

Mr. Chairman, I regret that there is still another matter to regret -- the problem posed by the attitude on some matters of some host governments. The Committee will recall that, when establishing UNRWA in Resolution 302 (IV), the Assembly called upon governments concerned to accord to the Agency all the privileges, immunities, exemptions and facilities necessary for the fulfilment of its functions. Unfortunately, some of the host governments have failed to extend to the Agency the co-operation essential to the effective execution of its task. The interference of some host governments in the local operations of the Agency, as described in the Director's report, is serious. The Agency cannot be expected to continue operations in such circumstances. We appreciate the concern of the host governments with protecting their national sovereignty, but we believe that they must come to a decision. If they are unwilling during the remaining period of the Agency's mandate to allow the Agency the freedom it requires to operate in their respective territories, are they prepared to assume the direct operational responsibilities for the relief and rehabilitation of the refugees? If they are not, and if they take the position that in the remaining period of its mandate the Agency must continue to have full responsibility for the care of the refugees, then are they prepared to recognize that in order for the Agency to discharge its responsibilities it is essential that it have their co-operation and that it be free from unwarranted interference in its operations in their territories? Surely the host governments would be prepared to abide by the terms of Articles 104 and 105 of the Charter and to recognize that the Agency is free to recruit, direct and terminate the employment of its personnel according to its own best judgment. Moreover, it should be understood that the Agency has the right, after representations to the governments concerned, to suspend its operations in areas where local conditions unduly hamper the carrying out of its responsibilities.

My Delegation noted with interest the suggestion of the representative of the United States that the Director of the Agency should submit to the next session of the General Assembly, recommendations concerning the nature and extent of the Agency's future operations and responsibilities. By the end of this year, when his report will be made to this Assembly, it will be urgently necessary to have clear understanding of the arrangements for refugees which will be necessary during the transitional period before the Agency ceases its operation in 1960.

Perhaps the most difficult task facing the Agency will be to meet the humanitarian needs of the refugees of the Gaza strip. As if their plight in past years had not been agonizing enough, these helpless people now find themselves in a virtual no-man's land with no sign of safety or security even for the bare subsistence which the Agency has been able to provide. They suffered casualties during the recent fighting and its aftermath - we deeply regret this loss of life and the injury sustained. The future for these refugees is even more uncertain than the past. There can be no doubt that in their