

II. UNITED NATION DECISIONS CONCERNING THE ARAB REFUGEES FROM PALESTINE

1) At the first session it held after the expulsion of the majority of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine from their homeland, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the slain Mediator, count Folke Bernadotte, submitted to it in the form of a draft resolution by the Government of the United Kingdom. Recognizing the right of the refugees to return to their homes, the Assembly directed that they be permitted to do so "at the earliest practicable date" if they so chose, and that compensation be paid for "loss of or damage to" their property.

This recognition of the right of the refugees to repatriation and compensation was contained in Resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, which has become the foundation of all subsequent United Nations pronouncements on the question of the Palestine Refugees. Paragraph 11 of this resolution reads :

"Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for the loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible."

2) At the following regular session (namely, the