

Salah Abed Rabbo

(Spokesman, Union of Youth Social Centers, West Bank)

Observations and Questions Regarding Mechanism and Motives.

Attitudes of Refugees towards their Regional Conferences:
The paper reflects the legal concern of the refugees after the Oslo agreement. The reason for the concern is not lack of confidence in the Palestinian negotiators, but rather the awareness that the negotiations are taking place under the umbrella of unequal power, and that the results of any negotiations are inevitably subject to the weight of the powerful party. This superior power is militarily, economically and scientifically available to Israel.

Another concern is that the current negotiations may neglect the refugees' question, which is the central public problem.

The paper points to the important recommendations agreed upon by the First al-Fari'a Palestine Refugee conference, 9/12/1995. The recommendations stress the Palestinian irrevocable and legal right to return, in view of the UN General Assembly Resolution resolution 194 of 11.12.48. The paper recommends holding unified regional conferences for Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Syria and Lebanon.

The paper also shows the achievements of the Preparatory Committee in organizing a conference for refugees in Ramallah and Bethlehem, and the mechanism employed to reach refugees inside and outside camps. The paper outlines the practical procedures available to organize regional conferences with the view that these be directed by

specialists in politics, law, economy, environment, social affairs and mass organization.

The paper discusses the role of committees and conferences from point of view of the refugees. The relationship between these committees and P.L.O is also considered, especially after the amendment of the Palestinian Constitution (the Palestine National Charter). Moreover, the paper discusses what final shape of such conferences should take: a civil-right movement, a political movement, a political party or an N.G.O.

Finally, the paper emphasizes the importance of the developmental role of the camps, which should not conflict with the right of the Palestine refugees to return. Palestinians are encouraged to consolidate their relationships with all refugees inside and outside Palestine. For this purpose, a data bank should be established.