

Chapter XV

Refugees and displaced persons

While the number of refugees swelled to over 12 million in 1988, some events occurred that offered hope for solutions for nearly half the world's refugee population. The signing of an agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan created an opportunity for millions of Afghans, constituting the world's largest refugee population, to return to their country, and the return of more than 80,000 Ugandans from the Sudan was the largest such movement anywhere in the world. Progress was made towards securing the independence of Namibia, which in turn paved the way for the organized return home of several thousand Namibians. Other large refugee repatriation movements in 1988 included Burundians, Chadians, Ethiopians, Mozambicans and Zimbabweans; Iraqi Kurds; Sri Lankan Tamils; and Central Americans.

The impact of those positive achievements was qualified, however, by an increase in the number of refugees and asylum-seekers world-wide. This was especially true in Africa, where hundreds of thousands of Somalis and Sudanese sought refuge in Ethiopia, and several thousand Ethiopians, Mozambicans and Sudanese fled to neighbouring countries. Those same tendencies also occurred in South-East Asia, where the number of asylum-seekers rose by more than 11 per cent over 1987, and in Europe, where the number increased by almost one third.

While more States acceded to the major international instruments on refugees, bringing the total number of signatories to 106 to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol, or both, there was also an increase in actions by States that deteriorated the plight of asylum-seekers, posing a threat to the humanitarian institution of asylum.

The General Assembly endorsed the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action, adopted by the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa, which called for international action in the fields of protection, assistance, refugee aid and development, emergency preparedness, public information and mobilization of resources to deal with the deteriorating humanitarian situation in southern Africa (resolution 43/116). The Assembly also welcomed decisions to hold conferences on Indo-Chinese (43/119) and Central American (43/118) refugees in 1989.

The Nansen Medal, awarded since 1954 in honour of Fridtjof Nansen, the first League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, went in 1988 to Syed Munir Hussain, Secretary of the States and Frontier Regions Ministry of Pakistan from 1982 to 1987. The Medal was awarded for his supervision of the world's largest refugee assistance programme—the Afghan refugee relief operation—for the Pakistani Government.

UNHCR programme and finances

Programme policy

Executive Committee action. At its thirty-ninth session (Geneva, 3-10 October 1988) the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,⁽¹⁾ emphasizing the importance of dealing with the underlying causes of refugee movements, called on the High Commissioner to continue his efforts to provide international protection through voluntary repatriation, local integration in countries of first asylum or resettlement in third countries. The Committee expressed its concern about the lack of adequate international protection for various groups of refugees, including a large number of Palestinians, and hoped that efforts would continue within the United Nations system to address their protection needs. (Palestinian refugees are dealt with in PART TWO, Chapter IV.) States were urged to abide by international prohibitions against expulsion and refoulement, or forcible return, of refugees, and were called on, along with the High Commissioner and others, to ensure the protection of refugees from arbitrary detention and violence. The Committee further encouraged all States hosting refugees to consider ways of facilitating their employment, invited States to promote measures favourable to stateless persons and called on the High Commissioner to implement measures intended to address the irregular movement to other countries of refugees who had found protection.

Regarding the promotion and dissemination of refugee law, the Committee called on States that had not done so to accede to the 1951 Convention⁽²⁾ and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees,⁽³⁾ and, if applicable, to the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention

governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa,⁽⁴⁾ in order to ensure the widest possible application of the basic principles of refugee law. It urged States to initiate or participate in training courses in refugee law and protection, and requested the Office of the High Commissioner (UNHCR) to provide information to the Committee on specific promotional activities world-wide, including their financial implications.

On the subject of international solidarity and refugee protection, the Committee, stressing that the principle of international solidarity was fundamental in encouraging a humanitarian approach to granting asylum and in implementing international protection in general, invited all States to support the protection functions of the High Commissioner, as well as to abide by their own humanitarian responsibilities towards refugees, particularly to safeguard the right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution and to ensure full respect for the principle of non-refoulement.

The Committee recommended that States and UNHCR take into account the following guidelines when dealing with cases of stowaway asylum-seekers: stowaways must be protected against forcible return to their country of origin; they should be allowed to disembark at the first port of call and have their refugee status determined by the authorities without implying a lasting solution in that country; and UNHCR should be requested to assist in finding a durable solution for those found to be refugees.

As to the special needs of refugee women, the Committee called for the reinforcement of measures to enhance their physical security and called on host Governments to strengthen their support of UNHCR's protection activities as they related to women. Relevant Governments were also called on to support the Special Resettlement Programme for Women-at-Risk. The High Commissioner was encouraged to expand his public information activities relating to refugee women and to develop training modules on the special needs of refugee women and the means of addressing them. The Committee requested the High Commissioner to provide at its next session a detailed progress report on the implementation of policies and programmes for refugee women, and called on host countries, the donor community and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to support the High Commissioner in implementing that programme.

The Committee welcomed plans to organize international conferences on Indo-Chinese and Central American refugees in 1989, and called on the international community to support them (see below). Regarding the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action, adopted by the International Confer-

ence on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa (see below), the Executive Committee requested the High Commissioner to ensure their implementation and to participate in formulating strategies for rendering humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons. The High Commissioner was further requested to report to the Committee at its next session on the role of UNHCR in implementing the Declaration and Plan of Action.

Within the framework of strengthening programme planning, implementation and monitoring, the Committee endorsed the High Commissioner's efforts in creating special programmes for refugee women and children, training staff, and providing technical support, evaluation services and the specifications and means of delivering supplies and food aid, and called on him to continue to provide assistance to refugees under the care of national liberation movements recognized by OAU and the United Nations.

The Committee called on the High Commissioner to encourage further study of the issue of durable solutions to the refugee problem, and appealed to Governments to continue to create and promote conditions conducive to attaining such solutions. It supported UNHCR's promotion of voluntary repatriation as the preferred long-term solution, and called for more resources to be devoted to that goal. When voluntary repatriation was not feasible, UNHCR was encouraged to promote local integration and resettlement.

The Committee made a number of recommendations regarding refugee aid and development. Recognizing the need to ensure compatibility between refugee aid and the national development plans of developing refugee-asylum countries, the Committee recommended that low-income asylum countries be provided with assistance to strengthen their social and economic infrastructure to enable them to cope with the burden of dealing with large numbers of refugees and returnees. It called on Governments and the High Commissioner to provide technical support to developing countries in needs assessment, formulation of concrete projects and plans of action in areas hosting large numbers of refugees. The Committee further expressed its desire that the issue of refugee aid and development receive prominent attention by the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters in 1989, and requested UNHCR to submit to the Executive Committee at its session that year a report describing in detail the role and mandate of UNHCR and the breakdown of financial resources being allocated to developing asylum countries.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December 1988, on the recommendation of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural)

Committee, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/117 without vote.

Office of the United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the activities of his Office, as well as the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner on the work of its thirty-ninth sessions, and having heard the statements made by the High Commissioner on 16 and 18 November 1988,

Recalling its resolution 42/109 of 7 December 1987,

Reaffirming the purely humanitarian and non-political character of the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner, which are undertaken in the common interest of humanity,

Noting with satisfaction that, following recent accessions, more than one hundred States are now parties to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees,

Noting with concern that, despite developments that offer hope for solutions to refugee problems, refugees and displaced persons of concern to the High Commissioner continue to face, in certain situations, distressingly serious problems,

Particularly concerned that in various regions the safety and welfare of refugees and asylum-seekers continue to be seriously jeopardized on account of military or armed attacks and other forms of violence, and noting that further efforts should be made in dealing with the problem of rescuing asylum-seekers in distress at sea and, in this context, also noting the problems relating to stowaway asylum-seekers,

Stressing the fundamental importance of the High Commissioner's function to provide international protection, particularly in the context of the increasing complexity of the contemporary refugee problem, and the need for States to co-operate with the High Commissioner in the exercise of this essential function,

Noting the efforts of the High Commissioner to continue to address the special problems and needs of refugee and displaced women and children, who in many cases are exposed to a variety of difficult situations affecting their physical and legal protection as well as their psychological and material well-being,

Emphasizing the need for States to assist, on as wide a basis as possible, the efforts of the High Commissioner to promote speedy and durable solutions to the problems of refugees,

Realizing in this context that voluntary repatriation or return remains the most desirable solution to the problems facing refugees and displaced persons of concern to the High Commissioner, and welcoming the fact that in various parts of the world it has been possible for significant numbers of them to return voluntarily to their countries of origin,

Recognizing that the enhancement of basic economic and social rights is essential to the achievement of self-sufficiency and family security for refugees, as well as to the process of re-establishing the dignity of the human person and realizing durable solutions to refugee problems,

Recognizing that durable solutions for refugees in developing countries can, in the majority of cases, be

achieved through a development-oriented approach and that the heavy burden placed on a host country as a result of growing influxes of refugees requires sufficient resources to redress the negative impact and the strain on its socio-economic infrastructure in rural and urban areas,

Welcoming the conclusions and decisions on refugee aid and development adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session as a tangible recognition of the need to ensure the compatibility of refugee aid and national development plans of the developing asylum countries,

Commending those States that, despite severe economic and development problems of their own, continue to admit large numbers of refugees and displaced persons of concern to the Office of the High Commissioner into their territories, and emphasizing the need to share the burden of these States to the maximum extent possible through international assistance, in accordance with the conclusions on refugee aid and development adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session,

Stressing the need for the international community to continue to provide adequate resettlement opportunities for those refugees for whom no other durable solution may be in sight, with particular attention given to refugees who have already spent an inordinately long time in camps,

Welcoming the valuable support extended by Governments to the High Commissioner in carrying out his humanitarian tasks, and recognizing the need for continuing and increasing co-operation between the Office of the High Commissioner and other bodies of the United Nations system and with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations,

Also welcoming the decision of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session to open sessions of its two sub-committees and informal meetings to participation as observers by States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies which are not members of the Executive Committee,

Noting the High Commissioner's continuing efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office, particularly in strengthening field activities and responsibilities,

Commending the High Commissioner and his staff for the dedicated manner in which they discharge their responsibilities, and paying tribute to those staff members who have endangered their lives in the course of their duties,

1. Strongly reaffirms the fundamental nature of the function of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to provide international protection and the need for Governments to co-operate fully with his Office in order to facilitate the effective exercise of this function, in particular by acceding to and implementing the relevant international and regional refugee instruments and by scrupulously observing the principles of asylum and non-refoulement;

2. Endorses, in this regard, the conclusions on international solidarity and refugee protection adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session;

3. Notes with particular concern the continued violation, in certain situations, of the principle of non-refoulement,

recalls existing prohibitions as contained in conclusions 4 and 5 adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its twenty-eighth session, stresses the need to strengthen measures to protect refugees against such action and appeals to all States to abide by their international obligations, taking fully into account their legitimate security concerns;

4. Appeals to all States that have not yet become parties to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees to consider acceding to these instruments in order to enhance their universal character;

5. Condemns all violations of the rights and safety of refugees and asylum-seekers, in particular those perpetrated by military or armed attacks against refugee camps and settlements and other forms of violence;

6. Endorses once again the conclusions on military and armed attacks on refugee camps and settlements adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-eighth session, and again calls upon all States to observe these principles;

7. Commends the High Commissioner for the work undertaken by his Office to identify and meet the special needs of refugee children and, in particular, for the guidelines of the Office on refugee children, and invites the High Commissioner to pursue his efforts on behalf of refugee children, drawing on the valuable contributions that non-governmental organizations continue to make in this area;

8. Endorses the conclusions on refugee women adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session, and urges States to extend their full co-operation to the High Commissioner in his efforts to ensure that the special needs of refugee women in the fields of protection, assistance and durable solutions are met;

9. Notes the close connection between the problems of refugees and of stateless persons and invites States actively to explore and promote measures favourable to stateless persons in accordance with international law;

10. Recognizes the importance of fair and expeditious procedures for determining refugee status and/or granting asylum in order, *inter alia*, to protect refugees and asylum-seekers from unjustified or unduly prolonged detention or stay in camps, and urges States to establish such procedures;

11. Recognizes the importance of achieving durable solutions to refugee problems and, in particular, the need to address in this process the root causes of refugee movements in order to avert new flows of refugees, taking into account the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on International Co-operation to Avert New Flows of Refugees, and to facilitate the solution of existing problems;

12. Urges all States to support the High Commissioner in his efforts to achieve durable solutions to the problem of refugees and displaced persons of concern to his Office, primarily through voluntary repatriation or return, including assistance to returnees as appropriate, or, wherever appropriate, through integration into countries of asylum or through resettlement in third countries;

13. Expresses deep appreciation for the valuable material and humanitarian response of receiving countries, in particular those developing countries which, despite limited resources, continue to admit, on a permanent

or temporary basis, large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers;

14. Urges the international community, in accordance with the principle of international solidarity and burden-sharing, to assist the above-mentioned countries in order to enable them to cope with the additional burden that care for refugees and asylum-seekers represents;

15. Supports broadly the purpose of a Project Planning Fund along the lines stipulated in paragraph 32 of the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner on the work of its thirty-ninth session and, in particular, the following recommendations:

(a) The Office of the High Commissioner should remain a focal point for encouraging refugee-related technical assistance and capital investment in developing asylum countries;

(b) Assistance to refugees should be additional to funds earmarked for development programmes in developing asylum countries;

(c) The High Commissioner should be requested to prepare a comprehensive report in which the nature and operational aspects of the Project Planning Fund and the mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner, as well as the role of development-oriented agencies and non-governmental organizations, would be clearly defined;

16. Recognizes with appreciation the work done by the High Commissioner to put into practice the concept of development-oriented assistance to refugees and returnees, as initiated at the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa and reaffirmed in the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa, urges the High Commissioner to continue that process, wherever appropriate, in full co-operation with appropriate international agencies, and further urges Governments to support these efforts;

17. Emphasizes the essential role of development-oriented organizations and agencies in the implementation of programmes that benefit refugees and returnees, urges the High Commissioner and those organizations and agencies, in accordance with their respective mandates, to strengthen their mutual co-operation towards the attainment of durable solutions, and calls upon the High Commissioner to continue to promote such co-operation;

18. Welcomes the various initiatives undertaken by the High Commissioner in regard to the promotion and dissemination of the principles of refugee law and protection and calls upon his Office, in co-operation with Governments, to intensify its activities in this area, bearing in mind the need, in particular, to develop practical applications of refugee law and principles and to continue to organize training courses for governmental and other officials involved in refugee activities;

19. Calls upon all Governments to contribute, in a spirit of international solidarity and burden-sharing and in every way feasible, to the High Commissioner's programmes with the aim of ensuring that the needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons of concern to the High Commissioner are met.

General Assembly resolution 43/117

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/874) without vote, 23 November (meeting 51); 38-nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.59); agenda item 102.

Sponsors: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Portugal, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Meeting numbers, GA/Session: 3rd Committee 44, 45, 47, 48, 50, 51; plenary 75.

Financial and administrative questions

UNHCR voluntary funds expenditure in 1988 amounted to \$545.5 million,⁽⁵⁾ compared to \$461.4 million in 1987.⁽⁶⁾ Of that, \$395 million was spent on General Programmes and \$150.2 million went to Special Programmes and other trust funds. Total income for 1988 amounted to \$529.1 million, compared to \$475.6 million in 1987.⁽⁷⁾

Although financial support from the donor community in 1988 was the highest ever received by UNHCR, it was inadequate to cover all programme needs. Against a General Programmes budget of \$420 million, \$395 million was spent. However, combined contributions and secondary income amounted to only \$385 million, forcing the High Commissioner to seek donor approval to advance funds from the 1989 General Programmes reserve to cover the shortfall.

Special appeals were issued in 1988 to meet the needs of new refugee emergency situations, such as Mozambican refugees in southern Africa, Somali and Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia, Burundi refugees in Rwanda and Iraqi Kurds in Iran. Appeals were also made to cover the financial requirements of returnee programmes in Afghanistan, Burundi, Central America, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Viet Nam, as well as other activities outside the General Programmes.

In October, the UNHCR Executive Committee approved a target of \$428.8 million for General Programmes in 1989.

Efforts made in 1988 to expand the donor base and increase contributions to voluntary funds were successful, as the number of donors increased by 19.6 per cent and income increased by 18.2 per cent.

Contributions

Contributions in cash and in kind in 1988 totalled \$482.7 million, compared to \$427.9 million in 1987. Paid cash contributions amounted to \$339.8 million in 1988, and outstanding cash pledges amounted to \$86 million. Contributions in kind amounted to \$9.6 million, with an additional \$47.3 million outstanding. In addition to those contributions, \$3,694,608 (\$834,948 from Canada and \$2,859,660 from the European Economic Community) was transferred to the World Bank for administration and implementation of the Income-Generating Project for Refugee Areas in Pakistan. Intergovernmental organizations provided \$47.6 million, while NGOs and private sources provided \$6.8 million.

1987 accounts

The audited financial statements on funds administered by UNHCR for the year ended 31 December 1987⁽⁷⁾ showed a total expenditure of \$461.4 million and a total income of \$475.6 million. In October 1988, the Executive Committee took note of the report of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters⁽⁸⁾ and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).⁽⁹⁾

On 21 December, in resolution 43/216, the General Assembly accepted the financial reports and audited financial statements of UNHCR and endorsed the observations and recommendations of the Board of Auditors and ACABQ.

REFERENCES

- ⁽¹⁾A/43/12/Add.1. ⁽²⁾YUN 1951, p. 520. ⁽³⁾YUN 1967, p. 769. ⁽⁴⁾YUN 1969, 470. ⁽⁵⁾A/44/5/Add.5. ⁽⁶⁾A/44/12. ⁽⁷⁾A/43/5/Add.5. ⁽⁸⁾A/AC.96/719. ⁽⁹⁾A/43/674 & Corr.1.

Refugee assistance and protection

Assistance

During 1988, as in previous years, UNHCR cooperated with concerned Governments and the international community to meet the humanitarian needs of refugees world-wide.⁽¹⁾ Those efforts centred on the promotion of durable solutions, namely, voluntary repatriation, local integration in the country of first asylum or resettlement in another country. In 1988, \$239 million was obligated for the promotion of those solutions. Of that amount, \$27.8 million was made available under Special Programmes for the rehabilitation of returnees in their country of origin. The largest voluntary repatriation movement of the year was the spontaneous return of more than 80,000 Ugandan refugees. Other major repatriation movements involved a number of African refugee groups, Sri Lankan Tamils from India, Iraqi Kurds and Central Americans. Resettlement in a third country continued to be the only feasible option for a significant number of refugees, including more than 50,000 Indo-Chinese. UNHCR expenditure for promotion of resettlement and transportation of refugees amounted to \$18.8 million under General Programmes.

Where political or other factors precluded rapid identification of durable solutions, UNHCR provided intermediate assistance including food, shelter, water, health services and sanitation, clothing, household utensils and basic education. In 1988, the largest care and maintenance programme was that for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, for which \$43.3 million was obligated under the

General Programmes. Over \$6.2 million of that was devoted to income-generating and self-sufficiency activities, another major UNHCR assistance area during 1988. Care and maintenance programmes were also implemented in Ethiopia, Malawi, Somalia and Thailand. At the same time, refugee operations were recognized as vehicles for economic development. In many cases, UNHCR redirected its operational expenditures to local businesses in order to benefit both host countries and refugees.

UNHCR emergency activities fell into the two broad categories of response and preparedness. Frequently UNHCR was forced to resort to its Emergency Fund, which allowed the High Commissioner to allocate up to \$10 million annually. In 1988, \$9.9 million from that Fund was used, mainly in response to emergencies in Africa and South-West Asia. UNHCR participated in a co-ordinated effort by the United Nations to promote national emergency preparedness in southern Africa. Other preparedness activities included management training and development of resource materials, an early warning project and a feasibility study on establishing emergency stockpiles.

Social services continued during the year, with an emphasis on promoting the self-sufficiency of refugees. A total of 70 refugee counselling projects were implemented in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East, at a cost of \$4.3 million. These included provision of information on the availability and use of community resources and establishment of referral links to facilitate access to employment, training and education, health services, housing and social security. Medical facilities and physical, social and mental treatment and rehabilitation support were made available to some 13,000 disabled refugees in several asylum countries at a cost of \$1.1 million.

Primary education continued to be provided through multisectoral projects. Post-primary, vocational/technical and academic education was provided by 110 UNHCR programmes. UNHCR promoted co-ordination among the education ministries of Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe in order to improve the quality of the Mozambican curriculum in refugee camps, to develop a refugee teacher-training scheme and to provide Mozambican textbooks to about 70,000 refugee children. Activities had been undertaken for phasing refugee educational schemes into the national system of Somalia, and guidelines on primary education for refugee children were being prepared. The costs of supplies for refugees and for UNHCR operations amounted to \$70.9 million in 1988, and some \$72.9 million in food aid to refugees was channelled through UNHCR.

In-depth evaluations of UNHCR operations in 1988 concentrated primarily on the extent to which

assistance activities were consistent with the durable solutions envisaged in various country programmes. Major evaluations of country and regional programmes were carried out in the Horn of Africa, western and southern Africa and Latin America. During 1988, the UNHCR self-evaluation system underwent the first major change since its introduction in 1980, with self-evaluations being prepared for all major operational activities rather than for individual projects.

To consolidate UNHCR activities aimed at protecting and assisting refugee women, the UNHCR Steering Committee on Refugee Women was established in February 1988 under the chairmanship of the Deputy High Commissioner. The Committee was to assess, review and develop policies, procedures and guidelines; promote public awareness of refugee women's problems; and ensure the availability of adequate human resources for the staffing of activities.

In response to a decision of the Executive Committee (see above), UNHCR formulated a detailed work-plan with a view to integrating the needs of refugee women into the mainstream. Efforts concentrated on institutional changes aimed at ensuring that the needs of women were systematically considered and regularly reported on.

Approximately half the world's refugees were children under 18 years of age. Accordingly, the newly established Working Group on Refugee Children focused on developing guidelines for field offices in their activities concerning refugee children. In August, UNHCR distributed to its officers and relevant organizations Guidelines on Refugee Children, which addressed issues such as determination of refugee status for children, the situation of unaccompanied minors and the effects on children of extended residence in refugee camps.

Assistance to refugees in Africa

The overall number of refugees in Africa increased during 1988. Refugees continued to flee from Mozambique into Malawi and from the Sudan into south-western Ethiopia, and two new influxes occurred without advance warning from north-western Somalia into eastern Ethiopia and from Burundi into Rwanda. The great majority of the Burundi refugees repatriated voluntarily within a few months, and other significant repatriation movements occurred to Chad and Ethiopia (see below). The new and continued refugee influxes required mobilization of substantial emergency assistance. Progress in promoting self-reliance was mixed, with benefits of better harvests in some countries offset by economic difficulties in many asylum countries.

In 1988, the total expenditure in Africa under UNHCR voluntary funds amounted to \$250.1 million, of which \$175.3 million was obligated under

General Programmes (mainly for care and maintenance operations) and \$74.9 million under Special Programmes (mainly for the needs of newly arrived refugees).

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 26 July, the Economic and Social Council, by decision 1988/158, took note of oral reports made on behalf of the Secretary-General by the High Commissioner on the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa, humanitarian assistance to refugees in Djibouti, assistance to refugees in Somalia, the situation of refugees in the Sudan, assistance to student refugees in southern Africa, and assistance to displaced persons in Ethiopia.

Follow-up to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa

In response to a 1987 resolution of the General Assembly,⁽²⁾ the Secretary-General in August 1988 submitted a report⁽³⁾ on follow-up activities to the Second (1984) International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa.⁽⁴⁾

Nineteen projects aimed at strengthening the social and economic infrastructure of host countries to enable them to deal with large numbers of refugees and returnees had been funded in 15 African countries, four of which had been completed. Planning missions were initiated in Ethiopia, Malawi, Somalia and the Sudan, and eight new projects to benefit refugees and local populations in asylum countries, to be financed through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Trust Fund for Refugee-Related Development Projects in Africa, were being prepared. As at 15 April 1988, total resources under the Trust Fund amounted to \$9,069,827, while the commitment for project and programming activities was \$6,630,530, leaving a balance of \$2,439,297 for financing pipeline projects and additional programming activities.

Refugees in southern Africa

More than 100,000 Mozambicans received assistance under a consolidated emergency programme in the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. By year's end, 13,000 Mozambicans had been transferred to a new settlement in Zambia.

UNHCR intensified its preparations for the repatriation of Namibian refugees in accordance with a 1978 Security Council resolution,⁽⁵⁾ which set out a plan for Namibia's transition to independence. The number of South African refugees reported to have found asylum in other southern

African countries remained at about 35,000, over half of whom received UNHCR assistance in 1988.

Malawi

In response to a 1987 Assembly resolution,⁽⁶⁾ the Secretary-General in August 1988 submitted a report on assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Malawi.⁽⁷⁾ In 1988, some 20,000 Mozambicans per month fled to Malawi, resulting in a total of 552,669 as at 1 June.

An inter-agency mission that visited Malawi in 1987 found that the country's rural subsistence economy was under severe strain owing to the refugee burden. Food production and water resources in the affected areas were insufficient to satisfy the needs of both the Malawi population and the displaced persons. The environment had been severely damaged by wood-cutting and cultivation on fragile hillsides. Health, education and community services were also under heavy strain. The mission concluded that the Malawi economy would not be able to cope with the expanded emergency conditions without major support from the international community and development investment. It was estimated that \$90.8 million in emergency assistance would be required in 1988 to finance food, water, health and education, as well as public works programmes designed to increase the amount of cultivable land and expand food production. The proposed action programme of economic development initiatives addressed both emergency needs and long-term development goals.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 24 May, by decision 1988/110, the Economic and Social Council took note of an oral report made by the representative of UNHCR on assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Malawi.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 43/148 without vote.

Assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Malawi

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 42/132 of 7 December 1987 on assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Malawi,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Malawi, as well as on the report of the inter-agency mission on this subject,

Having considered that part of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees regarding the situation of refugees and displaced persons in Malawi,

Gravely concerned about the continuing serious social and economic impact of the massive presence of refugees and

displaced persons, as well as its far-reaching consequences for the country's long-term development process,

Appreciating the important measures that the Government of Malawi is taking in order to provide shelter, protection, food, education and health and other humanitarian services to thousands of refugees and displaced persons,

Recognising the heavy burden placed on the people and Government of Malawi and the sacrifices they are making in caring for the refugees and displaced persons, given the country's limited social services and infrastructure, and the need for adequate international assistance to enable them to continue their efforts to provide assistance to the refugees and displaced persons,

Expressing its appreciation for the assistance rendered by Member States, the various organs of the United Nations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in support of the refugee programme in Malawi,

Bearing in mind the findings and recommendations of the inter-agency mission to Malawi, particularly on the need to strengthen the country's socio-economic infrastructure in order to enable it to provide for the immediate humanitarian relief requirements of the refugees and displaced persons as well as the long-term national development needs of the country,

Recognizing the need to view refugee-related development projects within local and national development plans,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Malawi, particularly with regard to the findings and recommendations of the inter-agency mission;

2. Commends the measures that the Government of Malawi is taking to provide material and humanitarian assistance to refugees and displaced persons, in spite of the serious economic situation it faces, and stresses the need for additional resources to lessen the impact of the presence of refugees and displaced persons on the country's long-term development process;

3. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, donor countries and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their efforts to assist the refugees and displaced persons in Malawi;

4. Expresses grave concern at the serious and far-reaching consequences of the massive presence of refugees and displaced persons in the country and its implications for the long-term socio-economic development of the whole country;

5. Appeals to Member States, the appropriate organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the international financial institutions to continue providing the Government of Malawi with the necessary resources for the implementation of development assistance projects in regions affected by the presence of refugees and displaced persons, as well as the development programmes recommended by the inter-agency mission;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize the necessary financial and material assistance for the full implementation of ongoing projects in the areas affected by the presence of refugees and dis-

placed persons and programmes recommended in the report of the inter-agency mission;

7. Requests the High Commissioner to continue co-ordination with the appropriate specialized agencies in order to consolidate and ensure the continuation of essential services to the refugees and displaced persons in their settlements;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 43/148

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/868) without vote, 29 November (meeting 56); 23-nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.71); agenda item 12.

sponsors: Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 49-56; plenary 75.

Conference on refugees in southern Africa

The Assembly in 1987⁽⁸⁾ had welcomed the OAU decision to hold an International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa. The Conference (Oslo, Norway, 22-24 August 1988)⁽⁹⁾ adopted the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action, which emphasized the need to link emergency aid to development assistance activities in order to promote self-sufficiency and to minimize the risk of dependency. Accordingly, the Conference urged all States to provide sufficient resources to support both emergency and development programmes on behalf of refugees, returnees and displaced persons. The 90 States participating in the Conference agreed to undertake activities in the areas of emergency preparedness, needs assessment and delivery of assistance, recovery and development, and resource mobilization. In the context of emergency preparedness, the Conference called on the United Nations system, OAU, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs to implement training programmes for relief officials in asylum countries in order to enable better use of resources. On the subject of internally displaced persons, the Conference requested the Secretary-General to conduct studies and consultations aimed at ensuring the timely implementation and co-ordination of relief programmes, and called on the international community to co-operate in ensuring the safe transport of relief and emergency goods.

The Conference recommended voluntary repatriation of refugees wherever possible, while recognizing that local integration or resettlement in a third country was sometimes a necessary alternative, especially in the case of South African and Namibian refugees. The Conference emphasized the need for all members of the international community to share the refugee burden equally, and accordingly urged African States to admit refugees from southern Africa not only into their countries, but also into their national educational

and employment systems, enabling them to have access, where feasible, to financial and land resources. As part of the follow-up and evaluation process, the Secretary-General was called on to provide for the regular appraisal of the Declaration and Plan of Action, in co-operation with UNHCR, the World Food programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund, UNDP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and NGOs.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 43/116 without vote.

International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 42/106 of 7 December 1987 on the convening of an International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa,

Gravely concerned about the constant deterioration of the situation in southern Africa arising from the domination and oppression of the peoples of South Africa and Namibia by the minority racist régime of South Africa,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa, held at Oslo from 22 to 24 August 1988, and the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa adopted by the Conference and contained in the annex to that report,

Taking note with appreciation of the active participation of His Excellency General Moussa Traoré, President of the Republic of Mali and current Chairman of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, His Excellency Mr. Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Her Excellency Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, at the Conference,

Aware of the valuable contribution made by the Governments of Norway and the other Nordic countries to the successful convening of the Conference,

Recognizing the importance of the financial and technical assistance provided by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity in the preparation and organization of the Conference,

Noting with satisfaction the successful outcome of the Conference,

Conscious of its responsibility to provide economic, material and humanitarian assistance to independent States in southern Africa in order to assist them in coping with the situation resulting from the acts of aggression and destabilization committed by the apartheid régime of South Africa,

Noting the absence of an operational mechanism within the United Nations system dealing specifically with the problems of assistance to internally displaced persons,

Noting with indignation that South Africa's policy of apartheid, its illegal occupation of Namibia, and its direct and indirect acts of aggression, intimidation and destabilization through armed terrorists continue to be the main causes of refugee flows and increasing displacement of persons in southern Africa,

Convinced that there is an urgent need for the international community to extend maximum and concerted assistance to southern African countries sheltering refugees, returnees and displaced persons and also to highlight the plight of these persons,

1. Takes note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa;

2. Endorses the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa adopted by the Conference;

3. Calls upon the international community to provide increased assistance to the countries of southern Africa to enable them to strengthen their capacity to provide the necessary facilities and services for the care and well-being of the refugees, returnees and displaced persons in their countries;

4. Reiterates its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his efforts, on behalf of the international community, to organize and mobilize special programmes of economic assistance for the front-line and other neighbouring States to help them to withstand the effects of the acts of aggression and destabilization committed by the apartheid régime of South Africa;

5. Requests the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to implement those specific tasks and responsibilities assigned to them in the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to undertake studies and consultations in order to consider the need for the establishment, within the United Nations system, of a mechanism or arrangement to ensure the implementation and overall co-ordination of relief programmes to internally displaced persons;

7. Urges all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and governmental and non-governmental organizations to undertake the measures required of them under the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action;

8. Express its gratitude to the Government of Norway for acting as host to the Conference, and to all the Nordic countries for their generous assistance towards the convening of the Conference;

9. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme for the valuable assistance that they provided to the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity in the organization of the Conference;

10. Commends the Organization of African Unity for having convened the Conference and for focusing the attention of the international community on the grave humanitarian problems of the southern African region;

11. Decides to consider this question at its forty-fourth session on the basis of a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General.

General Assembly resolution 43/116

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/874) without vote, 23 November (meeting 51); draft by Zaire, for African Group (A/C.3/43/L.58); agenda item 102. Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 44,45,47,48,51; plenary 75.

Student refugees in southern Africa

In response to a 1987 Assembly resolution,⁽¹⁰⁾ the Secretary-General reported on assistance to student refugees in southern Africa from 1 July 1987 to 30 June 1988.⁽¹¹⁾ Those refugees were South Africans and Namibians who had been granted asylum in Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia. There had been no massive exodus of refugees from either South Africa or Namibia during the period under review, but it was feared that the ongoing school boycott in Namibia, in protest of South Africa's policy of stationing troops close to schools, would intensify and ultimately lead to a substantial increase in the number of Namibian student refugees. In addition, lack of security in countries bordering South Africa necessitated the evacuation of most newly arriving refugees, mostly young males, into other countries in the southern and eastern African regions.

In Botswana, the number of refugees remained stable at about 1,000 South Africans and 200 Namibians. Of these, 180 South Africans and 120 Namibians continued to benefit from educational facilities offered at the Dukwe Settlement. Swaziland was host to 6,500 South Africans, 220 of whom were receiving UNHCR educational assistance. Educational assistance was also provided to South African and/or Namibian students in Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 43/149 without vote.

Assistance to student refugees in southern Africa The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 42/138 of 7 December 1987, in which it, inter alia, requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in co-operation with the Secretary-General, to continue to organize and implement an effective programme of educational and other appropriate assistance for student refugees from South Africa and Namibia who had been granted asylum in Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,

Noting with appreciation that some of the projects recommended in the report on assistance to student refugees in southern Africa continue to be successfully implemented,

Noting with concern that the discriminatory and repressive policies that continue to be applied in South Africa and Namibia cause a continued and increasing influx of student refugees into Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia,

Conscious of the burden placed on the limited financial, material and administrative resources of the host countries by the increasing number of student refugees,

Appreciating the efforts of the host countries to deal with their student refugee populations, with the assistance of the international community,

1. Takes note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General;

2. Expresses its appreciation to the Governments of Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia for granting asylum and making educational and other facilities available to the student refugees, in spite of the pressure that the continuing influx of those refugees exerts on facilities in their countries;

3. Also expresses its appreciation to the Governments of Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia for the co-operation that they have extended to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on matters concerning the welfare of the refugees;

4. Notes with appreciation the financial and material support provided for the student refugees by Member States, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, other bodies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

5. Requests the High Commissioner, in co-operation with the Secretary-General, to continue to organize and implement an effective programme of educational and other appropriate assistance for student refugees from South Africa and Namibia who have been granted asylum in Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia;

6. Urges all Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue contributing generously to the assistance programme for student refugees, through financial support of the regular programmes of the High Commissioner and of the projects and programmes, including unfunded projects, which were submitted to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, held at Geneva from 9 to 11 July 1984;

7. Also urges all Member States and all intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to assist the countries of asylum materially and otherwise to enable them to continue to discharge their humanitarian obligations towards refugees;

8. Appeals to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme and all other competent United Nations bodies, as well as other international and non-governmental organizations, to continue providing humanitarian and development assistance so as to facilitate and expedite the settlement of student refugees from South Africa and Namibia who have been granted asylum in Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia;

9. Calls upon agencies and programmes of the United Nations system to continue co-operating with the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner in the implementation of humanitarian programmes of assistance for the student refugees in southern Africa;

10. Requests the High Commissioner, in co-operation with the Secretary-General, to continue to keep the mat-

ter under review, to apprise the Economic and Social Council, at its second regular session of 1989, of the current status of the programmes and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 43/149

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/868) without vote, 29 November (meeting 56); 47- nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.72); agenda item 12.

Sponsors: Algeria, Angola, Barbados, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Yugoslavia, Zaïre, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 49-56; plenary 75.

Refugees in other African countries

Chad

In response to a 1987 Assembly resolution,⁽¹²⁾ the Secretary-General in September 1988 submitted a report on emergency assistance to voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad.⁽¹³⁾ Spontaneous and organized return of Chadians from neighbouring countries, especially Cameroon and Nigeria, continued during 1988. UNHCR continued to provide tools and seeds to returnees, install water supplies and, in collaboration with WFP, distribute food.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 43/143 without vote.

Emergency assistance to voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 42/128 of 7 December 1987 on emergency assistance to voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad, as well as all its previous resolutions on this question,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on emergency assistance to voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad,

Deeply concerned the persistence of the harmful effects of the drought, desertification, floods and infestations of locusts and grasshoppers, which are compounding the already precarious food and health situation in Chad,

Conscious that the large number of voluntary returnees and displaced persons resulting from the war and the drought in Chad poses a serious problem of their integration into society,

Considering that the mass return of returnees to Chad and of displaced persons in the northern region poses serious social and economic problems for the Government of Chad,

Bearing in mind the many appeals made by the Government of Chad for international emergency assistance to the voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad,

1. Endorses the appeals made by the Government of Chad for emergency assistance to the voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad;

2. Reiterates its appeal to all States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to support, by generous contributions, the efforts being made by the Government of Chad to assist and resettle the voluntary returnees and displaced persons;

3. Takes note with satisfaction of the action undertaken by the various organizations of the United Nations system and the specialized agencies with a view to mobilizing emergency humanitarian assistance to the voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad;

4. Again requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator to mobilize emergency humanitarian assistance to the voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad;

5. Calls upon:

(a) The Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize special humanitarian assistance for the resettlement of displaced persons in the northern region of Chad;

(6) The international community to support the efforts made by the Government of Chad to implement the programmes for repatriating and resettling the voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad;

6. Requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 43/143

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/868) without vote, 29 November (meeting 56); 37- nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.66); agenda item 12.

Sponsors: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Kampuchea, Djibouti, Egypt, France, Gabon, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Japan, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Zaïre.

Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 49-56; plenary 75.

Djibouti

In response to a 1987 Assembly resolution,⁽¹⁴⁾ the Secretary-General in September 1988 submitted a report on humanitarian assistance to refugees in Djibouti.⁽¹⁵⁾ The UNHCR multi-purpose assistance programme for 1988 focused on the improvement of community and preventive health care, nutrition and educational services.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 43/142 without vote.

Humanitarian assistance to refugees in Djibouti

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 41/137 of 4 December 1986 and 42/126 of 7 December 1987 on humanitarian assistance to refugees in Djibouti, as well as all its previous resolutions on this question,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on humanitarian assistance to refugees in Djibouti,

Deeply concerned about the plight of the refugees and the constantly increasing inflow of displaced persons

which has severely affected the inadequate social services and the infrastructure of the country,

Aware of the heavy economic and social burden placed on the Government of Djibouti and the consequent unfavourable effects on the development of that country, given the delicate nature of its resources,

Appreciation the determined and sustained efforts made by the Government of Djibouti to cope with the growing needs of the refugees and displaced persons, despite its modest economic resources and limited means,

Noting with appreciation the steps taken by the Government of Djibouti, in close co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to implement appropriate and lasting solutions with respect to the refugees in Djibouti,

Appreciating the assistance provided by Member States, the specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and voluntary agencies to the relief and rehabilitation programmes for the refugees and displaced persons in Djibouti,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on humanitarian assistance to refugees in Djibouti and appreciates the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to keep their situation under constant review;

2. Welcomes the steps taken by the Government of Djibouti, in close co-operation with the High Commissioner, to implement appropriate and lasting solutions with respect to the refugees in Djibouti;

3. Expresses its appreciation to Member States, the specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and voluntary agencies for their assistance to the relief and rehabilitation programmes for the refugees and displaced persons in Djibouti;

4. Urges the High Commissioner to intensify his efforts to mobilize, on an emergency basis, the necessary resources to implement lasting solutions with respect to the refugees in Djibouti and the constant inflow of displaced persons;

5. Calls upon all Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system, the specialized agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to support the determined and sustained efforts made by the Government of Djibouti to cope with the urgent needs of the refugees and displaced persons and to implement lasting solutions as regards their situation;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 43/142

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/868) without vote, 29 November (meeting 56); 88-nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.85); agenda item 12.

Sponsors: Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, France, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab

Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 49-56; plenary 75.

Ethiopia

In response to a 1987 Assembly resolution,⁽¹⁶⁾ the Secretary-General in September 1988 submitted a report on assistance to displaced persons and returnees in Ethiopia.⁽¹⁷⁾

Ethiopia reported the largest increase in the number of refugees in 1988, with the number of Sudanese refugees in the south-western region rising from nearly 260,000 to some 350,000, the majority of whom were women and children. The remote location of the camps and the severe malnutrition of some new arrivals continued to demand a high level of support. In May, the High Commissioner appealed for \$26.7 million in donations to assist the Sudanese refugees.

In addition, more than 300,000 Somalis entered south-eastern Ethiopia in 1988, a region devoid of natural resources and difficult to reach. Vital supplies were airlifted to those refugees as part of a major relief operation. In July, the High Commissioner appealed for international support for a relief programme valued at \$11 million, based on a tentative planning case-load of 120,000, but despite a rapid increase in the number of Somali refugees to some 400,000, only \$1.2 million had been contributed in cash by August.

Other assistance in the form of food, agricultural tools, seeds, livestock and home construction materials was provided to Ethiopian refugees returning home from Djibouti, Somalia and the Sudan.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 43/144 without vote.

Assistance to refugees and returnees in Ethiopia

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its resolutions, in particular resolution 42/139 of 7 December 1987, as well as all those of the Economic and Social Council, on assistance to displaced persons in Ethiopia,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to displaced persons in Ethiopia,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,

Recognizing the increasing number of refugees and voluntary returnees in Ethiopia,

Deeply concerned about the massive flow of refugees and voluntary returnees into the country and the enormous burden this has placed on the country's infrastructure and meagre resources,

Deeply concerned also about the grave consequences this has entailed for the country's capability to grapple with the effects of the prolonged drought,

Aware of the heavy burden placed on the Government of Ethiopia and of the need for adequate assistance to

refugees, voluntary returnees and victims of natural disasters,

1. Commends the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and intergovernmental organizations and voluntary agencies for their assistance in mitigating the plight of the large number of refugees and voluntary returnees in Ethiopia;

2. Appeals to Member States and to international organizations and voluntary agencies to provide adequate material, financial and technical assistance for relief and rehabilitation programmes for the large number of refugees and voluntary returnees in Ethiopia;

3. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to continue his efforts in mobilizing humanitarian assistance for the relief, rehabilitation and resettlement of voluntary returnees and the large number of refugees in Ethiopia;

4. Requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the High Commissioner, to apprise the Economic and Social Council, at its second regular session of 1989, of the implementation of the present resolution and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session.

General Assembly resolution 43/144

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/868) without vote, 29 November (meeting 56); 67-nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.67); agenda item 12.

Sponsors: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Byelorussian SSR, Cameroon, China, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Ukrainian SSR, USSR, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 49-56; plenary 75.

Rwanda

In August, some 55,000 refugees from northern Burundi fled to Rwanda, requiring immediate emergency assistance. A commission, comprising representatives from UNHCR, Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire, with OAU representatives as observers, was established to promote conditions conducive to the early voluntary return of those refugees. Repatriation began spontaneously in October and continued through UNHCR-organized convoys. The great majority of refugees had returned within two months.

Somalia

In response to a 1987 Assembly resolution,⁽¹⁸⁾ the Secretary-General in August 1988 submitted a report on assistance to refugees in Somalia.⁽¹⁹⁾ All of them were Ethiopian, and many were women and children. The second phase of a project to re-enumerate the refugees, consisting of a socio-demographic survey, was begun in 1988.

Concrete steps were taken to promote refugee-related development projects and to identify labour-intensive schemes benefiting both refugees and the local population. The Qorioley Refugee

Settlement Project, approved in May, was to produce a feasibility study and technical plan for the settlement of refugee families who had been living in refugee camps for eight years. The project was intended to serve as a model for other development projects for refugees in Somalia.

UNHCR continued its efforts to promote repatriation and self-sufficiency in Somalia, including road rehabilitation and agricultural development. Food assistance, co-ordinated by WFP, was expected to amount to about 42,000 metric tons in 1988, at an estimated cost of \$53 million. On the basis of a nutritional survey conducted in 1988, rations were increased and steps were taken to improve the timing of deliveries.

Prospects for the voluntary repatriation of Ethiopian refugees in Somalia improved during the year as a result of high-level discussions between UNHCR and Somalia, in which the parties agreed on the need to redirect the programme from relief assistance towards repatriation. In Somalia, that included the promotion of area development and rehabilitation projects aimed at creating durable economic assets and helping to redress the ecological and other consequences of the presence of refugees. Another objective was to ensure that refugee services that could contribute to national development were integrated into national structures. In north-western Somalia, however, the UNHCR assistance programme was seriously disrupted by the outbreak of conflict in May

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly, on 8 December, adopted resolution 43/147 without vote.

Assistance to refugees in Somalia

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 35/180 of 15 December 1980, 36/153 of 16 December 1981, 37/174 of 17 December 1982, 38/88 of 16 December 1983, 39/104 of 14 November 1984, 40/132 of 13 December 1985, 41/138 of 4 December 1986 and 42/127 of 7 December 1987 on the question of assistance to refugees in Somalia,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to refugees in Somalia,

Deeply concerned about the heavy burden that has been placed on the fragile economy of Somalia by the continuing presence of large numbers of refugees,

Concerned about the need to ensure continuing and adequate supplies of food in refugee camps in Somalia,

Conscious of the pressure that the refugee presence continues to impose on the public services, in particular education, health, transport and communications, and water supplies,

Noting with concern the deleterious effect of the refugee presence on the environment, which has resulted in widespread deforestation, soil erosion and the threat of destruction to an already fragile ecological balance,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;

2. Commends the measures that the Government of Somalia is taking to provide material and humanitarian assistance to refugees, in spite of its own limited resources and fragile economy;

3. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, donor countries and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their efforts to assist the refugees in Somalia;

4. Calls upon the High Commissioner to ensure, as appropriate, that the care, maintenance and rehabilitation needs of the refugees are adequately covered;

5. Appeals to Member States, international organizations and voluntary agencies to render maximum and timely material, financial and technical assistance to enable the Government of Somalia to implement the projects and activities identified in the report of the 1987 inter-agency mission annexed to the report submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-second session as the basis for a comprehensive programme of action combining both refugee-related humanitarian and developmental needs;

6. Calls upon the United Nations Development Programme to assume the leading role, as required by the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, in the conceptualization, implementation and monitoring of refugee-related projects, and to be involved in the mobilization of the financial and technical means required, in close co-operation with the High Commissioner and the World Bank,

7. Requests the pertinent organizations of the United Nations system, namely the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, as well as the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Food Programme, to prepare, in consultation with the Government of Somalia, detailed project documentation for the implementation of those projects and activities identified in the report of the Secretary-General as priority endeavours for a comprehensive programme of action;

8. Calls upon the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to continue and expand their activities in Somalia, in co-operation with the Government of Somalia, to protect and rehabilitate its damaged environment;

9. Recognizes the important role that non-governmental organizations are playing with regard to programmes for the care, maintenance and rehabilitation of refugees, particularly in activities related to small-scale development projects, and in the fields of health and agriculture;

10. Calls upon the international community to support the activities of non-governmental organizations in Somalia in the planning and implementation of refugee projects and refugee-related development activities;

11. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to apprise the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1989 of the progress made in their respective fields of responsibility with regard to those provisions of the present resolution which concern them;

12. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the High Commissioner and United Nations Development Programme, to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session a report on the progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 43/147

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/868) without vote, 29 November (meeting 56); 65-nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.70/Rev.1); agenda item 12.

Sponsors: Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Gambia, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 49-58; plenary 75.

Sudan

In response to a 1987 Assembly resolution,⁽²⁰⁾ the Secretary-General in August 1988 submitted a report on the situation of refugees in the Sudan.⁽²¹⁾ Government sources had indicated that there were approximately 2 million displaced persons and 1 million refugees in that country. The Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship, after discussions with Sudanese authorities, reinstated the United Nations Emergency Operations Group, composed of the local representatives of the key United Nations agencies, in order to ensure an effective and concerted response to the critical humanitarian situation resulting from drought, civil strife and the presence of refugees. The Group was to co-ordinate emergency and rehabilitation assistance requested by the Government for refugees and displaced persons as well as for the stricken population in drought-affected areas. The Secretary-General in March appealed for assistance in implementing ongoing projects in areas affected by refugees.

UNHCR continued to provide assistance to nearly half of the more than 800,000 refugees estimated to be in the Sudan, the majority of whom were Ethiopian. More than 300,000 Ethiopians were receiving UNHCR assistance; a substantially higher number had spontaneously settled in towns and rural areas and were therefore unassisted.

Some 30,000 Ethiopian refugees, the majority fleeing armed conflict, arrived in eastern Sudan in the second half of 1988. Most were accommodated with relative ease at existing reception centres. As part of the overall effort to link refugee assistance to national development, UNHCR, in co-operation with the World Bank, prepared an agricultural project in southern Kassala province to benefit small farmers, including refugees.

More than 80,000 Ugandan refugees in the Sudan returned to their country of origin in the largest such movement anywhere in the world.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 43/141 without vote.

Situation of refugees in the Sudan

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 42/129 of 7 December 1987 and its other previous resolutions on the situation of refugees in the Sudan,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 42/129 and the action taken by the concerned organizations, and the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,

Expressing its appreciation for the efforts made by the Government of the Sudan for the reception of the refugees and the provision of protection, shelter, food, health, education and other humanitarian services to the ever increasing number of refugees who have been crossing the borders into the Sudan since the early 1960s,

Recognizing the heavy burden shouldered by the people and the Government of the Sudan and the sacrifices they are making in acting as host to more than one million refugees, who constitute approximately 7.5 per cent of the total population of the country,

Concerned that the great majority of the refugees have spontaneously settled in various urban and rural communities throughout the country and are thus sharing the already meagre resources and services allocated to the indigenous population,

Expressing grave concern at the devastating and far-reaching effects of the successive calamities, ranging from the 1984 drought to the heavy rains and floods and the locust infestations, that have afflicted the country, thus exacerbating the already deteriorating situation resulting from the presence of this great number of refugees,

Gravely concerned also that the Government of the Sudan, besides dealing with the difficult prevailing economic and social problems, has the additional task of taking care of more than 1.5 million nationals displaced as a result of the 1984 drought, the civil strife in the southern part of the country and the rains and floods of August 1988,

Recognizing the serious task undertaken by the Government of the Sudan to initiate a wide-ranging rehabilitation programme to redress the impact and damages incurred by the natural disasters,

Considering those serious circumstances, which render the Government of the Sudan less prepared than ever to meet its obligations to its own people, and the more serious consequences, which affect the capacity of the Government of the Sudan to receive and grant asylum to additional numbers of refugees,

Expressing its appreciation for the assistance rendered by Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in support of the refugee programme in the Sudan,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation of refugees in the Sudan and expresses its appreciation for the appeal made by the Secretary-General to Member States and the appropriate organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations;

2. Takes note also of the report submitted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and in par-

ticular of the new trends identified in the area of refugee aid and development;

3. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner, donor countries and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their efforts to assist the refugees in the Sudan;

4. Expresses grave concern at the serious and far-reaching consequences of the presence of massive numbers of refugees in the country on the security and stability of the country and the overall negative impact on its basic infrastructure, which arrests the socio-economic development of the whole country;

5. Also expresses grave concern at the shrinking resources available for refugee programmes in the Sudan and the serious consequences of this situation for the country's ability to continue to act as host and provide assistance to refugees;

6. Appeals to Member States, the appropriate organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the international financial institutions to provide the Government of the Sudan with the necessary resources for the implementation of development assistance projects in regions affected by the presence of refugees;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to mobilize the necessary financial and material assistance for the full implementation of ongoing projects in the areas affected by the presence of refugees;

8. Requests the High Commissioner to continue co-ordination with the appropriate specialized agencies in order to consolidate and ensure the continuation of essential services to the refugees in their settlements;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 43/141

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/868) without vote, 29 November (meeting 56); 59-nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.64); agenda item 12.

Sponsors: Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Botswana, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Democratic Kampuchea, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Egypt, Guatemala, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 49-56; plenary 75.

Asia and Oceania

At the request of Sri Lanka, UNHCR in 1988 launched a programme to promote the return of Sri Lankan Tamils from India. Transportation for the returnees was provided by India, and reception, registration and initial assistance were provided by Sri Lanka and UNHCR. Reintegration assistance was also planned for Sri Lankan Tamils returning voluntarily from countries other than India. By year's end, some \$8.3 million had been spent towards implementation of the programme.

In India, there were more than 6,000 registered refugees at year's end, mainly from Afghanistan and Iran. UNHCR assistance included primary

and secondary education for children, as well as higher education and vocational training for adults. A total of 1,002 refugees in India were resettled in third countries during 1988, and 62 Afghans and 30 Iranians voluntarily repatriated.

During the year, UNHCR expenditure in the region stood at \$64.3 million under General Programmes and \$18.2 million under Special Programmes.

Indo-China

At the end of 1988, some 156,000 Indo-Chinese asylum-seekers were in UNHCR-assisted camps in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, with Thailand being host to the majority of the case-load. Despite efforts to promote voluntary repatriation, resettlement remained the principal durable solution. The increase in arrivals, particularly "boat people", was not offset by the resettlement of some 50,000 Indo-Chinese in third countries, and the number of registered asylum-seekers in South-East Asian camps, particularly in Hong Kong and Malaysia, rose by 11.5 per cent compared to 1987. Progress was made in Viet Nam, however, with more than 21,000 persons leaving through the reactivated Orderly Departure Programme.

In July, the Foreign Ministers of the Association of South-East Asian Nations called for an international conference on Indo-Chinese refugees to be held in 1989.⁽²²⁾ The UNHCR Executive Committee welcomed the proposal in October 1988.⁽²³⁾

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 43/119 without vote.

International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees The General Assembly,

Deeply concerned about the continuing humanitarian and other problems posed by the presence in the South-East Asian region of large numbers of refugees, displaced persons and those seeking refuge,

Recognizing that the problem of refugees, displaced persons and those seeking refuge is of international concern.

Convinced that there is an urgent need for the international community to find a comprehensive and durable solution to the problem which is acceptable to all parties concerned,

Appreciating the continuing efforts of the South-East Asian countries aimed at solving this problem, as well as the endeavours of the international community to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees, displaced persons and those seeking refuge in South-East Asia;

Noting the call in the Joint Statement on Indo-Chinese Refugees, issued at Bangkok on 4 July 1988 by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations at their twenty-first Ministerial Meeting, for the convening of

an International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees at the ministerial level, in early 1989, to be preceded by a preparatory conference at the senior official level,

Noting the expressions of support given by all States concerned, including those of the South-East Asian region, to the convening of the Conference,

Taking note of the decision by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at its thirty-ninth session to endorse the proposal for the convening of the Conference,

Bearing in mind the need for adequate preparation by the parties concerned to ensure the success of the Conference,

1. Welcomes the call by the Association of South-East Asian Nations for the convening of an International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees and expresses the strong desire that the Conference take place at the ministerial level at the earliest possible date during the first half of 1989;

2. Also welcomes the decision by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the convening of the Conference;

3. Requests the Secretary-General, in close cooperation with the States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations and other States concerned, to convene the Conference and to extend all possible assistance to the parties concerned for the organization of the Conference;

4. Appeals to all States, the specialized agencies and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to provide all the necessary support and resources needed by the High Commissioner for the preparation and the holding of the Conference;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to apprise the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1989 and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 43/119

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/874) without vote, 23 November (meeting 51); 25-nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.61): agenda item 102.

Sponsors: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chad, China, Denmark, Djibouti, Finland, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Singapore, Somalia, Sudan, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, United States, Viet Nam.

Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 44, 45, 47, 48, 50, 51; plenary 75.

Europe and North America

The number of new asylum-seekers in Europe increased to 240,000 during 1988, compared to 188,000 in 1987. Reversing the trend of previous years, most of the new asylum-seekers were of European origin. In addition, Hungary took in some 13,000 Romanian asylum-seekers, on whose behalf it sought UNHCR assistance. Another 50,000 Iraqi nationals were admitted to Turkey and granted temporary sanctuary as well as assistance and protection. UNHCR maintained close contact with Governments and NGOs to ensure preservation of the humanitarian tradition and the principles of the 1951 Convention⁽²⁴⁾ and the 1967 Protocol⁽²⁵⁾ relating to the Status of Refugees.

An agreement concluded in August between France, Suriname and UNHCR led to the creation of a tripartite commission to supervise the voluntary repatriation of some 8,000 Surinamese nationals in the French overseas department of Guiana.

In North America, Canada and the United States saw an expansion in their role as countries of first asylum during 1988. In the United States, there was a sharp increase in the number of Central American refugees, and accelerated procedures were introduced to determine the eligibility of their asylum requests.

During the year, UNHCR's operational expenditure in Europe and North America amounted to \$19 million under General Programmes and \$1.3 million under Special Programmes.

Latin America and the Caribbean

UNHCR had assisted about 124,000 refugees in Central America and Mexico by the end of 1988. The number of returnees increased considerably during the year, especially from Honduras, from where 2,476 Salvadorians and 7,965 Miskito and Sumo Nicaraguans repatriated. More than 37,000 refugees remained in Honduras at year's end, however, including Nicaraguans, Salvadorians and Guatemalans. In addition, 1,921 Guatemalans returned from Mexico, while 41,273 remained. Smaller repatriation movements occurred from the Dominican Republic (to Haiti) and Costa Rica (to El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua), bringing the total number of returnees in the region to 13,684. In southern Latin America, the estimated refugee population stood at 23,900, of whom 7,370 received UNHCR assistance. Though new Chilean asylum-seekers were registered, approximately 900 refugees, mostly Chileans, were assisted in repatriation.

During 1988, UNHCR expenditure in the region totalled \$32.8 million under General Programmes and \$6.5 million under Special Programmes.

In October,⁽²³⁾ the UNHCR Executive Committee welcomed the September decision of the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua to hold an international conference on Central American refugees in 1989.⁽²⁶⁾ The Secretary-General in September had reported⁽²⁷⁾ that UNHCR was providing support to the Governments of the region to prepare national profiles and programmes of solutions in preparation for the conference.

In October,⁽²⁸⁾ the Secretary-General reported on threats to international peace and security and peace initiatives in Central America, stating that he was gratified by the concrete measures taken to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees in the region; he emphasized particularly the de-

cision to hold an international conference on the subject.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 8 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 43/118 without vote.

International Conference on Central American Refugees

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 42/1 of 7 October 1987 concerning the peace initiatives undertaken in connection with the agreement on "Procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace in Central America", signed by five Central American Presidents at Guatemala City on 7 August 1987 at the Esquipulas II summit meeting, 42/110 of 7 December 1987 on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons of Central America, 42/204 of 11 December 1987 on special economic assistance to Central America and 42/231 of 12 May 1988 on the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,

Also taking note of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,

Gravely concerned about the present situation in the Central American region, the flows of refugees to neighbouring countries and countries outside the region, and the impact of those flows of refugees on the social and economic development of the area,

Conscious of the need to address the problem of Central American refugees who have found asylum in some Central American countries, including Belize and Mexico, and desirous of contributing to the search for lasting solutions of benefit to the countries and communities of asylum and origin,

Taking into account that, as stated in point 8 of the agreement concluded at the Esquipulas II summit meeting, the Central American countries have undertaken, as a matter of urgency, to address the problem of refugees, including their repatriation and relocation through bilateral and multilateral processes,

Welcoming the establishment of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Central American Refugees, consisting of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua, and emphasizing the importance of the success of their work,

Welcoming with satisfaction the San Salvador communique on the Central American refugees, signed on 9 September 1988, whereby it was decided to convene an International Conference on Central American Refugees, to be held at Guatemala City in May 1989,

Emphasizing that the general objective of the Conference is to examine the needs of Central American refugees and concrete proposals for practical solutions to their problems, as a contribution to peace in the region,

Reiterating the paramount importance of humanitarian and apolitical considerations, both in dealing with and in solving the problem of refugees, returnees and displaced persons, and the need to ensure that this approach is strictly observed by the countries of origin and of asylum and other interested participants,

Expressing its appreciation for the work done by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in support of the preparation for the Conference, and for its co-operation with the Preparatory Committee,

Recognizing the priority given in the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America to the section of the emergency programme which is designed to promote activities for solving the problem of refugees, displaced persons and repatriated persons,

Recognizing that the task of seeking solutions goes further than emergency activities and is linked with aspects concerning the development of the region and assistance for the displaced populations in the countries of origin and of asylum that are directly affected by the massive presence of refugees,

Emphasizing that, among the possible solutions, voluntary repatriation is the most appropriate solution for solving the problems created by the massive presence of refugees in the countries and communities of asylum,

Recognizing that the tripartite commissions, composed of representatives of the country of asylum, the country of origin and the Office of the High Commissioner, constitute an ongoing mechanism for solving the problem of refugees and that they require support in order to continue the current voluntary repatriation programmes in conditions of personal and material security,

1. Welcomes the decision adopted by the countries members of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Central American Refugees to convene the Conference at Guatemala City in May 1989;

2. Supports the undertaking made by the countries represented in the Preparatory Committee to continue to deal with the problems relating to the refugees and their voluntary repatriation, as well as with the preparatory work for the Conference and the Conference itself, on a purely humanitarian and apolitical basis;

3. Welcomes the decisions in support of the Conference adopted by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States at its eighteenth session and by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at its thirty-ninth session;

4. Urges that, in the context of the Conference, consideration should be given to the problems of displaced persons and to the effects of the massive presence of refugees in countries of asylum, as well as to those solutions which the affected countries deem applicable;

5. Exhorts all Member States, organs, specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, as well as the regional and subregional, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in the humanitarian task of helping Central American refugees, to participate in the Conference and to provide all the resources, co-operation and support necessary for preparing and holding it, and for following up the results;

6. Appeals to the international community to increase its assistance to the countries of asylum and of origin of Central American refugees in order to strengthen their capacity to provide the means and services necessary for the solution of the problem of refugees, returnees and displaced persons, in accordance with national development programmes;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to invite all States to participate in the Conference and to adopt the means necessary for ensuring its success;

8. Invites the Secretary-General to establish the necessary co-ordination between the Conference and the implementation of the section of the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America relating to refugees, displaced persons and repatriated persons;

9. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to organize the Conference, in close co-operation with the United Nations Development Programme and with the organs, specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, in co-ordination with the Preparatory Committee, bearing in mind the third point of the San Salvador communique on the Central American refugees;

10. Requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the High Commissioner, to report to the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1989 and to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 43/118

8 December 1988 Meeting 75 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/43/874) without vote, 23 November (meeting 51); 31-nation draft (A/C.3/43/L.60), orally revised; agenda item 102. Sponsors: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela.

Meeting numbers. GA 43rd session: 3rd Committee 44, 45, 47, 48, 50, 51; plenary 75.

South-West Asia,

North Africa and the Middle East

During 1988, UNHCR took steps to prepare for the voluntary repatriation of Afghans, including signing agreements with Afghanistan and Pakistan and holding discussions with Iran and representatives of the Afghan refugees to define the conditions of voluntary repatriation and to outline the material assistance needed. UNHCR's role included protecting the refugees and spontaneous returnees, building the capacity to respond to large-scale repatriation movements and providing direct support to the returnees in Afghanistan. A total of \$12 million was obligated for those activities during 1988.

In Pakistan, preparations for the repatriation of more than 3 million Afghan refugees were accelerated during the second half of the year, especially in the areas of health and training, even as assistance continued to be delivered to newly arriving refugees from the border areas of Afghanistan where military conflict had intensified.

In Iran, UNHCR contributed \$10.6 million towards the care and maintenance of Afghan refugees, in addition to Iran's own considerable contribution. In addition, at the request of Iran, UNHCR provided \$8.3 million in assistance to some 70,000 Kurdish refugees from Iraq, primarily for medical supplies, shelter and other basic necessities.

A large number of Somalis entered the Persian Gulf region during the year, and the UNHCR regional office at Beirut, Lebanon, continued to provide assistance to some 5,900 stateless refugees. Other groups receiving UNHCR assistance in the area during the year included 1,000 refugees of Eritrean origin living on the coast of the Red Sea and a group of 70,000-80,000 persons in Yemen from Democratic Yemen. In connection with the peace plan proposed in 1988 by the Secretary-General and OAU to end the dispute in Western Sahara (see PART FOUR, Chapter I), wherein UNCHR was called on to participate in the census of Western Saharan refugees, UNHCR was preparing a contingency plan towards their

repatriation. Meanwhile, it continued to assist vulnerable Sahraoui groups in Algeria.

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