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## REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Situation of refugees in the SudanReport of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 40/135 of 13 December 1985, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to send, in co-operation and co-ordination with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and relevant specialized agencies, a high-level inter-agency mission to assess the needs and the magnitude of assistance required by the programmes for refugees in the Sudan, as well as the impact of the refugees on the economy and vital public services, with a view to preparing a comprehensive programme of assistance to be submitted to the international community.
2. In response to that request, the Secretary-General arranged for a mission to visit the Sudan in February and March 1986 in order to consult with the Government. The report of the mission, which is annexed hereto, provides a framework and strategy for a comprehensive programme of assistance for the Sudan to help it deal with the serious situation arising from the presence of over a million refugees.
3. Further, in resolution 40/135, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the resolution.
4. The Secretary-General wishes to draw to the attention of the international community the serious economic and financial situation facing the Sudan and the strategy and framework proposed by the mission. He appeals to the international community to provide additional resources to assist the Sudan to carry the onerous burden of hosting over a million refugees.

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ANNEX

Report of the inter-agency mission to the Sudan

(3 February to 13 March 1986)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 40/135 of 13 December 1985 on the situation of refugees in the Sudan, the General Assembly, recognizing the need to view refugee-related development projects within local and national development plans, expressed grave concern at the shrinking resources available for refugee programmes in the Sudan and the serious consequences of that situation on the country's ability to continue to act as host and provide assistance to the increasing numbers of refugees and requested the Secretary-General to send, in co-operation and co-ordination with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and relevant specialized agencies, a high-level inter-agency mission to assess the needs and magnitude of assistance required by the programmes for refugees in the Sudan, as well as the impact of the refugees on the economy and vital public services, with a view to preparing a comprehensive programme of assistance to be submitted to the international community.

2. In a communication dated 20 December 1985 addressed to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations referred to General Assembly resolution 40/135 and requested the Secretary-General to arrange to send the mission to the Sudan as early as possible to assess the needs and magnitude of the assistance required and to prepare a report that should cover both humanitarian and development assistance. The Government of the Sudan expressed the hope that the report of the mission could be made available to the international community not later than 10 April 1986.

3. In response to the request in General Assembly resolution 40/135, the Secretary-General arranged for an inter-agency mission to visit the Sudan from 8 February to 13 March 1986. The members of the mission included representatives of the United Nations Secretariat (Office for Special Political Questions), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP), International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank. The United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa and the follow-up unit to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa also participated in the mission. Before the mission's departure, initial consultations were held with the relevant organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

4. The leader of the mission was received by His Excellency Dr. El-Gizouli Daf'Alla, Prime Minister of the Sudan, who reaffirmed the Sudan's willingness to meet its responsibilities under the relevant international instruments governing refugees. He stressed, however, the heavy burden being shouldered by the Government in providing public services for refugees, particularly those who were not covered by the programmes of the UNHCR, and the danger of growing local dissatisfaction in areas where refugees were concentrated.

5. The mission, whose programme in the Sudan was co-ordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, worked closely with the Commissioner for Refugees of the Ministry of the Interior. The Government established a counterpart group from the

appropriate ministries to work with the mission, and arrangements were made for members of the mission to visit the areas where refugees were concentrated and to meet with relevant regional and local government officials. The mission also held meetings with representatives of the donor community in the Sudan and with a number of non-governmental and private voluntary organizations operating there.

6. Throughout its stay in the Sudan, the mission worked in close co-operation with the representative of UNHCR and it benefited greatly from the advice and support of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident Co-ordinator of United Nations operational activities.

7. The mission wishes to express its appreciation to the Government of the Sudan and to the representatives of the United Nations system for all the support, assistance and hospitality it received.

## II. ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE SUDAN

8. The Sudan is classified by the United Nations as one of the least developed countries and over the past decade has been plagued by problems common to such countries, often in a most acute form. Developments in recent years do not suggest any substantial alteration of the present critical economic and financial position.

9. The drought emergency and the massive influx of refugees have taken place in the context of the serious disruption of the Sudanese economy that began in the late 1970s. Between 1978 and 1985, real gross domestic product (GDP) declined each year on average by 0.9 per cent or about 4.0 per cent in per capita terms. The decline resulted from contractions in investment and production partly caused by foreign exchange constraints and economic adjustments required by the country's growing international indebtedness. In addition, the serious drought affected all sectors of the economy. There was a sharp drop in agricultural production, and industrial production failed to respond to the large investments made in that sector in the 1970s. From 1982 on, the balance-of-payments position was in a state of crisis; national consumption exceeded national production and the Government faced large and growing budget deficits. At the same time, security problems increased and more and more resources had to be diverted to support military activities. These serious internal and external imbalances persist and are likely to continue.

10. The high rate of credit creation was a major cause of continuing inflation, a process supported by credit extended by the banking system to compensate for the lack of budgetary savings and the operating losses of public enterprises. In addition, the Sudan received increasingly large amounts of commodity aid, which tended to have an expansionary impact on the economy. The chain of deficient domestic resource mobilization, excessive domestic credit creation, foreign exchange constraints and continuous high inflation had increasingly strong negative repercussions on government development programmes and on local living conditions.

11. The critical position facing the country can be seen from a few selected indicators. The public sector deficit is approximately 10 per cent of GDP. Imports, at approximately \$1.5 billion, are double the value of exports - some \$700 million. Total foreign debt (including arrears) exceeds \$11.0 billion, a

figure that will likely increase by over \$1.0 billion a year in the immediate future as a result of the need for further rescheduling of interest and arrears and new concessionary loans. Total debt servicing obligations, with generous rescheduling, now amount to nearly \$1.5 billion - over twice the level of exports. Although rescheduling has occurred in the past, international assistance has not reached planned levels. For example, gross aid flows in 1984 were only about \$400 million compared to commitments estimated at \$735 million on the basis of donor statements at the Consultative Group Meeting held in December 1983.

12. The chronic shortage of resources facing the central Government and the lack of foreign exchange have had serious consequences for regional and local governments, which rely heavily on grants from the central Government to meet not only their development expenditures but also their recurrent costs. As a result, local and regional governments have been unable to maintain, let alone expand, their services.

13. The situation is unlikely to improve in the near future. Cotton, the major export, is facing depressed markets and is plagued by a white fly infestation that reduces its value on world markets. Central Government revenues are highly dependent on foreign trade taxes, and neither imports nor exports are likely to increase. The Gulf States and Saudi Arabia, affected by low oil prices, are unlikely to continue to pay above market price premiums for livestock exports from the Sudan or to continue to recruit Sudanese labourers. This could be serious, as remittances from abroad through the banking system amount to approximately \$450 million annually. Already some Sudanese have had their contracts terminated, and others are being offered re-employment at reduced wages and salaries.

14. In these circumstances, the burden of hosting large numbers of refugees has been overwhelming. It is unrealistic to expect a Government facing such massive financial problems to divert resources to assist the authorities in the areas in which refugees are concentrated. Additional international assistance is clearly necessary.

### III. THE DROUGHT EMERGENCY AND ITS AFTERMATH

15. The period of the heaviest inflow of refugees coincided with the worst drought that the Sudan had suffered in many years, bringing widespread famine and displacing millions of Sudanese farmers and nomads. Signs of the drought began to appear as early as 1981, and for the next four consecutive years there was an almost total failure of rainfall throughout most of the country. Rain-fed agricultural output fell by 58 per cent between 1981/1982 and 1984/1985, causing a sharp reduction in the availability of food.

16. The emergency situation brought on by the drought of 1981 to 1985 is not over in the Sudan. Despite a national grain surplus from the harvest following good rains in 1985, five million people, one quarter of the total population, are affected by local crop failures; hundreds of thousands more have not yet recovered from the devastation of three years of severe drought. There are still large areas of suffering, with famine conditions persisting in northern Darfur, northern Kordofan, the Red Sea Hills and areas of southern Sudan.

17. In 1986, many people, including spontaneously settled refugees, who survived the worst of the drought years remain highly vulnerable and will require a sustained level of assistance. The continued assistance for immediate relief and recovery must be in addition to the large-scale help that a drought-prone, low-income country such as the Sudan needs to revitalize development. Indeed, development is the only safety-net against future tragedies of the kind experienced in the Sudan in recent years.

18. Non-food needs are a priority in the months to come. In 1985, these needs were consistently underfunded, which tended to negate to a significant degree the benefits of the food aid. Substantial amounts are needed for seeds, tools and other agricultural inputs if farmers are to be enabled to rehabilitate their lands and resume productive lives. As is the case for food aid, agricultural inputs must be pre-positioned in farming areas before the onset of the rains.

19. Two areas will require special attention by the Government and the international community. First, emergency relief has to be provided in ways that are directly supportive both of recovery and of longer-term development. Such a strategy requires close collaboration between those responsible for emergency relief and recovery and those responsible for longer-term development measures. Second, special attention needs to be paid to meeting the recovery needs of people displaced from their homes and who have lost their possessions as a result of the famine. In such cases emergency assistance has to go beyond the provision of relief, with its inherent risks of creating dependence. Strong support will need to be given to the efforts of the Government of the Sudan to improve its indigenous capacity to anticipate, prepare for and respond to future drought emergencies.

20. Drought has intensified in the Sudan the interaction of other factors impeding development and has brought into the open the crisis of development - a crisis that has now reached alarming proportions. Drought will reoccur, but famines can be prevented. However, they can be prevented only by attacking their root causes through revitalized and sustainable development throughout the countryside.

21. Given the continuing emergency situation in large areas of the Sudan, including those areas affected by the impact of providing services to refugees, the mission stresses the priority of the emergency needs identified by the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa in its review of 1985 and 1986 emergency needs. In total these require some \$130 million for 1986. Without support for these emergency interventions, some of which are designed to stimulate the recovery of infrastructure and public services, there will be little foundation upon which to mount longer-term rehabilitation efforts and to encourage the resumption of development programmes. The mission stresses that a durable solution to the problem of refugees cannot be divorced from general rural development.

#### IV. REFUGEES IN THE SUDAN - BACKGROUND

22. The Sudan began hosting refugees more than 20 years ago, the first influx being a small group of about 5,000 from Zaire (then the Congo). With the escalation of conflict in Eritrea in the late 1960s, thousands fled their homes and found refuge in the neighbouring areas of eastern Sudan. From approximately 30,000 in 1967, the number increased to 441,000 by 1979. The flow continued and was

augmented by sizable numbers of refugees from Uganda in the south and Chad in the west. From the beginning of 1984 to the middle of 1985, the inflow increased dramatically, with some 300,000 refugees from Ethiopia alone entering the country. At the end of January 1986, the Government estimated that there were well over one million refugees in the Sudan, of whom 637,000 were being assisted directly by UNHCR (see table below). The rest have settled spontaneously in towns and rural areas mainly in the eastern region and neighbouring areas of the central region of the country but also in the south and west.

<u>Origin</u>	<u>Estimated refugee population</u>	<u>Number assisted by UNHCR</u>
Ethiopia	786 000	448 000
Chad	123 000	65 000
Uganda	250 000	124 000
Zaire	5 000	-
Total	<u>1 164 000</u>	<u>637 000</u>

23. Refugees in the Sudan can be classified as follows:

- (a) Those spontaneously settled in towns and villages;
- (b) Settled refugees (rural, semi-urban and wage-earning) who arrived before 1984;
- (c) Those recently arrived in reception centres who cannot be expected to return home in the immediate future;
- (d) Those recently arrived in reception centres who are likely to return in the near future to their home countries (e.g., some Chadians and Tigrayans).

24. The needs of each of these groups and the implications regarding their attainment of a measure of self-sufficiency are different. In addition, the problems experienced by the areas hosting them vary considerably. Therefore, there is no single solution but several, taking into consideration the resource base and other characteristics of the hosting regions.

25. UNHCR assistance to refugees in the Sudan is largely implemented by the Office of the Sudanese Commissioner for Refugees (COR), the focal point within the Government for all matters concerning refugees. Voluntary agencies, including non-governmental organizations and private voluntary organizations, are also implementing parts of the programme and making financial contributions. Food is provided through WFP and contributions in kind to UNHCR from Governments and inter-governmental organizations. Some spontaneously settled refugees affected by drought were assisted by the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa.

26. Until November 1984, assistance to refugees was funded from within the general programme of UNHCR. Since 8 November 1984, the High Commissioner has issued several appeals to the international community for emergency assistance, raising the target for such assistance as the needs continued to increase. The appeal covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 1986 for relief and recovery is estimated at \$US 39,756,226 for the eastern region of the Sudan and \$US 12,148,124 for the western region. The proposed projected allocation for the annual programme in 1986 is estimated at \$US 21,685,900. In total, the programme for 1986 amounts to nearly \$74.0 million.

27. The majority of refugees who are spontaneously settled in towns and villages have not received direct assistance. Their exact number is not known. Self-settled refugees, like the Sudanese in the communities where they live, were also affected by the drought either directly as a result of successive harvest failures or indirectly because of the deteriorating economic situation that resulted in the lack of normal or seasonal employment opportunities and very high food prices, on the one hand, and low prices for livestock, on the other. Some of these refugees moved to organized settlements or reception centres in search of food, as did some Sudanese.

28. Although it is difficult to arrive at the exact number of spontaneously settled refugees, it is nevertheless clear that self-settled refugees are leading a precarious life in the context of the present state of the economy. They place tremendous pressure on the already fragile infrastructure, especially in the services sector. In addition, the presence of an additional population of such a magnitude has a negative impact on the supply of basic food items, resulting in high prices and scarcity of products. In some areas, these refugees compete in the labour market with the poorest segments of the local population for limited employment opportunities.

29. In this context it is important to note that, as the economic conditions of the Sudanese have grown worse, the immigrant population has tended to become the scapegoat. Complaints about the inadequacy of public services, destruction of the environment, shortages of land and water and the limited employment opportunities are followed by questions about the ability of the Sudanese economy to support these aliens. While the Sudan has, up until now, maintained a policy of open hospitality towards anyone claiming refugee status, issues such as the above and the reactions of the local population are becoming a source of tension.

#### Refugees in established settlements

30. The official policy of the Government of the Sudan with respect to refugees who arrived prior to 1984 has been to accommodate them in settlements where, after an initial period of assistance, they were expected to become self-supporting. The refugee settlements created before 1984 have thus been conceived and developed under successive annual programmes of UNHCR/COR as potentially viable economic units in which refugees would be provided with the necessary land, resources and/or employment opportunities to enable them to produce sufficient food or to earn enough cash to meet their basic needs.



### Eastern region

31. In the eastern region of the country there are some 132,500 Ethiopians in 24 settlements. The majority of these settlements are agricultural; others are located where there is normally a demand for labour. By the beginning of 1984 all were at least partially self-sufficient. As a result of the almost total failure of the 1984 harvests in the agricultural settlements and the collapse of the labour market, beginning in late 1984 all have required full food assistance. The general food scarcity in the region brought about the movement to the settlements of some spontaneously settled refugees and Sudanese nationals alike.

32. There are, however, serious doubts about the viability of many of the settlements in the long term. As most of the settlements in the eastern region are located in marginal rainfall areas, they do not have a sufficient margin above bare subsistence to offset crop failures and other temporary setbacks. Only those situated south of the 600mm/year rainfall line can hope for crop security. For those situated north of that line, the risk of crop failure may be as much as 30 per cent. Other problems affecting long-term viability include land tenure problems, lack of access to irrigation for wage-earning settlements, lack of long-term employment opportunities, restrictive licensing practices that prevent refugees from engaging in certain occupations, restrictions on refugee movement to and from markets, poor settlement management and a lack of participation by refugees in planning and decision-making. Further, in most of the areas, the local population is living in conditions of dire poverty. Bringing the refugees in the settlements up to the local level will not be enough.

33. Since April 1985, the situation in the eastern region has been fluid. Some 60,000 refugees of recent arrival from Tigray province have spontaneously returned to their homes, while there have been numerous new arrivals. It is not yet known whether the number of new arrivals from Ethiopia will match the number returning. UNHCR has therefore maintained a planning figure for assisted Ethiopians through 1986 at the present population of approximately 445,000 including refugees in established settlements.

### Southern region

34. Since 1979, Ugandan refugees have been entering the region of Equatoria Province in southern Sudan. By end of 1985, some 124,000 refugees had been settled in 44 agricultural settlements established through the efforts of the Government of the Sudan, UNHCR, WFP and various executing agencies. By and large these settlements have attained a high degree of self-sufficiency in food production. In addition, some tens of thousands of refugees are spontaneously settled among the local population and in the border areas. Some 5,000 Ugandans were repatriated in 1985 in the framework of a limited voluntary repatriation movement.

### Western region

35. In contrast with the refugee situation in the eastern and southern regions, the influx of refugees from Chad into western Sudan is a relatively recent phenomenon, dating from mid-1984. By early 1986, it is estimated that more than 120,000 refugees had moved eastward across the Chad/Sudan border into Darfur, a region that was seriously affected by drought. Although in recent months the

number of new arrivals has declined, it is too early to tell whether there will be a further influx of Chadian refugees in 1986. Over 75,000 refugees are being assisted in reception centres by the Government of the Sudan, UNHCR and WFP. Outside these reception centres, there is a known caseload of some 25,000 Chadians to whom assistance is being extended by various non-governmental agencies. It is anticipated that some of these groups will seek UNHCR assistance during 1986, following indications from the agencies involved that they would like to terminate their present emergency assistance.

### General

36. In all regions, but particularly in the East, isolated refugee settlements do not appear to stand a chance of becoming economically and socially viable unless they are integrated into the macro-economic structure of the regions where they are situated. Any solution must look to the development of those parts of the Sudan where refugees are concentrated. The establishment of integrated development areas benefiting both nationals and refugees appears to be the only option that will ensure a long-term solution to the problem of the refugees. The operative modalities for such an approach need to be further investigated, as conditions vary within and between regions.

37. The viability of each existing settlement must therefore be reassessed and the obstacles to its self-sufficiency identified. Each settlement must be provided with sufficient arable land, water, access to markets and opportunities for income-generating activities or for wage-earning employment in order to enable refugees to meet their basic needs and ultimately to support necessary community services. Where this cannot be done in a settlement's present location, a suitable alternative site should be allocated. If necessary, sites in other provinces or regions should be envisaged. In order to avoid the refugees becoming a privileged group, it is essential that steps be taken at the same time to improve the situation of local people in these areas.

38. In the South, major efforts need to be made in order to maintain the existing levels of services and to develop refugee-impacted areas as a whole. In the West, where the refugee influx is recent, there is an opportunity to look in the very beginning to a longer-term solution in which refugees are integrated into local communities.

## V. BURDEN OF REFUGEES IN THE SUDAN

39. The mission was requested to assess the impact of refugees on the economy and vital public services. However, it proved impossible to quantify either the impact of refugees or the burden that the Sudan is facing as a consequence of accepting refugees.

40. In the Sudan, as with countries accepting refugees elsewhere, international assistance programmes tend to provide minimal essentials to refugees and to assume that all ancillary national facilities and services will be made available free of charge by national and local authorities. For example, refugees and refugee programmes make use of national transportation and communication systems,

educational facilities and health and sanitation facilities. In addition, host Governments are expected to provide all the general government services (police, defence, general legal system, courts, inspection services etc.). In the case of spontaneously settled refugees, where external assistance is not being provided, the total burden tends to fall on the host country.

41. Very little systematic research has been done on the burden of refugees in the Sudan, and in that country, where the economy has been seriously disrupted and vital public services are in a state of crises, it would be extremely difficult to isolate the impact of refugees per se. Fragmentary data do exist, however, which make it clear that the burden of refugees is extremely heavy.

42. Some preliminary partial data on the burden of refugees were provided in the documentation for the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (see A/CONF.125/2, paras. 790-796). In addition, an economic assessment of the refugee impact in Kassala province was commissioned by the Commissioner for Refugees in the Sudan. That study, based on a refugee population less than one half of the present number, estimated direct costs for health, housing, education, land, livestock and security at LSd 8.5 million. In addition, the revenue foregone by the Government in connection with land taxes, fuelwood, charcoal and timber was estimated at nearly LSd 20 million. These rough estimates would need to be more than doubled to take account of the increased number of refugees since 1982 and the rate of inflation and would have to be more than doubled again to cover the costs for the rest of the refugee population in the country.

43. In general, it should be noted that for the Sudan as a whole refugees amount to over 6 per cent of the host population, only one half of which are covered by UNHCR programmes. To a large extent, government services provided to the Sudanese citizens are being provided to spontaneously settled refugees and many general government services are also being provided for those covered by UNHCR programmes. In addition, regional and local governments raise revenues that are used to provide services and some of their expenditures benefit refugees.

44. However, this discussion both understates and overstates the actual direct costs to the Government. The actual costs tend to be higher because both settlement refugees and spontaneously settled refugees use services provided by state and parastatal organizations (e.g. the water corporations and the Sudan railway) whose charges fall far short of their actual costs. To some extent international programmes for refugees also use these services. This additional demand adds to the deficits of such organizations since few appear to be operating under conditions of economies of scale. Second, the government refugee administration services involve expenditures under the central budget that are not all met by international programmes. On the other hand, most refugees are located in remote or badly serviced areas where government services are well below the average for the country as a whole. Further, in the Sudan, refugees are not being provided with all general government services.

45. An examination of national, regional, and local budgets in the Sudan does not suggest any significant identifiable increases in government expenditures as a result of the refugee influx. The incremental costs have been very small. Because of the financial restraints under which the governments at all levels have been

operating for the past four years, it appears that the impact of refugees and their demands on public services have not shown up in government accounts but have instead fallen as a burden on Sudanese citizens, particularly in areas in which refugees are concentrated, for whom the overall levels and standards of government services have deteriorated. In other words, the refugee burden is being carried by Sudanese citizens.

46. Very little research has been carried out on the burden associated with the consumption of resources and services by refugees at the expense of local people. It is clear, however, that these are substantial. The most serious cases should be noted.

47. In the field of education, for example, not all students of primary school age are able to find places in the Sudanese school system. In the case of spontaneously settled refugees, each refugee school child is in effect displacing a local child with serious long-term consequences for literacy and general education. Similarly, since international programmes provide only primary education in the settlements, refugee students from these primary schools who find places in intermediate and secondary schools displace local students (less than 60 per cent of Sudanese students are able to obtain places in such schools). Even for those Sudanese students who are able to attend school the quality of education is declining as teacher/student ratios have deteriorated sharply (particularly in the eastern region) and the schools have faced increasing shortages of teaching materials.

48. A similar situation has emerged with respect to health and sanitation. Reports covering hospitals in the eastern region indicate that up to 50 per cent of hospital and out-patient cases are refugees. Since government expenditures on health have not increased in real terms, the actual burden is being carried by Sudanese citizens who are denied health services. In this area too there has been a significant decline in general standards. Most hospitals are desperately short of essential supplies, and in many hospitals in eastern regions, bed occupancy rates are now in excess of 100 per cent compared to a more normal 60 to 70 per cent in 1982.

49. Refugees have had an impact on vital services in other obvious areas. Port Sudan, Sudan railways and the national transport system have been unable to handle the traffic offered by organizations assisting in refugee programmes. In effect refugees and international refugee programmes have added to the congestion, thereby causing delays and higher costs for everyone. Similarly, the main and secondary road systems are deteriorating through lack of maintenance, and by their use of those roads refugees and international refugee programmes are aggravating an already serious situation. Water is in short supply in most regions where refugees are concentrated and the additional demands of over one million people are a serious cause of concern. In the same way, refugees and their livestock are contributing new diseases and exacerbating the unsanitary conditions in overcrowded areas in towns and are contributing to overgrazing. Because the Government is unable to finance programmes to deal with these issues, the major burden of refugees is falling on local citizens through a deterioration in their living conditions and a lessening of their prospects for development.

50. All of these burdens pale to insignificance, however, when compared to the damage being done to the environment through overgrazing of range lands and over-cutting of forests. Overall, and more particularly in areas of refugee concentration, the effects on the land of larger populations and heavier demands are catastrophic. For example, the estimated drain on eastern province forests for fuel wood and charcoal alone is now four times the allowable cut. This particular burden is not only felt by Sudanese citizens today but will be felt for decades to come. Even with more effective replanting and conservation policies the renewal of wood supplies would take many years, which gives a special urgency to programmes designed to improve the efficiency of charcoal burning stoves.

51. International assistance programmes are contributing to the problem even where funds are provided to purchase charcoal in the local market. In the Sudan the difference between the market price and the opportunity cost of wood is very great. In effect the present policy of relying on local supplies of energy for the refugees means that the Sudan is supplying at far below its economic value one of its most valuable commodities already in short supply - forests - on which the future of the economy depends.

52. In these circumstances, the social tensions and costs associated with hosting refugees have become a serious concern. The continued acceptance of refugees could be in danger unless steps are taken to ameliorate the deteriorating conditions under which the Sudanese citizens in refugee-impacted areas are living. The mission was informed that in a number of cases local citizens are objecting to the continued presence of refugees or to programmes to resettle refugees in their areas.

#### Burden sharing

53. At present the burden of dealing with refugees is being carried by the Sudan with assistance from the donor community. As refugees are accepted as an international responsibility, the mission believes that the international community should explore approaches to ensure that the burden is shared more equitably. The Sudan is one of a small group of poor developing countries hosting large numbers of refugees while themselves facing serious development problems. The mission is of the view that such countries are carrying an undue burden and are entitled to additional help.

54. One approach, and the one which the mission favours, is to create an internationally accepted list of "refugee-affected countries" that would be entitled to special treatment in regard to international development assistance. Any least developed country that is hosting a significant number of refugees (say well over 0.5 per cent of the total population) and whose rate of growth is inadequate should be entitled to a larger share of the available pool of development funds from both bilateral and multilateral sources. The mission suggests that the Committee on Development Planning would be an appropriate forum to examine this suggestion and that it should develop criteria for the inclusion of a country in such a list.

## VI. PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE

### A. Suggested approach

55. A comprehensive programme of assistance for refugees in the Sudan must concern itself with their immediate needs and with longer-term development so that the refugees can become not only self supporting but also capable of contributing to the economy of the host country. Further, the programme must be designed to ensure acceptance of the refugees by the communities in which they live. In the Sudan, this means assisting the people in areas hosting refugees to meet their basic needs. Such a programme is clearly a continuing exercise.

56. The immediate needs of refugees in Sudan have been brought to the attention of the international community by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in his various appeals, the most recent for the period January to December 1986. The mission wishes to emphasize the importance of mobilizing the resources required to meet those needs.

57. Numerous projects directed to the benefit of refugees and local citizens in the Sudan have been identified and designed by several previous missions and are currently before the international donor community for support. These include the projects presented to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, the majority of which are still under consideration by donors; the proposals in the joint ILO/UNHCR project on income-generating activities for refugees in eastern and central Sudan, summarized in the report entitled "Towards Self-Reliance"; some of the "Quick recovery" agricultural projects formulated by the FAO/WFP/multidonor mission fielded in 1985; the proposals formulated by the ILO identification and programming mission to the Sudan in September 1985 and published under the title "After the Famine"; and various proposals formulated by other project identification missions that have visited Sudan during the past few years. These already identified projects and programmes cover both immediate and developmental needs largely falling outside UNHCR programmes but within any comprehensive programme of assistance.

58. A detailed programme for the longer-term development and rehabilitation of refugee-impacted areas of the country will require financial and technical commitments on the part of central and regional authorities, as a counterpart to international assistance, as well as a number of basic policy decisions by the Government. The future of the refugee reception centres and existing settlements, particularly in the eastern region, the allocation of suitable agricultural land, freedom of movement of refugees, restrictive licensing policies and the legal status of the spontaneously settled refugees all need to be examined. Some of these questions can be decided only after the impending elections and after the new Government has had an opportunity to review the position. Given these factors, a detailed comprehensive programme of assistance can be formulated only in stages and in relation to the resources likely to be available.

59. At this time, what is needed is a strategy for assistance to areas hosting refugees that could serve as background for future policy decisions of the Government and as a development framework for the organization and support of specific projects. This framework must necessarily differ from region to region to take into account the differing demographic, social and economic factors prevailing

in the eastern, southern and western regions of the country where the main concentrations of refugees are located. The framework must also look towards the refugees, settled and spontaneous alike, becoming self-supporting at a level at which they can contribute to the costs of government services.

60. Unfortunately, efforts to help the refugees in the Sudan to become economically self-sufficient have by and large met with very limited success. Apart from the temporary reception centres, three types of settlements have been established: (a) agricultural settlements where refugees have been allocated agricultural land; (b) rural wage-earning settlements where it was expected that inhabitants would find employment as rural labourers in adjacent mechanized farming and irrigated areas; and (c) wage-earning settlements adjacent to towns that were expected to provide urban employment opportunities. Serious doubt persists regarding the long-term viability of many of the agricultural settlements, as the majority of those settlements are located in areas of marginal rainfall and do not have the potential to provide sufficient surpluses to offset crop failures. With the exception of one wage-earning settlement, sufficient employment opportunities have either been lacking or have not proved to be sufficiently attractive to the settlers. As a consequence of these factors large numbers of refugees remain dependent on international assistance or drift into towns where many end up in peri-urban shanty towns and slums.

61. The great numbers of refugees in the Sudan and their dispersion throughout the area make it extremely difficult to deal with the situation through a traditional refugee-related project approach. The problems can be addressed satisfactorily only through general development of the refugee-impacted areas by means of increasing production and employment, expanding markets, improving transport and communication and strengthening health facilities and other public services. Individual projects will do little to raise the level of economic activity or improve the quality of life for refugees and Sudanese alike unless they are linked in a genuine programme that attacks the basic problems in a co-ordinated manner and on the scale needed to produce a substantial impact.

62. To set such a process in motion in critical areas of high refugee concentration in eastern Sudan in a manner within the support capacity of the donor community the mission recommends that a number of integrated urban-rural development programmes be established as focal areas for development in the region and as a framework for the implementation of individual sectoral projects. These integrated umbrella projects should encompass towns and their surrounding areas and not be limited to rural development only. In that way, the problems of spontaneously settled refugees and their impact on the social services and infrastructure in towns of the region can be addressed as a matter of urgency. This approach needs to be worked out in detail by an expert team experienced in the planning of integrated subregional development programmes.

63. Initial priority areas for this approach would appear to be (a) Kassala and its rural environs, including Wad Sherife, (b) El Gaderef and the surrounding areas and (c) Port Sudan and its environs. The approach could be extended to the south (Yei and its hinterland) and to the west.

64. As a follow-up to this proposal, the mission recommends the fielding of a joint World Bank/UNDP/UNHCR expert planning team under the leadership of the World Bank to formulate integrated development plans of realistic scope for the areas suggested or others that may be identified in the course of the planning team's investigations.

65. The proposed integrated umbrella projects are intended to serve as a framework for the implementation of specific sectoral and sub-sectoral projects and programmes needed to initiate and support a process of economic and social development in the particular area concerned. Area councils in the areas selected for concentrated development, including the Rural Water Corporation and some other key regional agencies, will require strengthening in some respects to enable them to play an effective supporting role. Given the under-employment of their trained manpower, programme support to these organizations would yield high returns.

66. The mission believes that this type of integrated town-country development strategy is well suited to dealing with the situation existing in areas of the eastern region that are hosting large concentrations of refugees and could provide a co-ordinated framework for the many individual projects presently under implementation or in the identification and planning stage. It would also offer options to donors, either individually or in concert with one another, to channel their assistance to a specific geographical area, into a specific sector or to a particular project, as they may prefer, with greater assurance that the aid will be effective since it will be linked to broader area development efforts.

B. Progress with follow-up projects to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa

67. Within the United Nations system, UNHCR and UNDP have been entrusted with the task of follow-up to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa. UNDP is responsible for the monitoring, co-ordination and promotion of technical and capital assistance designed to strengthen the social and economic infrastructure of countries of asylum. The administrative arrangements made by the two organizations to fulfil their respective roles have been described in the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session (see A/39/402/Add.1, para. 6), and the Secretary-General will report to the Assembly at its forty-first session on action taken or planned to follow up on the process initiated at the Conference.

68. The programme of refugee-related development projects submitted for the Sudan at the Conference was the largest of the 14 countries seeking international support to help them bear the burden of the presence of large numbers of refugees. In total, some 30 projects were broadly described. Of these, 17 were in the health, education and training sectors, 6 in the sectors of agriculture, fisheries and forestry, 4 in the communications and energy sectors, and 3 in the water and sanitation sectors.

69. At the conclusion of the Conference, it had been foreseen that this programme would be funded essentially on a bilateral basis, the limited resources made



available through the United Nations and UNDP best serving as seed money. To date 6 of these 30 projects have been funded in total or partially. Donors have concentrated their assistance on the improvement of the water supply and of transportation facilities, mainly in the eastern region, and have provided partial funding for some of the education and health projects.

70. Some developmental assistance benefiting both refugees and nationals has been channelled through international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, dealing primarily with refugees. This type of assistance and bilateral development projects in areas of concentration of refugees, although not hitherto reported as "follow-up" to the Conference by the donors or by the Government of the Sudan, are clearly in accord with the principles and the goals of the Declaration and Programme of Action of the Conference.

### C. Priority areas for assistance

71. The mission has identified the following priority areas for additional assistance. These projects and programmes should form part of any integrated approach that might be adopted. The list includes proposals identified by the mission and selected high priority projects related to areas of refugee concentration identified by other missions that have visited the Sudan in the past few years. Follow-up projects to the Conference still requiring donor support are also listed.

#### 1. General

- (a) Rural-urban integrated development and planning team;
- (b) Establishment of a refugee health unit in the Ministry of Health.

#### 2. Khartoum

- (a) Malaria control;
- (b) Refuge for homeless children.

#### 3. Eastern Sudan

- (a) Assistance for the epidemic and Disease Control Centre, El Gedaref;
- (b) Boarding facilities at the Vocational Training Centre, Port Sudan;
- (c) Development of water supply projects for rural and urban areas;
- (d) Strengthening institutional capabilities to operate and maintain water supply programmes;
- (e) Upgrading of health services in urban areas;
- (f) Primary health programmes;

- (g) Afforestation and energy-saving technology;
- (h) Road and bridge construction;
- (i) Range management and water spreading;
- (j) Up-grading of slum areas in Port Sudan.

4. The South - Equatoria Province

- (a) Programme support for the regional government and four area councils;
- (b) Programme support for education and health;
- (c) Assistance for vehicle and equipment repair and water system maintenance;
- (d) Extension services and agricultural training programmes;
- (e) Vocational training and manpower development programmes;
- (f) Small-scale income-generating projects;
- (g) Development and maintenance of rural water-supply projects;
- (h) Intermediate technology project for the production of tools;
- (i) Afforestation;
- (j) Strengthening road construction and maintenance capabilities;
- (k) Support for veterinary services and animal husbandry;
- (l) Primary health programmes;
- (m) Juba-Yei road;
- (n) Sales facility for spares, basic tools and supplies;
- (o) Support for light industry;
- (p) Annual regional development conference;
- (q) Local revenue administration assistance;
- (r) Assistance in regional and local planning;
- (s) Project to estimate number of spontaneously settled refugees.

5. Western Sudan

- (a) Water harvesting and spreading schemes;
- (b) Rehabilitation of Jabal Marra rural development project area;
- (c) Strengthening of agricultural extension services;
- (d) Strengthening of horticultural nursery services;
- (e) Strengthening of plant protection services;
- (f) Food production, preservation, storage and processing;
- (g) Grazing management and range conservation;
- (h) Range management and forage production;
- (i) Fir construction;
- (j) Production of fuel wood and building poles;
- (k) Rural water supply;
- (l) Strengthening of primary health care;
- (m) Construction of shallow wells for irrigation.

6. Selected projects identified by the WFP/FAO/multilateral donor mission (January 1986)

- (a) Supply of agro-chemicals to fight locusts (\$500,000);
- (b) Rehabilitation of fish-ponds in Equatoria, Bahr El Ghazal and Upper Nile provinces (\$248,715);
- (c) Technical assistance and equipment for hybrid seed propagation;
- (d) Monitoring of crop areas and yield by satellite remote sensing in the eastern region (\$850,000);
- (e) Roughage bulking centres;
- (f) Materials and funding for construction of underground storage "bunker silos" (45,000 tons)

7. Follow-up projects to the Conference (A/CONF.125/2)  
(these may need revision and updating of costs)

- (a) Water supply, Kassala Province (partially funded);

- (b) Road and bridge construction, Kassala Province;
- (c) Upgrading of environmental health and sanitation, Gedaref and Kassala;
- (d) Improvements of hospitals Gedaref and Kassala;
- (e) School construction - Gedaref Showak area;
- (f) School construction - Kassala area;
- (g) Demonstration project for rangeland management - Mahargat area;
- (h) Co-operatives for fruit and vegetable production;
- (i) Reforestation of selected areas - eastern region;
- (j) Construction of six vocational training centres in eastern region;
- (k) Expansion of educational facilities - Red Sea Province;
- (l) Strengthening of health services and facilities - Red Sea Province;
- (m) Roads and bridges - Equatoria;
- (n) Primary health care and sleeping sickness control - Equatoria;
- (o) Hospital upgrading - Equatoria;
- (p) Teacher training centre - Equatoria;
- (q) Vocational training centre - Equatoria;
- (r) Senior secondary school - Limbe, Equatoria;
- (s) Fula Rapids hydroelectric scheme - Equatoria;
- (t) Reforestation - Equatoria;
- (u) Promotion of horticulture - Equatoria;
- (v) Fishing co-operative - Nimule, Equatoria.

72. Details concerning the projects identified by the mission and a fuller description of the refugee situation in the Sudan are provided in the background report of the inter-agency mission entitled "Programme for the rehabilitation and development of areas hosting refugees in the Sudan" available from the United Nations (Office for Special Political Questions).

# Sudan

