increasing number of Palestinian refugees has been a source of tension in the Middle East. The problem of Palestinian refugees has deep emotional, historical and juridical roots. Successive resolutions of the General Assembly calling for repatriation, resettlement and compensation have not thus far brought about a solution. Perhaps the hour is auspicious for a genuine effort toward a solution to the question of Palestine refugees within the context of a political settlement. We sincerely hope so.

In the interim we face the immediate problem of the welfare of individual refugees, over a million of whom require assistance. We have before us the report of the Commissioner General in Document A/6713. We note that the Commissioner General has established a revised budget of \$47.5 million, of which \$40.1 million are required to maintain the regular programme at the previous level, and 7.4 are required to meet new needs arising from the emergency. Of the total budget 41.6 million dollars must be obtained in the form of contributions from Governments. We have observed with regret that the amounts pledged at the pledging conference on December 6 would result in a serious shortfall if the proposed budget is maintained. We regret that the unfortunate trend of deficit financing established in previous years, which has forced UNRWA