



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

FIFTY-SEVENTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

A57/41
20 May 2004

First report of Committee B

Committee B held its first meeting on 20 May 2004 under the chairmanship of Dr Jigmi Singay (Bhutan).

On the proposal of the Committee on Nominations,¹ Professor N.M. Nali (Central African Republic) and Dr S. Kharabsheh (Jordan) were elected Vice-Chairmen, and Ms Z. Jakab (Hungary), Rapporteur.

It was decided to recommend to the Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly the adoption of the attached resolution relating to the following agenda item:

19. Health conditions of, and assistance to, the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine

¹ Document A57/36.

Agenda item 19

Health conditions of, and assistance to, the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine

The Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly,

Mindful of the basic principle established in the Constitution of WHO, which affirms that the health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security;

Recalling all its previous resolutions on health conditions in the occupied Arab territories;

Expressing appreciation for the report of the Director-General on the health conditions of, and assistance to, the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine;¹

Expressing its concern at the deterioration of health conditions and the humanitarian crises resulting from military activities which caused severe restrictions on the movement of Palestinian people and goods, including restrictions on the movement to and from Palestinian territories, particularly of ambulances, health workers, the wounded and sick;

Expressing its concern at the continued use of excessive force by the Israeli military forces which resulted in the killing and injuring of thousands of Palestinians, including children;

Expressing its concern at the serious deterioration of the economic and health situation resulting from closures and curfews imposed on the Palestinians by the Israeli occupying forces, which together with the withholding of Palestinian tax revenues, has resulted in unprecedented levels of unemployment, with implications for poverty, food insecurity and nutritional vulnerability; and at reports of malnutrition among children, and evidence of endemic anaemia among nursing mothers;

Expressing its concern at the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure during Israeli military incursions, and particularly at the continued construction by Israel of a “security fence”, which is not being built on or near the 1967 borders, and which produces humanitarian and economic hardship for the Palestinians, and prevents access to hospitals and to health care;

Expressing its concern at the grave violations of international humanitarian law by the Israeli occupation authorities in the occupied Arab territories, including the unlawful arrest of thousands of Palestinian civilians, among whom hundreds of children locked up in Israeli jails, some of whom detained without charge and others sick, without receiving medical care;

Affirming that the targeting of civilian populations by any party, in particular extrajudicial executions, is another violation of international humanitarian law;

Affirming that the ongoing violence, closures and curfews and the continuing occupation of the Palestinian territories are among the main causes of acute psychological distress and emotional

¹ Document A57/30.

problems among Palestinian children and adults, including psychosomatic problems, rejection of authority, risk-taking behaviour, decreasing hope in the future, and those caused by the general atmosphere of hopelessness and frustration;

Affirming the right of Palestinian patients and medical staff to be able to benefit from the health facilities available in the Palestinian health institutions in occupied east Jerusalem,

1. CALLS upon Israel, the occupying power, to halt immediately all its practices, policies and plans which seriously affect the health conditions of civilians under occupation, particularly its excessive use of force and military actions against Palestinian civilians;
2. EXPRESSES gratitude to all Member States, and intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations for their continued support in meeting the health needs of the Palestinian people;
3. EXTENDS its thanks and appreciation to the Director-General for his efforts to provide necessary assistance to the Palestinian people, the rest of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, and other peoples of the region;
4. REQUESTS the Director-General:
 - (1) to dispatch as soon as possible to the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine, a fact-finding committee on the deterioration of the health and economic situation resulting from both the current crises and erection of the “security fence” in the occupied Palestinian territories;
 - (2) to take urgent steps, in cooperation with Member States, to support the Palestinian Ministry of Health and other medical service-providers in their efforts to overcome the current difficulties, in particular so as to guarantee the free movement of all health personnel and patients and the normal provision of medical supplies to the Palestinian medical premises;
 - (3) to take steps, in cooperation with Member States, to ensure the free movement of goods, workers and people in order to allow trading, farming and other forms of economic activities inside the occupied Palestinian territories and the access by the population in general to basic services;
 - (4) to continue providing necessary technical assistance to meet needs arising from the current crises, including health problems resulting from erection of the “security fence”;
 - (5) to take the necessary steps and make the contacts needed to obtain funding from various sources, including extrabudgetary, to meet the urgent health needs of the Palestinian people;
 - (6) to take urgent action to implement the joint Ministry of Health/WHO strategy for mental health;
 - (7) to report on implementation of this resolution to the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly.

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