

TWENTY-THIRD PROGRESS REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

(for the period from 1 May 1964 to 23 December 1965)

Note by the Secretary-General: The following report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine has been transmitted by the Chairman of the Commission for communication to the Members of the United Nations in accordance with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 512 (VI) of 26 January 1952.]

1. Since the eighteenth session of the General Assembly, the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, in accordance with the recommendation contained in General Assembly resolution 1912 (XVIII), has continued its efforts. While some accomplishments have been made in related areas, the Commission could make no progress in finding a practical means, acceptable to parties concerned, for assisting in achieving a final settlement of the questions outstanding between them, nor can the Commission report any progress in its efforts to assist in finding a means for implementing paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

Release of Arab refugee bank accounts blocked in Israel and transfer of safe deposit and safe custody items

2. During the first stage of the release operation in 1953, the Government of Israel had turned over for payment by the banks a total of 740,408 pounds sterling. As at 31 July 1965 a total of 2,801,009 pounds sterling of the blocked accounts of refugees and absentee owners had been released since the 1954 release scheme was inaugurated. Under the extended release scheme, as at 31 July 1965, 46,591 pounds sterling had been released. Thus, on 31 July 1965, a grand total of 3,588,008 pounds sterling had been paid to owners of blocked accounts.

3. Figures covering the status of the release scheme for safe custody items and the contents of safe deposit lockers as at 31 July 1965 are given in the annex to the present report.

Completion of the identification and valuation programme
and subsequent activity

4. In May 1964, the Commission submitted its twenty-second progress report (A/5700), which covered the period 1 November 1963 to 30 April 1964. In that report, the Commission announced the completion of its identification and valuation programme of Arab refugee immovable property holdings in Israel. Simultaneously with the publication of the report, the Commission published a working paper prepared by the Commission's land expert, Mr. Frank E. Jarvis. This Working Paper (A/AC.25/W.84) contained a detailed description of the work accomplished in connexion with identification and valuation of Arab refugee immovable property holdings in Israel and described the documentary material and basic data used in the work. It also described the techniques developed for identifying property holdings and determining consistent bases for establishing values of individual properties.

5. Because in the past the interested parties had expressed continuous interest in the Commission's identification and valuation programme, the Commission thought that these parties might wish to make inquiries or comments concerning the programme as set forth in the land expert's working paper. The Commission therefore requested the Secretary-General to make available the services of Mr. Frank E. Jarvis to serve as the Commission's Technical Representative for the period of time necessary to receive and answer inquiries of a technical nature relating to the methods and techniques of identification and valuation as set forth in the working paper. Mr. Jarvis was accordingly retained as the Technical Representative of the Commission to answer inquiries from Member States about the work as well as any questions which might lead to a further clarification of the very complex programme. The Commission also announced its willingness to accept inquiries from individuals and to answer such inquiries within the limitations imposed by staff and budget.

6. In addition to the publication of its progress report in May 1964, the Commission, in October 1964, communicated further with the parties concerned in

order to reiterate the readiness of its Technical Representative to receive inquiries on the working paper and on the identification and valuation project. In communicating with the interested parties, the Commission emphasized that it considered the identification and valuation programme a work that was purely technical in nature. The Commission also emphasized that it had not reached any conclusion concerning possible modes of implementing paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

7. The Commission has also received a number of communications from individuals inquiring about the nature of the programme, seeking to know whether their property was registered in the Commission's files, and presenting information about their property which would have a bearing on its value. These communications have been encouraging in the sense that only in minor instances has it not been possible to correlate completely the individuals own statements of property holdings with the Commission's records. From these results the Commission is encouraged to hope that, except in a very small number of cases where further investigation may be necessary, the files of identification in general correctly record individual property holdings.

8. A number of these inquiries also raised the question of values ascribed to individual properties. The Technical Representative, however, was not authorized to discuss specific values ascribed to properties, the Commission being of the view that, in the absence of any agreed programme involving values of properties, it would be not only premature but possibly prejudicial to speak of specific figures. The Commission considers that the values ascribed to individual properties in the work of its land expert would have a meaning only in the event of an agreed undertaking involving properties or compensation. In such circumstances they could provide accurate relative assessment figures for the various properties to which adjustments responsive to the situation at that time could be applied.

9. In June 1965 the Commission again communicated with the interested parties to inform them that it had recently decided to extend the services of its Technical Representative until 31 March 1966. The Commission considered that this extension of Mr. Jarvis' services was a logical continuation of its technical programme and repeated that it had reached no conclusion concerning possible modes of implementing paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

10. The Commission feels that this follow-up aspect of its technical programme of identification and valuation might come to a close at the end of March 1966. The Commission is of the opinion that by that time the interested parties or individuals would have had ample opportunity to address any inquiries to the Commission's Technical Representative.

11. The Commission continues to be deeply concerned about the intractable nature of the differences between parties concerned, and in particular with the plight of the refugees. The Commission wishes in conclusion to assure Member States that, despite the numerous continuing difficulties involved in a settlement of the refugee problem, it will endeavour to intensify its efforts in seeking a solution in accordance with the wishes of the General Assembly which have most recently been expressed in resolution 2052 (XX) of 15 December 1965.

ANNEX

Status of safe custody items and of contents of safe deposit lockers
as at 31 July 1965

	<u>Boxes and parcels</u>	<u>Shares, bonds, etc.</u>	<u>Palestine Government bearer bonds</u>	<u>Safe deposit lockers</u>
Total	60	800	434	178
Released	48	274	332 ^{a/}	143
Balance outstanding	12	526	102	35

a/ To this figure should be added some 275 Palestine Government bearer bonds released under the extended release scheme.