

CABLEGRAM DATED 15 MAY 1948 ADDRESSED TO THE  
SECRETARY-GENERAL

BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

On the occasion of the intervention of Arab States in Palestine to restore law and order and to prevent disturbances prevailing in Palestine from spreading into their territories and to check further bloodshed, I have the honour to request your Excellency to bring following statement before General Assembly and Security Council.

"1. Palestine was part of the Ottoman Empire subject to its rule of law and enjoying full representation in its parliament, the great majority of its population was composed of Arabs with a small minority of Jews enjoying all rights alike with all the remaining citizens and liable only to such charges as all others were. Never were they as minority the subject of any discrimination on account of their creed. Holy places were protected and accessible to all without distinction.

2. The Arabs have constantly been seeking their freedom and independence, when the second World War broke out and the Allies declared that they were fighting to restore freedom to the nations the Arabs sided with the Allies and placed all their means at their disposal and in fact fought with them for the realization of their national aspirations and their independence. Great Britain took upon herself the recognition of the independence of the Arab countries in Asia including Palestine. The Arabs effort was felt and duly appreciated in winning victory.

3. Great Britain issued a declaration in 1917 in which expression was made of its sympathy with the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. When this was brought to the knowledge of the Arabs they did not fail to express their resentment and opposition to such expression of policy and when they protested formally to Great Britain the latter made the necessary reassurances with a confirmation of the view that such a declaration did not affect in any degree their rights nor their freedom and independence, and that the said declaration did not prejudice the political position of the Arabs of Palestine notwithstanding the illegality of the said declaration. The British Government's interpretation of it was that it meant no more than the establishment of a spiritual abode for the Jews in  
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Palestine without their being any ulterior political motives such as the creation of a Jewish State, that being further the expressed views of the Jewish leaders at the time. 4. When the war ended Great Britain did not fulfill its pledges. Instead Palestine was placed under a Mandate entrusted to Great Britain. The terms of the Mandate provided for the safeguarding of the interests of the inhabitants of Palestine and their preparation for eventual independence to which they were entitled by virtue of the Covenant of the League of Nations which admitted that the inhabitants of Palestine were fit for it. 5. Great Britain however placed Palestine in such a position as made it possible for the Jews to flood the country with waves of immigrants and factually helped their establishment on the soil despite the saturation of the land with its population which did exceed the absorptive capacity of the country economically and otherwise thereby neglecting the provided for interests and the rights of its lawful inhabitants. The Arabs used all means at all times to express their deep concern and anxiety at such a policy which they felt was undermining their future and their very existence. But at all such times they were met with utter disregard and harsh treatment such as jail exile, etc. 6. And whereas Palestine is an Arab country falling in the heart of the Arab countries and attached to the Arab world with all bonds spiritual, historical, economical and strategical, the Arab States as well as Eastern countries, whether through its people or governments, could not but concern and interest themselves with the fate of Palestine. This is why they took upon themselves the task of handling its case before the International institutions generally and particularly before Great Britain, insisting upon a solution for the problem based upon undertaking given to them and upon democratic principles. A round table conference was held early in 1939 in London in which the Arab States took part asking for the safeguarding of the independence of Arab Palestine as a whole. That conference resulted in the issue of the well-known White Paper in which Great Britain defined its policy towards Palestine, admitting its right to independence while laying down at the same time certain provisions for the exercise of such independence, Great Britain did therein further declare that its obligations regarding the establishment of the Jewish National Home have been completely fulfilled as the said National Home had been established. But unfortunately the underlying policy of the White Paper was not carried out, which led to an increasingly bad situation and in fact resulted in complete prejudice and disregard to Arab interests. 7. During the time that the second World War was raging the respective

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Governments of the Arab States began to co-ordinate their views and actions for the useful purpose of better securing co-operation regarding not only their present and future but for playing their part in the establishment of lasting World-wide peace. The problem of Palestine did not at any time during their mutual consultations fail to absorb its due share of attention and interest. It was a result of those consultations that then emerged the present Arab League as instrument for the realization of their own peace, security and welfare. The Arab League Charter declared that Palestine had become an independent country since its separation from the Ottoman Empire, but that all the appertaining external rights and privileges attendant upon formal independence had to be subdued temporarily for reasons beyond the will of its people. It was a happy coincidence which gave rise to the hopes of the Arab States then that at that time the United Nations was brought to existence soon after. And accordingly the Arab States unhesitatingly participated in its creation and membership out of deep belief in that Institution, its ideals, and high aims. 8. Since then the Arab League, through its member States, unceasingly endeavoured by all its means, whether with the Mandatory or with the United Nations, to find a fair and just solution for the problem of Palestine, based on democratic principles and consistent with the provisions of the League of Nations Covenant as well as of the United Nations Charter, a solution which would be lasting and would ensure peace and security in the land leading to prosperity but such solution invariably conflicted with opposition from Zionists and with their demands as they then started to openly declare their insistence upon a Jewish State and in fact bent upon full preparations with arms and fortifications to impose their own solution by force. 9. When the General Assembly made its recommendations on the 29 November 1947 for the solution of the Palestine problem on the basis of partition providing for the establishment of two States, one Arab and one Jewish, with an international regime of trusteeship for the City of Jerusalem, the Arab States expressed the warning that such a solution was prejudicial to the rights of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine to independence and was contradictory to democratic principles and to the League of Nations as well as the United Nations Charter. The Arabs then rejected such a scheme declaring that it was not susceptible of execution by peaceful means and that its imposition by force constituted a threat to peace and security in this area.

The apprehensions of the Arab States proved to be well founded as the disturbances of which they had warned soon swept the country, and armed conflict took place between its two peoples who started to combat against

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each other and shed each other's blood. Consequently, the United Nations realized the mistake upon which the recommendation of partition was made and turned to search for an outlet. 10. Now that the Mandate over Palestine has come to an end, leaving no legally constituted authority behind in order to administer law and order in the country and afford the necessary and adequate protection to life and property, the Arab States declare as follows:

- (A) The right to set up a Government in Palestine pertains to its inhabitants under the principle of self-determinations recognized by the Covenant of the League of Nations as well as the United Nations Charter;
- (B) Peace and order have been completely upset in Palestine, and, in consequence of Jewish aggression, approximately over a quarter of a million of the Arab population have been compelled to leave their homes and emigrate to neighbouring Arab countries. The prevailing events in Palestine exposed the concealed aggressive intentions of the Zionists and their imperialistic motives, as clearly shown in their acts committed upon those peaceful Arabs and villagers of Deer Yasheen, Tiberias, and other places, as well as by their incroachment upon the building and bodies of the inviolable consular codes, manifested by their attack upon the Consulate in Jerusalem.
- (C) The Mandatory has already announced that on the termination of the Mandate it will no longer be responsible for the maintenance of law and order in Palestine except in the camps and areas actually occupied by its forces, and only to the extent necessary for the security of these forces and their withdrawal. This leaves Palestine absolutely without any administrative authority entitled to maintain, and capable of maintaining, a machinery of administration of the country adequate for the purpose of ensuring due protection of life and property. There is further the threat that this lawlessness may spread to the neighbouring Arab States where feeling is already very tense on account of the prevailing conditions in Palestine. The respective members of the Arab League, and as members of the United Nations at the same time, feel gravely perturbed and deeply concerned over this situation.
- (D) It was the sincere wish of the Arab States that the United Nations might succeed in arriving at a fair and just solution of the Palestine problem, thus establishing a lasting peace for the country under the precepts of the democratic principles and in conformity with the Covenant of the League of Nations and the United Nations Charter.
- (E) They are responsible in any ..... by virtue of their responsibility as members of the Arab League which is a regional organization within the  
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meaning of Chapter 8 of the Charter of the United Nations. The recent disturbances in Palestine further constitute a serious and direct threat to peace and security within the territories of the Arab States themselves. For these reasons, and considering that the security of Palestine is a sacred trust for them, and out of anxiousness to check the further deterioration of the prevailing conditions and to prevent the spread of disorder and lawlessness into the neighbouring Arab lands, and in order to fill the vacuum created by the determination of the Mandate and the failure to replace it by any legally constituted authority, the Arab Governments find themselves compelled to intervene for the sole purpose of restoring peace and security and establishing law and order in Palestine. The Arab States recognize that the independence and sovereignty of Palestine which was so far subject to the British Mandate has now, with the termination of the Mandate, become established in fact, and maintain that the lawful inhabitants of Palestine are alone competent and entitled to set up an administration in Palestine for the discharge of all governmental functions without any external interference. As soon as that stage is reached the intervention of the Arab States, which is confined to the restoration of peace and establishment of law and order, shall be put an end to, and the sovereign State of Palestine will be competent in co-operation with the other State members of the Arab League, to take every step for the promotion of the welfare and security of its peoples and territory. The Governments of the Arab States hereby confirm at this stage the view that had been repeatedly declared by them on previous occasions, such as the London Conference and before the United Nations mainly, the only fair and just solution to the problem of Palestine is the creation of United State of Palestine based upon the democratic principles which will enable all its inhabitants to enjoy equality before the law, and which would guarantee to all minorities the safeguards provided for in all democratic constitutional States affording at the same time full protection and free access to Holy places. The Arab States emphatically and repeatedly declare that their intervention in Palestine has been prompted solely by the considerations and for the aims set out above and that they are not inspired by any other motive whatsoever. They are, therefore, confident that their action will receive the support of the United Nations as tending to further the aims and ideals of the United Nations as set out in its Charter".

I have the honour, etc.

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