

The Secretary-General also reported that the City of New York had taken official action to begin its public improvement work on streets and areas surrounding the site, and that a program had been agreed upon which would integrate the building operations of the United Nations within the site with those of the City of New York outside the site.

The United Nations awarded to the Slattery Contracting Company, of New York, the contract for excavation. Excavating work was begun on September 14, 1948.

## 9. The Question of Palestine

### a. ORGANIZATION OF THE ad hoc COMMITTEE ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION

#### (1) Establishment and Terms of Reference of the ad hoc Committee

During its second session, the General Assembly, at its 90th meeting on September 23, 1947, established an ad hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question, composed of all Members, and referred to it the following agenda items for consideration and report:

"Question of Palestine": item proposed by the United Kingdom (A/286).

Report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine ("UNSCOP") (A/364).

"Termination of the Mandate over Palestine and the Recognition of its Independence as One State": item proposed by Saudi Arabia (A/317) and Iraq (A/328).

#### (2) Organization of the ad hoc Committee

At its first meeting on September 25, 1947, the Committee elected H. V. Evatt (Australia) Chairman, Prince Subha Svasti Svastivat (Siam) Vice-Chairman and Thor Thors (Iceland) Rapporteur. It also decided to invite the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency for Palestine to be represented at its deliberations in order to supply such information or render such assistance as the Committee might require. The invitation was accepted, and representatives of both organizations attended all meetings of the ad hoc Committee.

### b. SUMMARY OF AGENDA OF THE ad hoc COMMITTEE

#### (1) Question of Palestine

The representative of the United Kingdom, in a letter to the Secretary-General dated April 2, 1947, had requested, on behalf of his Government, that the "Question of Palestine" be placed on the agenda of the General Assembly at its next regular

annual session. In the same communication, the representative of the United Kingdom had requested the convening of a special session of the Assembly "for the purpose of constituting and instructing a special committee" to prepare for the consideration of the question of Palestine at the subsequent (second) regular session.<sup>211</sup>

#### (2) Report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP)<sup>212</sup>

The report of the Special Committee (A/364) related the events leading up to the establishment of UNSCOP and gave a summary of its activities. It surveyed the elements of the conflict with relation to geographic and demographic factors, relevant economic factors, Palestine under the Mandate and the conflicting claims, and dealt with the question of the religious interests and Holy Places in Palestine. The report also reviewed the main proposals previously propounded for the solution of the Palestine question.

The Committee made twelve recommendations, eleven of which were adopted unanimously and the twelfth by a substantial majority.

The report contained a majority proposal for a Plan of Partition with Economic Union and a minority proposal for a Plan for a Federal State of Palestine.<sup>213</sup> Reservations and observations of certain members of the Committee were included in the report.

#### (a) SUMMARY OF UNSCOP'S ACTIVITIES

Pursuant to the request of the United Kingdom, the General Assembly had convened at Flushing Meadow, New York, on April 28, 1947, and, on May 15, 1947, had established and instructed a Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP).

UNSCOP was composed of representatives of Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia, and was given the "widest powers to ascertain and record facts, and to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine"; it was under instructions to report its recommendations to the Secretary-General not later than September 1, 1947.<sup>214</sup> It actually completed its work on August 31.

The Special Committee held its first meeting at

<sup>211</sup> See Yearbook of the United Nations, 1946-47, pp. 276-78.

<sup>212</sup> For this section see doc. A/364: United Nations Special Committee on Palestine—Report to the General Assembly.

<sup>213</sup> The representative of Australia on the Special Committee abstained from voting on either the Majority or the Minority Plan.

<sup>214</sup> See Yearbook of the United Nations, 1946-47, pp. 301-3.