

Middle East

The year 2015 was characterized by the reconstruction of Gaza, continued breakdown in talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians, violence and diplomatic activity. On 2 January, the Secretary-General accepted instruments of accession to sixteen multilateral treaties submitted by the State of Palestine. The political and security situation remained tense throughout the year. Apart from a meeting between the Israeli and Palestinian chief negotiators in Amman in late Ju2 (h)6.5(e J)2314.3 (u)-20 (d t4 Tc 0.007 Tw 0 -1.06 Td [(a)-7.7

S/2015/784; A/ES/10/696-S/2015/790; A/ES/10/697-S/2015/805; A/ES/10/698-S/2015/807; A/ES/10/699-S/2015/827; A/ES/10/700-S/2015/834; S/2015/839; A/ES/10/701-S/2015/861; S/2015/872; A/ES/10/702-S/2015/887; S/2015/893; A/ES/10/703-S/2015/907; A/ES/10/704-S/2015/925; A/ES/10/705-S/2015/948; S/2015/970; A/ES/10/706-S/2015/989; A/ES/10/707-S/2015/1023; S/2015/1033].

On 30 January [S/2015/88], the Secretary-General informed the Security Council President of his intention to appoint Nickolay Mladenov (Bulgaria) as the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative to the Palestine Liberation Organization () and the , succeeding Robert H. Serry (Netherlands), who would complete his assignment on 31 March 2015. On 3 February [S/2015/89], the Council took note of the Secretary-General's intention.

The Security Council was briefed throughout the year on the security and political situation in the Middle East. On 15 January [S/PV.7360], Assistant-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen reported that the likelihood of resumed talks between the Israelis and Palestinians was very low. In Gaza, the security situation showed signs of serious deterioration.

Meanwhile, violence continued in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

On 18 February [S/PV.7386], Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Political Affairs Jeremy Feltman briefed the Council that the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians continued to threaten further escalation; and if that occurred, it would have highly damaging and potentially irreversible consequences for both parties and for the two-State solution.

In February, the Israeli Government announced that, for a second month, it would withhold the transfer of the tax revenues it collected on behalf of the in retaliation for the Palestinian accession to the International Criminal Court bringing the total withheld amount to over \$200 million. The Middle East Quartet that met at the principals level on 8 February in Munich prioritized the resumption of negotiations and a strengthening of its engagement to prepare for a revival of the peace process, including through regular and direct outreach to the Arab States. The Quartet also called for the acceleration of reconstruction in Gaza, where more than 75,000 individuals had been

Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Iceland, the former

pursuant to Assembly resolution 69/90 [YUN 2014, p. 534], by which the Assembly requested the Special Committee, pending complete termination of the Israeli occupation, to continue to investigate Israeli policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, especially Israeli violations of the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention), and to report to the Secretary-General as soon as possible. The Assembly also requested the Special Committee to continue to investigate the treatment of the thousands of prisoners and detainees, including women and children, in Israeli prisons and detention centres in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

The Special Committee held its annual consultations with Member States concerned with the implementation of resolution 69/90 in Geneva on 2

prohibition of forcible transfer and annul any plans to relocate Bedouin and herder communities without their free and informed consent. The Secretary-General called on the State of Palestine to conduct prompt, thorough, effective, independent and impartial investigations into allegations of unlawful killing, injury or summary executions by security forces and any violations of international humanitarian law by Palestinian actors.

By a 25 September note [A/70/392], the Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly the report by Special Rapporteur Makarim Wibisono on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, submitted in accordance with Human

Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, India, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritania, Mauritius, Nepal, Pakistan, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, South Africa,

Palestine between September and November; and organized the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (29 November). The Committee on Palestinian Rights, in its annual report [A/70/35], requested the Division to continue its work.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 24 November [meeting 64], the General Assembly decided, by 157-119, 29 votes in favour, 119 abstentions and 29 votes against, to request the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement to the conflict between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, and to report to the General Assembly at its 65th session.

Social Council, on the implementation of assistance to the Palestinians.

During the reporting period, the Palestinian Government continued to implement the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016: State-building to Sovereignty. In support of those efforts, the United Nations continued to implement the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2014-2016. The financial resources required for the assistance provided through the Framework amounted to \$1.2 billion.

The United Nations responded to humanitarian and development challenges in the context of the occupation, but placed particular focus on providing humanitarian assistance during and after the conflict in Gaza between 8 July and 26 August and support to the Palestinian Government. The United Nations also brokered a temporary agreement between Israel and Palestine to enable the entry, use and monitoring of “dual-use” material into Gaza to allow reconstruction and the rehabilitation of damaged facilities.

The 2015 Strategic Response Plan sought \$705 million to meet the most urgent humanitarian needs by enhancing the protective environment and tackling the food insecurity of the most vulnerable groups throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. To complement that programming and respond to the governance, recovery, reconstruction and structural development needs that had been compounded by the conflict in Gaza, the United Nations Support Plan for the Transformation of the Gaza Strip 2014-2016, detailed the contribution of the United Nations to the Palestinian National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza for 2014-2017 and requested \$2.1 billion. Meanwhile, through the 2014 Strategic Response Plan, the United Nations and its partners continued to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and protection assistance, including food assistance, to 1.9 million people in Gaza.

ditions of unimaginable suffering. Despite the substantial burden placed on Jordan and Lebanon, those two countries had been generous in offering sanctuary to more than one million civilians fleeing Syria.

In Gaza, as a result of the nine-year Israeli blockade, almost the entire population was dependent on aid to meet basic needs, as unemployment remained among the highest in the world. Tens of thousands of homes remained in ruins after the 2014 conflict. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, violence and operations by Israeli security forces, access restrictions, forced displacement, demolitions and other rights violations had increased significantly since October 2015.

Regarding the financial situation, in 2015 faced the most serious financial crisis in its 66-year-long history, which threatened the opening of some 700 schools in the Middle East. The extraordinary mobilization of partners allowed to bridge that gap and sustained the schooling for 500,000 girls and boys.

In identical letters of 13 April [A/69/867-S/2015/253] addressed to the Secretary-General, the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council, the State of Palestine conveyed its grave concern about the dire situation of Palestine refugees in Syria, in particular the humanitarian catastrophe in the Yarmouk refugee camp.

Commissioner-General Pierre Krähenbühl issued a special report in August [/ /] on the financial crisis affecting the work of the Agency.

U had a deficit of \$101 million in its core budget, the General Fund, which was largely funded by voluntary contributions. The Agency had taken measures to ensure that its essential services in health, relief and sanitation could be delivered until the end of 2015 to protect the public health and safety of Palestine refugee and host communities. As at 3 August 2015, however, lacked the funds to open its 685 schools that provided education for some 500,000

payment of compensation, noted that it had nothing to report since its previous submission.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 9 December [meeting 70], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Fourth Committee [A/70/496], adopted *the resolution (167-1-11)* by recorded vote (167-1-11) [agenda item 54]

wait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia,

August report [A/70/340] on Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues. Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Japan, Pakistan and the Republic of Korea had replied to his request for information from Member States on action taken or envisaged in relation to paragraph 4 of resolution 69/86 [YUN 2014, p. 554], paragraph 4 of resolution 69/87 [ibid. p. 559] and paragraphs 26 and 27 of resolution 69/88 [ibid. p. 556]. No information

auspices, contributing to calming of tensions between the Sunni and Shia communities.

The Special Tribunal for Lebanon continued to present evidence at ons

U generally enjoyed freedom of movement throughout its area of operations. ere were how-

with the Hizbullah Resistance Brigades on 5 April

الأمم المتحدة The Council discussed the situation in Syria in meetings held on 28 January [S/PV.7369], 26 February [S/PV.7394], 26 March [S/PV.7418], 28 May [S/PV.7452], 29 June [S/PV.7476], 28 July [S/PV.7493], 29 July [S/PV.7497], 7 August [S/PV.7501], 17 August [S/PV.7504], 27 August [S/PV.7513], 16 September [S/PV.7524], 27 October [S/PV.7543], 16 November [S/PV.7560], 18 December [S/PV.7588], 21 December [S/PV.7592] and 22 December [S/PV.7595].

Implementation of resolutions 2139(2014), 2165(2014) and 2191(2014)

الأمم المتحدة In February [S/2015/124], pursuant to Council resolutions 2139(2014) [YUN 2014, p. 578], 2165(2014) [YUN 2014, p. 583] and 2191(2014) [YUN 2014, p. 590], in which the
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the State of Palestine conveyed the grave concerns of the Palestinian leadership about the dire situation of Palestine refugees in Syria as a result of the armed conflict there; and called the international community's attention to the humanitarian catastrophe in the Yarmouk refugee camp.

In identical notes verbales of 14 April [A/69/873–S/2015/254] to the Secretary-General and the Council President, Jordan brought attention to the security, political and humanitarian situation in Syria that had continued to deteriorate as a result of the Syrian Government's daily acts against its own people, flagrantly and repeatedly violating the provisions of international humanitarian law and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

In letters of 17 April [S/2015/265] and 24 April [S/2015/277] to the Security Council President, the United Kingdom and Qatar transmitted letters from the Syrian Coalition drawing attention to chemical weapons attacks by Syrian aerial forces in the Syrian governorate of Idlib.

On 23 April [S/2015/276], in identical letters addressed to the Secretary-General and the Council President, Syria responded to the Secretary-General's April report (see above).

On 25 April

On 20 May [A/69/911-S/2015/363], Jordan rejected the claims set out in the 18 May letter from Syria (see above).

On the same date [S/2015/352], Syria attached a list containing the names of 96 Syrian civilians, including 41 children, killed in Aleppo by terrorist groups during the period from 13 April to 7 May.

On 25 May [A/69/912-S/2015/371], 29 May [A/69/919-S/2015/392] and 12 June [A/69/937-S/2015/429] Syria stressed that the acts of terrorism in Syria would not have occurred were it not for the support that certain States had been providing for more than four years to terrorist organizations such as , the Nusra Front, the so-called Army of Conquest, the Free Army and other terrorist organizations.

On 28 May [S/2015/388], in identical letters addressed to the Secretary-General and the Council President, Syria responded to the Secretary-General's May report (see above)

In identical letters of 2 June [A/69/923-S/2015/403] and 16 June [A/69/943-S/2015/440], Jordan rejected the allegations of Syria in its 25 May and 12 June letters (see above) and called on Syria to focus on safeguarding the lives of its people.

On 5 June [S/2015/410], Syria alleged that Turkey supported terrorist groups since the outset of the crisis in Syria.

On 8 June [A/69/930-S/2015/414], Syria conveyed its position on the decisions by the United States and

Communiqué, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria, Mr. de Mistura, announced, during a briefing to the Security Council on 29 July, that he would continue the diplomatic efforts by establishing an intra-Syrian dialogue process, focusing on four key thematic working groups, among which humanitarian access would figure prominently.

As in the previous months, the delivery of humanitarian assistance to many of the 12.2 million people in need of assistance remained extremely challenging, and access to the 4.6 million people living in hard-to-reach areas remained critical and very limited compared with the level of need. During the reporting period, the United Nations and partners reached 1.8 per cent of the 422,000 besieged population with health assistance. A new list of national

twenty-second report on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139(2014) and 2165(2014), covering the period from 1 to 30 Novem-

the country and abroad, including all components of Syrian society: Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, Assyrians, Syriac communities, Circassians and Armenians.

On 12 December [S/2015/964], Syria said that terrorists carried out bombings in several Syrian governorates, killing approximately 100 innocent civilians and causing various injuries to others.

On 16 December [S/2015/986], Qatar transmitted to the Security Council President a letter from the Syrian Coalition drawing attention to the indiscriminate attacks by a combination of Syrian military missiles and air strikes that took place in eastern Ghouta, killing at least 45 civilians and wounding at least 100 others.

In an 18 December communication [S/2015/998], Syria noted that Turkish interference in internal Syrian affairs had taken on many forms over the course of the crisis, including the direct participation of the Turkish armed forces in offensive military operations in g . 9 in68-k

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By its resolution 2059(2012) [YUN 2012, p. 449], the Security Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria () for a final period of 30 days and expressed its willingness to renew it again only if the Secretary-General reported, and the Council confirmed, the cessation of the use of heavy weapons and a reduction of violence by all sides sufficient to allow to implement its mandate. As those conditions were not met, mandate came to an end on 19 August 2012.

Financing

In an 18 November 2014 report [A/69/594 & Corr.1], the Secretary-General provided details on the donation of, and the final disposition of, the assets of with a total inventory value of \$15,718,700, that were disposed of as at 15 September. He recommended that the General Assembly take note of the report on the final disposition of the assets of .

In March [A/69/847], recommended that the Assembly take note of the Secretary-General's report, subject to its comments and observations.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 25 June [meeting 97], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee [A/69/953], adopted () without vote [agenda item 164].

By decision of 23 December, the General Assembly decided that the agenda item on the financing of would remain for consideration during its seventieth (2016) session.

Use of chemical weapons

OPCW-UN joint mission for the elimination of the chemical weapons programme in Syria

On 27 September 2013, the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons () decided to establish special procedures for the expeditious destruction of Syria's chemical weapons programme. On the same day, the Security Council, by its resolution 2118(2013) [YUN 2013, p. 443], endorsed the Executive Council decision, authorized a United Nations advance team to provide early assistance to activities in Syria, and requested the

Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mau-

In a 25 February communication [A/69/799-S/2015/143], Syria noted that on 25 February, Israel re-arrested the activist Sidqi al-Maqt, who had been released in August 2012 after being held in Israeli prisons for 27 years without legal or moral basis, raiding his family home in the village of Majdal Shams in the occupied Syrian Golan.

On 2 March [A/69/807-S/2015/154], Syria informed the Secretary-General and the Council President that Israel had detained Sheikh Atif Darwish and Fida' Majid al-Sha'ir in yet another violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2192(2014) [YUN 2014, p. 604], the Secretary-General reported in March [S/2015/177] to the Council on activities between 20 November 2014 and 3 March 2015.

The ceasefire between Israel and Syria was maintained albeit in a continuously volatile environment attributable to the ongoing conflict in Syria. The Syrian armed forces carried out military activities and security operations against armed groups, often in response to offensives carried out by the armed groups. Inside the area of separation, the presence of the Syrian armed forces and military equipment, as well as any other armed personnel and military equipment, other than that of the UN Truce Supervision Commission, was in violation of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement.

A number of incidents occurred on 7 December 2014 and 18 and 27 January 2015 across the ceasefire line.2 (12-19.1 (l)-9d0117.8 (e)-Mw 2.977 0 Td [()-25.3

that the General Assembly appropriate an amount of \$52,261,222, a reduction of \$40,478 to the Secretary-General's proposals, for the maintenance of for the 12-month period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of beyond 30 June 2015.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 25 June [meeting 97], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee [A/69/960], adopted 
