

Chapter XV

Refugees and displaced persons

During 1989, despite continuing and widespread refugee problems in the world, there were encouraging developments in relation to certain long-standing situations. The single most notable of these was in Namibia; the emergence there of an independent State was preceded by the successful repatriation of more than 43,000 Namibians. The International Conference on Central American Refugees formulated in May a special plan of action to facilitate the return and rehabilitation of refugees and displaced persons and to benefit local populations as well. The Comprehensive Plan of Action, adopted at the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees in June, set out measures to deal with asylum-seekers in the South-East Asian region.

However, the repatriation of more than 3 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan and another 2.5 million in Iran remained stalled by an intractable political situation in Afghanistan. Similarly, prospects for peace in Kampuchea did not materialize, preventing the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of Kampuchean refugees and displaced persons.

Faced with the most difficult financial crisis ever in its 40-year history, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in 1989 undertook repeated cuts in programmed and assessed needs, with serious negative consequences for refugees and the Office's ability to protect and find durable solutions for them.

The Nansen Medal, awarded since 1954 in honour of Fridtjof Nansen, the first League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, was not awarded in 1989.

Jean-Pierre Hocké resigned as High Commissioner with effect from 1 November. The General Assembly on 20 November elected Thorvald Stoltenberg of Norway as his successor for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 1990 (decision 44/312).

UNHCR programme and finances

Programme policy

Executive Committee action. At its fortieth session (Geneva, 5-13 October 1989), the Executive Committee of the Programme of the UN High

Commissioner for Refugees(1) reiterated the primary nature and fundamental importance of the High Commissioner's protection responsibilities. In expressing deep concern about the financial situation of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), it called on UNHCR, States, governmental and non-governmental organizations and the international community at large to give the necessary priority to protection activities and to ensure their efficiency and effectiveness. The Committee also expressed concern over 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 UN system to address their protection needs (for more information on Palestinian refugees, see PART TWO, Chapter IV). States were urged to abide by international prohibitions against expulsion and refoulement, or forcible return of refugees, and were called upon to ensure the protection of refugees from arbitrary detention and violence. In welcoming resettlement opportunities offered by several African States, the Committee invited all States to make places available to respond to urgent or emergency protection situations facing individual refugees.

The Committee welcomed the outcome of the Round Table on Solutions to the Problem of Refugees and the Protection of Refugees (San Remo, Italy, 12-14 July) and called on the High Commissioner to convene, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, an open-ended working group of Committee members to examine protection problems and solutions in a coherent and comprehensive manner.

With regard to the promotion and dissemination of refugee law, the Committee encouraged the High Commissioner actively to promote further the universal applicability of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees(2) and the 1967 Protocol thereto(3) and to continue organizing protection training courses for government and other concerned officials. States were asked to adopt appropriate legislative and/or administrative measures for the effective implementation of those international instruments.

The Committee considered the phenomenon of refugees and asylum-seekers who moved in an irregular manner from a country in which they had already found protection or who wilfully destroyed or disposed of their documentation in order to mis-

lead the authorities of the country of arrival. While it recognized that there might be exceptional cases to justify the former, it considered the latter unacceptable and concluded that appropriate arrangements should be made to deal with the problem.

Progress was made towards promoting the participation of refugee women as agents, as well as beneficiaries, in the planning and implementation of protection and assistance programmes. The Committee urged the High Commissioner to develop a methodology for systematically addressing gender issues in refugee programmes and encouraged additional efforts to raise public awareness of the specific situation of refugee women. As regards refugee children, the High Commissioner was requested to give special attention to the needs of unaccompanied minors, particularly with regard to forced recruitment into armed forces and to the risks associated with irregular adoption.

With regard to Central American refugees, the Committee welcomed the commitments of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua in the implementation of the Concerted Plan of Action, adopted in May at the International Conference on Central American Refugees (see below). It also welcomed the adoption in June of the Declaration and Comprehensive Plan of Action on Indo-Chinese Refugees (see below).

To help implement development projects relating to refugees, returnees and the areas hosting them, the Committee requested the High Commissioner to establish a close working relationship with relevant agencies of the UN system, including the UN Development Programme (UNDP), so as to examine the conditions and modalities of an appropriate implementing mechanism. It further requested UNHCR to give priority to and identify with development agencies and Governments of host countries appropriate projects and initiatives that might be presented to development agencies for implementation and funding in refugee/returnee areas of developing countries.

The Committee approved the allocation under General Programmes amounting to \$389.4 million (including the \$10 million Emergency Fund) for 1989 and \$414.4 million for 1990.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

By decision 1989/164 of 5 July, the Economic and Social Council transmitted the report of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees(4) to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth (1989) session.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee, adopted resolution 44/137 without vote.

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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 fortieth session, and having heard the statements made by the Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the High Commissioner on 15 and 17 November 1989,

Recalling its resolution 43/117 of 8 December 1988,

Reaffirming the purely humanitarian and non-political character of the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner, as well as the fundamental importance of the High Commissioner's protection function and the need for States to co-operate with the High Commissioner in the exercise of this primary and essential function,

Noting with satisfaction that, following recent accessions, one hundred and six 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 Office of the High Commissioner continue to face, in certain situations, distressingly serious problems, including problems of protection as a result of expulsion and refoulement of refugees, their unjustified detention and measures that do not recognize their special situation,

Particularly concerned that in various regions the safety and welfare of refugees and asylum-seekers are seriously undermined on account of military or armed attacks, forced recruitment of refugees into armed forces and other forms of violence, and noting that further efforts should be made to ensure rescue and disembarkation of asylum-seekers in distress at sea and, in this context, noting also the problems relating to stowaway asylum-seekers,

Noting the efforts of the Office 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 Office of the High Commissioner in its search for durable and timely solutions to the problems of refugees based on new approaches that meet current realities and at the same time respect the basic principles and concerns of protection,

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 Office of the High Commissioner, and welcoming the fact that it has been possible for significant numbers of them to return voluntarily to their country of origin,

Recognizing that the promotion of fundamental human 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,

Deeply concerned about the unprecedented financial crisis that the Office of the High Commissioner is currently facing,

Aware that the application of the principle of international solidarity and the search for durable solutions imply a better sharing of responsibilities and arrangements among all the agencies of the United Nations system and other concerned organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, for the implementation and the financing of related activities,

Recognizing that durable solutions for refugees in developing countries can, in many 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, and emphasizing the need to ensure the compatibility of refugee aid and national development plans of developing countries of asylum,

Welcoming the conclusions and decisions on refugee aid and development adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fortieth session, in particular the request to the Office of the High Commissioner to continue its catalytic role in the area of refugee aid and development,

Commending those States which, 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,

Emphasizing the need for close co-operation between the Office of the High Commissioner and relevant agencies of the United Nations system and other international organizations, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, in devising and implementing specific elements of development assistance for solving problems of refugees and returnees and of areas hosting them,

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 being paid to those refugees who have spent an inordinately long period of time in camps and to individuals facing urgent or emergency protection situations,

Welcoming the valuable support extended by Governments to the Office of the High Commissioner in the performance of its 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,

Noting the efforts of the Office of the High Commissioner, in co-operation with the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner, including the establishment of a Working Group, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office, and the need to further strengthen field activities and responsibilities,

Commending the Office of the High Commissioner and its 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 States to co-operate fully with his Office in the fulfilment of this function, in particular by acceding to and fully and effectively implementing the relevant international and regional refugee instruments;

2. Endorses the conclusions on the implementation of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fortieth session;

3. Calls upon all States to refrain from measures that jeopardize the institution of asylum, in particular the return or expulsion of refugees and asylum-seekers contrary to fundamental prohibitions against these practices, and urges States to continue to admit and receive refugees pending identification of their status and appropriate solutions to their plight;

4. Urges all States to establish quick and effective procedures for determining refugee status and granting asylum in accordance with internationally accepted criteria and appropriate legal guarantees, in order to deal expeditiously with manifestly unfounded claims and to protect refugees and asylum-seekers from unjustified or unduly prolonged detention or stay in camps;

5. Notes with deep concern, in this context, that large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers in different areas of the world are currently subject to detention or similar restrictive measures by reason of their illegal entry or presence in search of asylum, pending resolution of their situation, and reiterates the conclusions on detention adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-seventh session, which set out the grounds for detention of such persons;

6. Condemns 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, forced recruitment into armed forces and other forms of violence;

7. Notes the accomplishments of the Office of the High Commissioner in the promotion and dissemination of refugee law, including, in particular, the organization of training courses on protection directed towards government and other concerned officials, and urges the Office to pursue its activities in this regard, making every effort to ensure that such protection training courses continue on a significant scale;

8. Endorses the conclusions on refugee children adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fortieth session, in particular on the development and dissemination of the "Guidelines on Refugee Children" and the implementation of a work plan concerning refugee children that requires the active co-operation and collaboration of Governments, United Nations bodies, among them the United Nations Children's Fund, and non-governmental organizations with the Office of the High Commissioner;

9. Endorses the conclusions on refugee women adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fortieth session, in which, in particular, the Executive Committee recognized the need to facilitate the participatory role of refugee women and the need for a policy framework and organizational work plan for the implementation of the

next stages of bringing issues concerning refugee women into the mainstream of the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner;

10. Endorses the conclusions on durable solutions and refugee protection adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fortieth session, in which the Executive Committee recognized the need for the active promotion of solutions by the international community and by countries of origin, asylum and resettlement, in accordance with their respective obligations and responsibilities and the desirability of prevention through, *inter alia*, the observance of human rights, as the best solution;

11. Recognizes the importance of attaining 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 and to facilitate the solution of existing problems;

12. Approves the decision entitled "Sharing of responsibilities for operational activities relating to refugees", adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fortieth session, and invites the agencies of the United Nations system as well as all other relevant international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, to establish as soon as possible specific mechanisms of co-operation to assure an agreed division of responsibilities and arrangements for the financing of these activities, while preserving the specific mandate of the High Commissioner to provide protection;

13. Urges the member States of relevant bodies to ensure that their delegates to such bodies as the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Bank and regional development banks, and multilateral agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development are made aware of the refugee-related conclusions of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fortieth session and urges them to use their good offices to ensure the adoption of policies and the establishment of mechanisms, both institutional and financial, that will provide for co-ordinated and expeditious implementation of development initiatives related to refugees and returnees;

14. Notes with appreciation the ongoing work being done by the Office of 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, as well as in the Declaration and Concerted Plan of Action in favour of Central American Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons adopted by the International Conference on Central American Refugees, held at Guatemala City from 29 to 31 May 1989, urges the Office to continue that process wherever appropriate, in full co-operation with appropriate international agencies, and urges Governments to support these efforts, being fully aware of the catalytic role of the Office of the High Commissioner;

15. Recognizes the importance of the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees, held at Geneva on 13 and 14 June 1989, and the Comprehensive Plan

of Action adopted at that Conference, as well as the International Conference on Central American Refugees and the Concerted Plan of Action in favour of Central American Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons;

16. Urges all States to support the Office of the High Commissioner in its search for durable solutions to the problem of refugees and displaced persons of concern to the Office, primarily through voluntary repatriation or return, with assistance to returnees as appropriate, and, wherever appropriate, through integration into countries of asylum or through resettlement in third countries;

17. Expresses its 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;

18. Urges the international community, in accordance with the principle of international solidarity and in the spirit of burden-sharing, to assist the countries referred to in paragraph 17 of the present resolution in order to enable them to cope with the additional burden that the care for refugees and asylum-seekers represents;

19. Endorses the conclusions and decisions on assistance activities adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its fortieth session, which reflect the gravity of the financial crisis that the Office of the High Commissioner is facing at present;

20. Calls upon all Governments to contribute to the High Commissioner's programmes and, taking into account the need to achieve greater burden-sharing among donors, to assist the High Commissioner in securing additional income from traditional governmental sources, other Governments and the private sector in order to ensure that the needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons of concern to the Office of the High Commissioner are met.

General Assembly resolution 44/137

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/44/823) without vote, 27 November (meeting 56); 31-nation draft (A/C.3/44/L.67), orally revised; agenda item 110. Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 44-47, 49, 56; plenary 8 2.

Financial and administrative questions

The year 1989 was a particularly difficult year for UNHCR in financial terms. Total voluntary funds expenditure amounted to \$570.3 million,⁽⁵⁾ reflecting a marked increase compared to \$545.5 million in 1988. Of the 1989 total, \$386.6 million was spent on General Programmes and \$183.7 million went to Special Programmes and other accounts. Total income for 1989 amounted to \$533.6 million, compared to \$529.1 million in 1988.

Severe funding problems, started by a negative carry-over of some \$6.8 million from 1988 in General Programmes, were compounded by a reduction in secondary income while overall requirements continued to increase. The initial General Programmes target had been \$429 million. In addition, UNHCR had had to address

new situations in Ethiopia, Central America, South-East Asia and Hong Kong, with costs totalling some \$42.4 million. Drastic reassessment of priorities had brought about savings of some \$34 million. Due to limited levels of contributions, further reductions were made in programmes for all regions. In July, operational projects were cut and austerity measures imposed, for further savings of some \$35 million. Thus, the final revised General Programmes target was \$389.4 million.

In view of funding difficulties, the Executive Committee in October(1) authorized an exceptional carry-over of a maximum of \$40 million into 1990 in order to cover the anticipated shortfall for the year. It also decided to hold an extraordinary session in mid-1990 to address the content of the General Programmes and other assistance activities, with a view to examining the effective use of funds and administration of programmes and projects. The Committee endorsed the recommendation of the Board of Auditors(5) that UNHCR should intensify its efforts to extend fund-raising activities to non-traditional sources, including the private sector.

Contributions

Contributions in cash and in kind in 1989 totalled \$505.9 million, compared to \$482.7 million in 1988. Paid cash contributions amounted to \$407.6 million in 1989; outstanding cash pledges amounted to \$55.2 million. Contributions in kind amounted to \$10.7 million, with an additional \$32.4 million outstanding. Seventy-two Governments made contributions totalling \$459 million, while 30 non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations made contributions in cash and kind valued at some \$47 million. Donor support continued to be strong in absolute terms, with an increase of 5.6 per cent from the total contributions income figure of \$480 million in 1988.

In October, the Executive Committee of UNHCR, noting the shortfall in funds in relation to requirements, appealed to Governments that had already contributed to consider making additional contributions and requested those Governments that had not previously contributed to provide financial support.

Government pledges of \$166 million were announced at a meeting on 20 November of the Ad Hoc Committee of the General Assembly for the Announcement of Voluntary Contributions to the 1990 Programme of UNHCR.

1988 accounts

The audited financial statements on funds administered by UNHCR for the year ended 31 December 1988(5) showed total expenditures of \$545.5 million and total income of \$529.1 million. In October 1989, the Executive Committee took

note(1) of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).(6)

On 19 December, in resolution 44/183, 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.

Administrative and personnel issues

The Executive Committee of UNHCR in October approved the transfer in 1990 of up to \$800,000 from the General Programme Reserve to the Fund for Staff Housing and Basic Amenities, bringing the ceiling of the Fund from \$5.1 million to \$5.9 million.

The Committee urged the High Commissioner to reduce in 1990 the average grade level at headquarters and to raise the average grade level in the field, inter alia, through the reallocation of senior management posts from headquarters to the field.

REFERENCES

- (1)A/44/12/Add.1. (2)YUN 1951, p. 520. (3)YUN 1967, p. 769. (4)A/44/12. (5)A/44/5/Add.5. (6)A/AC.96/732.

Refugee assistance and protection

Assistance

During 1989,(1) UNHCR continued to cooperate with concerned Governments and the international community in efforts to meet the humanitarian needs of refugees throughout the world and to direct programmes towards durable solutions through either voluntary repatriation or local integration in the country of first asylum, or, where those were not possible, resettlement in another country.

More than \$255 million was obligated in 1989 to promote durable solutions, including \$71 million spent under Special Programmes to facilitate voluntary repatriation and the rehabilitation of returnees in their countries of origin. UNHCR continued to emphasize that States must create the necessary conditions in concerned countries of origin to make voluntary repatriation a viable option and, in that connection, advocated the establishment of tripartite commissions to promote and facilitate voluntary return whenever possible.

In Africa, the voluntary repatriation of more than 43,000 Namibians, mainly from Angola and Zambia, was successfully completed as called for in a 1978 Security Council resolution.(2) In Angola and Zaire, a two-way repatriation began in September 1989. In Latin America, some 9,000 persons were repatriated, mainly from Honduras

to El Salvador, and another 5,000 persons from Honduras and Costa Rica to Nicaragua. Also, some 1,800 Chileans were repatriated under UNHCR auspices. Where voluntary repatriation was unlikely and where the host Government was agreeable, UNHCR assisted refugees in settling within the host country. In China, Mexico, Somalia, the Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Zaire and Zambia, rural settlement projects enabled refugees to resume a more normal life and become self-sufficient. Education, vocational training, counselling services, housing facilities and social amenities were provided to refugees in urban and semi-urban areas. An upward trend in resettlement continued in 1989, with a total of 124,244 refugees resettled in third countries under UNHCR auspices. That increase was composed essentially of Indo-Chinese and contrasted with slightly fewer refugees resettled from most other areas, as compared with 1988. Only Africa showed an increase of some 26 per cent, with 4,563 persons resettled.

UNHCR also responded to requests for emergency assistance in 1989. Almost all of the \$10 million in the UNHCR Emergency Fund was needed for urgent intervention in Angola (\$1.05 million), Ethiopia (\$0.6 million), Malaysia (\$0.5 million), Mauritania (\$0.48 million), Pakistan (\$0.73 million), Senegal (\$2.7 million), Uganda (\$2.6 million) and Zaire (\$0.95 million). In October, UNHCR introduced a new Refugee Contingency Plan format. It was complemented in high-priority locations by the UNHCR emergency preparedness profile, containing infra-structural and institutional resource data to facilitate emergency preparedness planning. New emergency measures, including a central emergency stockpile, an emergency staffing roster, an emergency registration kit and a field-level emergency alert system, were being prepared.

UNHCR developed a training course to enable project planners and implementers to conduct a thorough analysis of the situation of women in any refugee population through examination of the gender-based division of socio-economic roles. In July, a Senior Co-ordinator for Refugee Women was appointed to co-ordinate and monitor the integration of women's issues into all UN activities.

Implementation of the UNHCR Guidelines on Refugee Children⁽³⁾ was delayed in several areas due to the continued financial difficulties of the Office. Refugee children continued to face serious problems with respect to protection and general welfare. To identify the most appropriate durable solutions for unaccompanied minors, UNHCR issued draft guidelines for interviewing unaccompanied refugee children and adolescents and for preparing social histories.

During 1989, some \$3.5 million was spent on public information activities to create international

awareness and understanding of the plight of refugees and the goals and activities of UNHCR. The Office continued to publish the magazine *Refugees* monthly in English, French and Spanish, bi-monthly in German and Japanese, quarterly in Italian and twice yearly in Greek. Some 200,000 copies were distributed free of charge in over 100 countries. With television networks, UNHCR co-produced programmes on refugee children in Ethiopia, victims of torture, Vietnamese "boat people", Afghan refugees in Pakistan and refugee women.

Refugee aid and development

UNHCR co-operated in 1989 with development agencies to implement projects reinforcing ongoing assistance or facilitating the phasing-out of such assistance. It worked with the World Bank in the "Second Income-generating Project for Refugee Areas in Pakistan" and agreed to a third phase in 1991-1992, pending the voluntary repatriation of refugees to Afghanistan. In Somalia, a joint World Bank/UNHCR/UNDP/European Economic Community mission made initial assessments for a "refugee-affected area project", to help refugees who might opt to remain in Somalia when the majority repatriated. UNHCR undertook project-preparation work with the International Fund for Agricultural Development in Mexico for Guatemalan refugees and in Ethiopia for returnees. Projects in the Sudan and Iran awaited the necessary funding.

In a report⁽⁴⁾ to the Executive Committee, the High Commissioner delineated the role and mandate of UNHCR with regard to other agencies working to resolve and alleviate refugee and returnee problems through developmental initiatives, and addressed the character and operational aspects of a proposed Project Planning Fund for Refugee Aid and Development and financial resources allocated to developing asylum countries. Observing that appropriately targeted development assistance could play an important role in reversing or at least attenuating the root causes leading to refugee outflows, he concluded that the concept of refugee aid and development could contribute to a more cost-effective and co-ordinated approach by UNHCR in its search for durable solutions. He proposed: strengthening co-ordination between national refugee administration authorities and planning and technical departments; advancing refugee-related concerns in policy bodies of international development organizations; and introducing multi-year programme planning into the UNHCR programme.

In October, the Executive Committee requested⁽⁵⁾ the High Commissioner to continue his catalytic role in the area of refugee aid and development and to give priority to and identify ap

propriate projects and initiatives with development agencies and Governments of host countries. Member States were asked to respond favourably to refugee aid and development appeals for projects to be undertaken by UNHCR in partnership with refugee-hosting Governments and development agencies.

Also in October, on a related subject on sharing responsibilities for operational activities relating to refugees, the Committee requested the High Commissioner to enter into consultations as soon as possible with UNDP and other development agencies of the UN system, so as to examine the condition and modalities of an appropriate implementing mechanism for development projects relating to refugees, returnees and the areas that received them.

Africa

The overall number of refugees in Africa increased during 1989. Refugees continued to flee from Mozambique into Malawi and from the Sudan into south-western Ethiopia. Events in Mauritania and Senegal in May, and in Liberia at the end of the year, necessitated new emergency operations in a part of Africa that had been relatively free of large-scale refugee movements. African Governments continued to offer generous asylum to refugees, but their increased burden brought greater difficulties in maintaining past liberal practices.

During the year, expenditures in Africa under UNHCR voluntary funds totalled \$257.8 million, of which \$176.7 million was obligated under General Programmes, the greater part for care and maintenance operations, and \$78 million under Special Programmes, the greater part for repatriation operations and the needs of newly arrived refugees.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 26 July, the Economic and Social Council, by decision 1989/176, noted the oral reports made on behalf of the Secretary-General by the High Commissioner on the situation of refugees in the Sudan and refugees and displaced persons in Djibouti and Malawi, assistance to refugees in Somalia, assistance to refugees and returnees in Ethiopia, and assistance to student refugees in southern Africa, as well as an oral report on behalf of the Secretary-General by a UNDP representative on assistance to refugees in Somalia.

Southern Africa

During 1989, assistance continued to more than 120,000 Mozambicans in Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. A two-way repatriation between Angola and Zaire began by air in September and

some 6,500 Angolans and 3,000 Zairians were repatriated. The number of South African refugees reported to have found asylum in southern Africa remained stable at some 35,000, over half of whom received UNHCR assistance.

In discharging responsibilities assigned to UNHCR in a 1978 Security Council resolution,(2) and within the framework of the activities of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group, a total of 43,387 Namibians were repatriated. Of that number, 35,553 returned from Angola, 3,841 from Zambia and 3,993 from 40 other countries (see PART FOUR, Chapter III).

Mozambican refugees in Malawi

In response to a 1988 General Assembly request,(6) the Secretary-General in July 1989 reported(7) on assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Malawi. There were 646,864 refugees in Malawi, mainly from Mozambique, as at 1 April 1989.

The continued influx of refugees over the years had resulted in the Government's policy to discourage refugee settlements among the local Malawian population. Although the Government regularly opened new sites for refugees to keep up with the rate of the arrivals, land shortages remained a serious problem. In addition, government services had to support both national and refugee populations, often to the detriment of the Malawian citizens, he said.

The original target—to provide one potable water point per 1,000 persons—had been achieved by the end of 1988; a new objective of one water point for every 750 was set. As for education, some 206 classrooms were completed, with 60,000 Mozambican children enrolled in primary education programmes following the Mozambican curriculum. Some 20 handicapped refugees received training in carpentry, sewing, shoemaking and tinsmithing. The World Food Programme (WFP) co-ordinated the supply of most basic food items, with UNHCR purchasing additional basic commodities and supplementary and therapeutic food.

Following the establishment of a tripartite commission in December 1988, the Governments of Malawi and Mozambique, together with UNHCR, held two meetings during 1989 on voluntary repatriation.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 44/149 without vote.

Assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Malawi

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 42/132 of 7 December 1987 and 43/148 of 8 December 1988 on assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Malawi,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General, Having examined that part of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees that deals with 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,

Recognizing 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 organizations of the United Nations system, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other 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;
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 for the development programmes now being implemented;

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 displaced persons and for programmes now being implemented;

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-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 44/149

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/44/648) without vote, 29 November (meeting 60); 27-nation draft (A/C.3/44/L.62); agenda item 12.

Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 48, 50-60; plenary 82.

Student refugees

In July, the Secretary-General reported(8) on assistance to student refugees in southern Africa. Assistance was provided by UNHCR to equip student refugees with skills to make them productive and self-reliant in their countries of asylum, and also to prepare them to assume leadership roles in various fields of competence upon their return to their countries of origin. Appropriations for 1989 amounted to \$489,000. Higher education for Namibian and South African refugees was funded by the UN Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa.

The Secretary-General reported that during the 1987/88 academic year, some 708 South African and Namibian students were assisted to study at the lower secondary school level, both in and outside the region.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 44/157 without vote.

Assistance to student refugees in southern Africa
The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 43/149 of 8 December 1988, 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 continue to be successfully implemented,

Noting with concern that the discriminatory and repressive policies that continue to be applied in South Africa 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 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 matter under review, to apprise the Economic and Social Council, at its second regular session of 1990, of the current status of the programmes and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 44/157

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/44/848) without vote, 29 November (meeting 60); 49-nation draft (A/C.3/44/L.78); agenda item 12.

Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 48, 50-60; plenary 82.

Follow-up to the 1988

Conference on refugees in southern Africa

In response to a 1988 General Assembly resolution,(9) the Secretary-General reported in September 1989 on follow-up to the 1988 International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa. He summarized activities of UN bodies and Member States in implementing the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action,(11) adopted at the Conference, which were designed to promote emergency preparedness, needs assessment and delivery of assistance, recovery and development, and mobilization of resources.

The Secretary-General also considered the nature of the problem of internally displaced persons and UN mechanisms to deal with that problem. He noted that since internally displaced persons remained within their own territory, they fell under the jurisdiction of their own national Governments, and that there was no formal mechanism within the UN system to deal specifically with that problem. Referring to the arrangements in place at the headquarters and at the field level, in the case of Africa, he concluded that it was not appropriate to establish a new mechanism but, rather, necessary to strengthen existing arrangements so as to enhance accessibility and effectiveness. He suggested that the UNDP resident representative/UN resident co-ordinator should play the key role whenever an emergency situation involving displaced persons evolved, including early warning.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, the General Assembly adopted resolution 44/136 without vote.

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

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 43/116 of 8 December 1988 on the 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 people of South Africa by the minority racist regime 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,

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,

Taking note with appreciation of the consultations undertaken by the Secretary-General to establish within the United Nations system a mechanism to ensure the implementation and overall co-ordination of relief programmes for internally displaced persons,

Noting with indignation that South Africa's policy of apartheid 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. Reaffirms the need to continue the implementation of the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa adopted by the Conference;

3. Expresses its gratitude to the countries and organizations that have given assistance to the countries in southern Africa to enable them to cope with the situation of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in their countries;

4. 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;

5. 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 withstand the effects of the acts of aggression and destabilization committed by the apartheid régime of South Africa;

6. Takes note with appreciation of the efforts made by the Secretary-General, the Office of 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, and encourages them to continue their efforts;

7. Endorses the recommendation of the Secretary-General aimed at assigning to the United Nations resident co-ordinators the function of co-ordinating assistance for internally displaced persons, in close co-operation with Governments, local representatives of donor countries and United Nations agencies in the field;

8. Once again urges all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and governmental and non-governmental organizations to undertake the measures as required of them under the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action;

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

General Assembly resolution 44/136

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/44/823) without vote, 27 November (meeting 56); draft by Lesotho, for African Group (A/C.3/44/L.63); agenda item 110 (a).

Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 44-47, 49, 56; plenary 82.

Other African countries

Chad

In response to a 1988 General Assembly request,(12) the Secretary-General reported(13) in October 1989 on emergency assistance to voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad. UNHCR's special programme, which was extended several times until 31 March 1989, provided assistance to returnees in the country. At the end of 1988, approximately 103,000 returnees had benefited from the programme, which included provision of food, blankets, household utensils, seeds and agricultural tools, as well as transportation costs. When the programme closed in March, \$2.25 million had been spent. Limited repatriation continued in 1989, particularly from Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Nigeria.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

The General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 44/153 on 15 December without vote.

Assistance to voluntary returnees and displaced persons in Chad

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 43/143 of 8 December 1988 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,

Deeply concerned about the persistence of the harmful effects of the natural calamities that are compounding the already precarious food and health situation in Chad,

Considering that the large number of voluntary returnees poses serious social and economic problems for the Government of Chad,

Considering also that the return of displaced persons in the northern region poses serious resettlement problems for the Government of Chad,

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

1. Endorses the appeals made by the Government of Chad for humanitarian 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. Notes with satisfaction the action taken by the various organizations of the United Nations system and the specialized agencies with a view to mobilizing humani-

tarian 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 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;

(b) 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-fifth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 44/153

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/44/846) without vote, 29 November (meeting 60); 36-nation draft (A/C.3/44/L.70); agenda item 12.

Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 48, 50-60; plenary 82.

Djibouti

In response to a 1988 General Assembly request,(14) the Secretary-General in July 1989 reported(15) on humanitarian assistance to refugees in Djibouti. With full co-operation from the Government, UNHCR had mobilized resources throughout 1988 and the first half of 1989, successfully determining a durable solution for the majority of some 13,000 refugees living in Djibouti-Ville and at the Dikhil camp. Following the departure of 6,455 Djibouti nationals in 1988 from the Dikhil camp, who settled elsewhere in the country, 5,671 Ethiopian refugees, by 14 February 1989, had voluntarily repatriated. As a result, the camp closed by the end of March. The remaining 1,500 refugees in Djibouti, all Ethiopians, received supplementary aid and counselling, educational and medical services from UNHCR. In addition, some 35,000 Somalis fled to Djibouti as a result of armed conflict in north-west Somalia.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 44/150 without vote.

Humanitarian assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Djibouti

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 42/126 of 7 December 1987 and 43/142 of 8 December 1988 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 recent inflow of over thirty-live thousand externally displaced persons, which has

added considerably to the burden already being carried by Djibouti in respect of refugees in the country,

Noting that Djibouti is considered one of the least developed countries and that the recent inflow of large numbers of externally displaced persons and the continued presence of refugees have severely strained the already inadequate social and economic infrastructure,

Noting also that the present situation has required the diversion of scarce resources from development to emergency relief and precautionary measures,

Appreciating the determined and sustained efforts made by the Government of Djibouti to cope with the growing needs of refugees and externally displaced persons,

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 and externally displaced persons in Djibouti,

Noting with satisfaction that over six thousand refugees have been settled and integrated in Djibouti, despite the physical, social and economic obstacles that the country faces,

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

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

5. Call upon all Member States, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, 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 refugees and externally 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-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 44/150

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/44/848) without vote, 29 November (meeting 60); 82-nation draft (A/C.3/44/L.64); agenda item 12.

Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 46, 50-60; plenary 82.

Ethiopia

In response to a 1988 General Assembly request,(16) the Secretary-General reported(17) in September on assistance to refugees and returnees in Ethiopia.

The influx of Sudanese refugees into south-western Ethiopia continued at an average of 4,400 persons per month. By the end of 1989, the total refugee population was 384,989. UNHCR spent \$26.8 million to assist them, 76 per cent of that amount for transport. All refugee shelters were sprayed twice a year with insecticide to control malaria outbreaks and adequate numbers of refuse disposal pits had been constructed. The morbidity and mortality rate dropped considerably as a result of strengthened primary care activities. Some 90 refugees were undergoing training as community health agents and traditional birth attendants.

Throughout 1989, a steady influx of Somali refugees into eastern Ethiopia continued. In August, the five camps hosting Somali refugees were occupied by 324,808 persons. In late 1989, a new camp was established for 10,000 new Somali refugees. Following completion of geological surveys, exploratory drilling was taking place in the Jerrer Valley for a proposed piped water supply system. WFP contributed 63,452 metric tons of food, worth \$16.5 million, for Somali refugees. UNHCR provided \$34.2 million to assist refugees, with \$6.2 million worth of food contributions to augment WFP food aid.

Repatriation of Ethiopian refugees from Somalia and Djibouti continued. Some 4,704 returnees from Somalia, reintegrated in southern Ethiopia during 1989, received cash grants, water, food and shelters. In May, a UNHCR technical mission launched studies aimed at increasing the receiving capacity in southern Ethiopia and to prepare for a possible large-scale repatriation of Ethiopian refugees from Somalia. By the end of February 1989, some 5,600 refugees had voluntarily repatriated from Djibouti.

UNHCR's total expenditures in Ethiopia during 1989 amounted to \$89.5 million.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 44/154 without vote.

Assistance to refugees and returnees in Ethiopia
The General Assembly,

Recalling all its resolutions, in particular resolution 43/144 of 8 December 1988, 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,
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 to mobilize 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 1990, of the implementation of the present resolution and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

General Assembly resolution 44/154

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/44/848) without vote, 29 November (meeting 60); 71-nation draft (A/C.3/44/L.71); agenda item 12.

Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 48, 50-60; plenary 82.

Somalia

In response to a 1988 General Assembly request,(18) the Secretary-General in August reported on assistance to refugees in Somalia.

In February/March, a UN inter-agency mission to Somalia assessed urgent humanitarian requirements and recommended that measures be taken to ensure both the safety of refugees and the civilian nature of those assisted. The mission was dispatched after Somalia requested assistance to cope with the country's emergency situation caused by armed conflict (see PART THREE, Chapter III).

Refugees hosted in Somalia, all of Ethiopian origin, numbered 600,000 in 1989. At high-level negotiations between UNHCR and Somalia (Geneva, 17-25 May; Mogadishu, 12-14 June), agreement was reached on general principles and implementation modalities of the refugee programme. It dealt with voluntary repatriation, spontaneous local integration and assistance to refugees. Later, a tripartite commission, consist-

ing of representatives of Ethiopia, Somalia and UNHCR, was established.

An organized voluntary repatriation programme for the Gedo region continued, with 4,700 repatriated in 1989. Total operational expenditures for voluntary repatriation in 1989 amounted to \$1.59 million. While UNHCR, WFP and Somalia agreed to continue food rations for a fixed period, during which civilians in the camps would be re-registered and assisted to relocate to selected sites outside conflict zones, relocation proved not to be feasible. In August, UNHCR and WFP suspended assistance in north-western Somalia due to security problems. In December, a joint mission to Somalia by UNHCR, the European Community, the World Bank and UNDP outlined projects for the refugee-affected areas.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 44/152 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, 42/127 of 7 December 1987 and 43/147 of 8 December 1988 on assistance to refugees in Somalia,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,

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,

Noting the circumstances that have made it necessary for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme to suspend temporarily their food and other humanitarian assistance programmes for refugees in the north-west districts of Somalia,

Gravely concerned about the resultant serious food shortages that have occurred in the refugee settlements in the north-west districts of Somalia,

Conscious of the fact that Somalia, as a least developed country, does not possess the economic or financial capacity to fill the gap created by the temporary suspension of humanitarian assistance programmes for refugees in the north-west districts of Somalia,

Aware of the fact that Somalia does not have the capacity to provide humanitarian assistance from its limited resources,

Noting with concern the deleterious effect of the presence of refugees 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 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme to resume their assistance programmes for the refugees in the north-west districts of Somalia as soon as possible;

5. Requests the Secretary-General, in close cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner, the World Food Programme and the donor community, to launch an interim assistance programme that would ensure that essential food and other humanitarian supplies continue to reach the refugee settlements in the north-west districts of Somalia until such time as a more permanent arrangement can be made;

6. Appeals to Member States, international organizations and voluntary agencies to give full support to the Secretary-General in the launching of the proposed interim assistance programme;

7. Also 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 relating to both the humanitarian and the developmental needs of refugees;

8. 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;

9. 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, and to protect and rehabilitate its damaged environment;

10. 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;

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 1990 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 the United Nations

Development Programme, to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session a report on the progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution.

General Assembly resolution 44/152

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/44/848) without vote, 29 November (meeting 60): 47-nation draft (A/C.3/44/L.66), orally revised: agenda item 12. Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 48, 50-60; plenary 82.

Sudan

In response to a 1988 General Assembly resolution,(21) the Secretary-General reported(22) in August on the situation of refugees in the Sudan.

Of an estimated 745,000 refugees in the country, UNHCR assisted 380,000, about 350,000 of whom were from Ethiopia. With the Ugandan returnee operation completed, and a reduced caseload of Chadian refugees in the west, UNHCR focused its efforts on the large Ethiopian refugee population in eastern Sudan. UNHCR worked with the World Bank to prepare an agricultural development project to benefit small farmers, including refugees in settlements. It also co-operated with UNDP in following up recommendations of a 1987 inter-agency mission to the Sudan.(23) Four technical missions, dispatched in March/April 1989, subsequently proposed 33 projects requiring a total of \$167 million in donor support in the areas of agriculture (\$21.6 million), heat and water (\$59.4 million), income generation (\$11.3 million) and education (\$74.4 million).

In March, a revolving fund for small-scale ventures, employment promotion and income generation for women, particularly refugees in the Sudan, with a total allocation of \$268,300 was approved. It was financed by funds from the 1984 Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa.(24)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 44/151 without vote.

Situation of refugees in the Sudan

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 43/141 of 8 December 1988 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 43/141 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, education and health 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 to host more than one million refugees,

who constitute approximately 7.5 per cent of the total population of the country,

Deeply concerned that the great majority of the refugees have settled of their own accord in various urban and rural communities throughout the country and are thus sharing with the indigenous population the already meagre resources and services,

Expressing grave concern at the devastating and far-reaching effects of the successive calamities, ranging from the drought in 1984 to the torrential rains and floods and locust infestations in 1988, 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 persons displaced by successive calamities and civil strife in the south,

Recognizing the efforts undertaken by the Government of the Sudan to initiate a wide-ranging rehabilitation programme to redress the 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;
2. Takes note also of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and, in particular, 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 on the security and stability of the country and the overall negative impact on its basic infrastructure and socio-economic development;
5. Also expresses grave concern at the shrinking resources available for refugee programmes in the Sudan and the serious consequences of this situation on the country's ability to continue to host and assist 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 particular those prepared by the United Nations Development Programme, in the 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 specialised agencies in

order to consolidate and ensure the continuation of essential services to the refugees in their settlements and to explore ways and means to extend assistance to refugees who have settled of their own accord elsewhere;

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

General Assembly resolution 44/151

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

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Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 48, 50-60; plenary 82.

Asia and Oceania

In China, UNHCR implemented 42 projects related to water supply, crop production, forestry, education, animal husbandry, health and income generation to benefit the younger generation among some 280,000 Vietnamese refugees. As a result, some 6,000 jobs were created, some 400 children and youths were admitted to primary schools and a vocational training centre, and some 700 families were provided with housing and drinkable water. UNHCR's financial contribution to these projects totalled \$4 million.

As lead agency for repatriation of some 300,000 Kampuchean refugees and displaced persons, UNHCR, following a debate on repatriation at the International Conference on Cambodia (Paris, July/August), prepared draft proposals for a repatriation plan (see PART TWO, Chapter III).

The organized repatriation of Sri Lankan Tamils from south India, which began in 1987, ended in April 1989. At the beginning of 1989, there were 9,549 registered refugees in India comprising some 8,322 Afghans and 1,010 Iranians. Assistance was provided in the form of care and maintenance, including education and vocational training. A total of 1,231 refugees departed for resettlement in third countries; 33 Afghans and 19 Iranians voluntarily repatriated.

During 1989, UNHCR expenditures in the region stood at \$67.5 million under General Programmes and \$41.4 million under Special Programmes.

Indo-China

The rising spiral of arrivals of Vietnamese asylum-seekers continued during 1989, bringing the overall number of Indo-Chinese asylum-seekers in the UNHCR-assisted camps to more than 195,000. Of those, approximately 100,000 persons were in Thailand and 56,000 in Hong Kong, with the rest spread throughout the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Japan. The number of registered asylum-seekers rose by 33 per cent compared to the pre-

vious year. On the other hand, close to 45,000 refugees left various countries of first asylum for resettlement in third countries, and over 43,000 persons left Viet Nam under the Orderly Departure Programme.

Regarding Vietnamese and Lao asylum-seekers, the Comprehensive Plan of Action adopted at the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees (see below) presented measures to rechannel departures through legal means, while limiting resettlement to recognized refugees. In 1989, more than 900 Vietnamese and close to 2,000 Lao asylum-seekers returned home voluntarily. However, no consensus could be reached on the problem of return, other than voluntary, to Viet Nam of those persons determined not to be bona fide refugees. In December, the Hong Kong authorities deported some 51 screened-out Vietnamese. Another problem was partial denial of asylum to "boat people", practised in the form of redirecting arriving boats to neighbouring countries.

International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees

The International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees was held in Geneva on 13 and 14 June 1989 to deal with problems posed by the continuing presence in South-East Asia of large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers from Viet Nam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic and by their continuing exodus into the region. As requested by the General Assembly,(25) which in 1988 had welcomed the call by ASEAN for the convening of the Conference, the Secretary-General reported(26) on the Conference in September.

The Conference adopted both a Declaration and a Comprehensive Plan of Action, which set out measures regarding organized clandestine departures, regular departure programmes, refugee status, and implementation and review procedures. The Conference established a Steering Committee consisting of 15 "core group" countries (Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam) to review the Plan's implementation.

In October, the UNHCR Executive Committee reaffirmed(5) that the Comprehensive Plan of Action was an important and sound basis for a balanced, humanitarian and durable solution to the problem of Indo-Chinese refugees.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 26 July, the Economic and Social Council, by decision 1989/176, noted an oral report made on behalf of the Secretary-General by the High Commissioner on the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 44/138 without vote.

International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 43/119 of 8 December 1988,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees, held at Geneva on 13 and 14 June 1989, and the Declaration and Comprehensive Plan of Action adopted by the Conference,

Noting with satisfaction the active participation of Member States, specialized agencies and regional, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations in the Conference,

Taking note of the decision on the Conference adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at its fortieth session,

1. Welcomes the successful conclusion of the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees, which was convened by the Secretary-General, under the presidency of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malaysia;

2. Takes note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the Conference;

3. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for convening the Conference and to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for his valuable assistance and contribution in organizing the Conference;

4. Welcomes the adoption by the Conference of the Declaration and Comprehensive Plan of Action and affirms its belief that the Plan of Action is an important and sound basis for a balanced, humanitarian and durable solution to the problems addressed by the Conference;

5. Stresses that the measures stipulated in the Comprehensive Plan of Action are interrelated and mutually reinforcing and should be implemented in their totality by all States concerned, within the context of national laws and regulations and of international standards;

6. Notes the progress on the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan of Action at the various bilateral and multilateral meetings among the parties concerned, especially those held within the context of the Steering Committee established by the Conference;

7. Calls upon all States concerned and the relevant specialized agencies and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to undertake the various measures required of them within the framework and letter of the Comprehensive Plan of Action;

8. Appeals to all States and regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to provide resources for the General and Special Programmes of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to enable it to carry out the tasks prescribed in the Comprehensive Plan of Action;

9. Stresses that the solution of the problem of those seeking refuge in the South-East Asian region could contribute positively towards a climate of peace, harmony and good-neighbourliness among States in the region;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to monitor closely the progress towards implementation of the Comprehensive Plan of Action and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

General Assembly resolution 44/138

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

Approved by Third Committee (A/44/823) without vote, 27 November (meeting 56); 17-nation draft (A/C.3/44/L.68/Rev.1): agenda item 110 (c). Meeting numbers. GA 44th session: 3rd Committee 44-47, 49, 56; plenary 82.

Europe and North America

In Western Europe, the number of asylum-seekers from outside the region continued to increase in 1989, reaching approximately 320,000, as compared to 290,000 in 1988. The influx created a large backlog of undecided applications, leading to a serious strain on reception facilities and increased expenditures on public relief and assistance. Consultations on multilateral solutions to the new asylum situation were held by 14 European and North American Governments and UNHCR.

In December, the High Commissioner appealed to the international community for funds for a shelter project to improve the living conditions of some 13,500 Iraqi nationals in south-east Turkey. The Government of Turkey assisted 30,000 Iraqi nationals living in the country.

During the year, 24,623 refugees were resettled in Canada and 94,000 in the United States. Also, approximately 22,000 persons requested asylum in Canada and 102,000 persons in the United States.

Following the Hungarian Government's accession to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees⁽²⁷⁾ and its 1967 Protocol,⁽²⁸⁾ UNHCR opened an office in Budapest. UNHCR elaborated a programme to help the Government to establish adequate infrastructure for asylum-seekers in Hungary; an appeal for \$5.2 million was launched for that purpose.

In 1989, UNHCR's voluntary funds expenditures in Europe and North America totalled \$24.1 million, of which \$18.8 million was obligated under General Programmes and \$5.3 million under Special Programmes.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The estimated refugee population in southern Latin America at the end of 1989 was 22,700, of whom 6,437 were receiving UNHCR assistance. In Mexico, where 41,500 Guatemalan refugees lived, UNHCR commenced a multi-year plan aimed at achieving self-sufficiency in the states of Campeche and Quintana Roo and elaborated a project for the promotion of income-generating activities in Chiapas.

UNHCR opened sub-offices in French Guiana and Suriname in 1989. Efforts to facilitate the

voluntary repatriation of Surinamese refugees in French Guiana were strengthened within the framework of a tripartite commission composed of representatives of France, Suriname and UNHCR. The voluntary repatriation of Chilean refugees increased considerably. Some 1,720 refugees returned from Argentina, Cuba and Eastern European countries. From the Dominican Republic, 492 Haitian refugees repatriated.

During 1989, UNHCR voluntary funds expenditures in Latin America and the Caribbean totalled \$39.6 million, of which \$32.8 million was under General Programmes and \$6.8 million under Special Programmes.

Central America

By the end of 1989, about 122,000 Central American refugees were receiving UNHCR assistance. There was a considerable increase in the number of returnees, with significant movements taking place from Honduras. UNHCR continued to assess the welfare of returnees in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

At a summit meeting (Tela, Honduras, 5-7 August),⁽²⁹⁾ the five Central American Presidents (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua) adopted a joint plan for the voluntary demobilization, repatriation or relocation of the members of the Nicaraguan resistance and their families. Following repatriation, beneficiaries would be integrated into the development process in their country of origin, according to the plan. The Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the Organization of American States, as requested by the five Presidents, set up an International Support and Verification Commission to implement the plan. The number of beneficiaries of the plan was estimated at 90,000 persons, with financial requirements of \$48 million. (See also PART TWO, Chapter II.)

Conference on Central American Refugees

The International Conference on Central American Refugees was held in Guatemala City from 29 to 31 May.⁽³⁰⁾ It adopted a Concerted Plan of Action in favour of Central American Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons, which described an overall strategy and follow-up and promotion mechanisms. Objectives of the Plan of Action included identification of durable solutions, within the possibilities of the affected countries, including voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement in third countries. The Plan also set out a three-year regional programme consisting of 32 projects, valued at \$380 million.

In October, the Executive Committee of UNHCR, welcoming the commitments given by the affected countries, urged⁽⁵⁾ the international community to ensure that the support expressed

during the Conference became concrete commitments of collaboration with the affected countries for implementation of the Plan.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 26 July, the Economic and Social Council, by decision 1989/176, noted the oral report made on behalf of the Secretary-General by the UN High Commissioner on the International Conference on Central American Refugees.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 15 December, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee, adopted resolution 44/139 without vote.

International Conference on Central American Refugees

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 42/1 of 7 October 1987, 42/110 of 7 December 1987, 42/204 of 11 December 1987, 42/231 of 12 May 1988 and 43/118 of 8 December 1988,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,

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

Welcoming the Declaration and Concerted Plan of Action in favour of Central American Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons adopted by the International Conference on Central American Refugees, held at Guatemala City from 29 to 31 May 1989,

Bearing mind that a concerted effort in favour of lasting solutions to the problems of refugees, returnees and displaced persons requires the support, co-operation and co-ordination of the affected and interested Governments and of the various international organizations involved, in particular the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Development Programme,

Noting the establishment of the machinery for follow-up and co-ordination at the national level in pursuance of the Concerted Plan of Action and the establishment of priority and design of projects within the framework of the strategies defined by each Government,

Noting with interest that meetings for co-ordination, management and execution have begun with the co-operating countries and the non-governmental organizations interested in participating in the programmes and projects to assist the returnees, displaced persons and refugees in Central America,

Aware of the need to deal with the serious problem of the refugees in Central America who have found asylum in a number of Central American countries, including Belize, and Mexico, and wishing to contribute to the search for lasting solutions that would benefit the countries and communities of asylum and origin,

Recognizing the need to incorporate in the plans of assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons measures to restore the ecological balance and the rational utilization of the natural resources in the areas of the countries affected,

Bearing in mind that, as stated in point 8 of the agreement on "Procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace in Central America", 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 multi-lateral processes,

Reiterating its determination to continue its efforts and contributions in the context of the peace agreements, and welcoming the agreements adopted at Tela, Honduras, on 7 August 1989, which include aspects of voluntary repatriation and relocation,

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

Once again reiterating the paramount importance of humanitarian and apolitical considerations, both in dealing with and in solving the problems 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 parties,

Recognizing the work carried out by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and by the United Nations Development Programme with the Governments of the affected countries in the preparation and convening of the Conference and in the meetings of the Follow-Up Committee of the International Conference on Central American Refugees,

Aware of the reductions in the budget of the Office of the High Commissioner in the region, which seriously affect the beneficiary populations and the policies for a solution put forward in the context of the agreement concluded at the Esquipulas II summit meeting and at the International Conference on Central American Refugees,

Taking into consideration the priority assigned to that section of the emergency programme of the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America that is intended to promote activities for solving the problem of refugees, displaced persons and returnees,

Recognizing that the search for solutions goes beyond emergency activities and is linked to aspects of the development of the region and assistance for the displaced populations in the countries of origin and asylum that are directly affected by the massive presence of refugees,

Recognizing also that the tripartite commissions, composed of representatives of the countries 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,

Recognizing further that solutions to the problems of refugees, returnees and displaced persons form an integral part of the efforts for peace, democratization and development being made in the region by each Government,

1. Expresses its profound satisfaction with the success of the International Conference on Central American Refugees, as well as with the adoption by acclamation of the Declaration and Concerted Plan of Action in favour of Central American Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons;

2. Welcomes the guidelines, goals and objectives of the Concerted Plan of Action as a promising initial basis for future activities, and therefore reaffirms its commitment to contribute to the achievement of a firm and lasting peace in Central America;

3. Welcomes the establishment of the machinery for follow-up and co-ordination at the national level, in pur-

suance of the Concerted Plan of Action, and the establishment of priority and design of projects within the framework of the strategies defined by each Government;

4. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to support, in close collaboration with the Governments of the affected countries and the Follow-Up Committee of the International Conference on Central American Refugees, together with the United Nations Development Programme and the organs, specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, the holding of meetings for follow-up to the Concerted Plan of Action, so that they may be held at the earliest possible time;

5. Notes with interest that the Follow-Up Committee will hold its first meeting during the first week of March 1990, and urges the co-operating countries to respond positively to the assistance projects submitted by the Central American countries, including Belize, and Mexico;

6. Urges Member States and 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 continue to provide and to increase their assistance and support to the affected countries in order to implement and follow up the guidelines, goals and objectives of the Concerted Plan of Action;

7. Calls upon the co-operating countries and the relevant agencies of the United Nations system to assist in restoring the ecological balance of the areas in the countries of asylum affected by the massive presence of refugees, in order to provide the populations of those areas with the conditions conducive to development;

8. Appeals to the international community to ensure that the co-operation extended in the solution of the problem of refugees takes into account both the sacrifice borne by the countries of asylum in receiving massive flows of refugees and the effort exerted by the countries of origin to create the conditions that would facilitate the return of their nationals;

9. Also 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;

10. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Development Programme for the assistance rendered for the holding of the Conference;

11. Expresses its concern at the reductions in the budget of the Office of the High Commissioner in the region, which seriously affect the beneficiary populations and the policies for a solution formulated at the Conference and by each Government, and urges that the budget previously allocated be restored;

12. Expresses its gratitude to the people and Government of Guatemala for the hospitality extended for the holding of the Conference;

13. Requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the High Commissioner, to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1990 and to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

General Assembly resolution 44/139

15 December 1989 Meeting 82 Adopted without vote

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South-West Asia,
North Africa and the Middle East

An estimated 100,000 Afghan refugees were reported to have returned, mainly from Pakistan, to their places of origin in the south-western and northern provinces of Afghanistan, but continued fighting in 1989 in certain provinces created new waves of refugees to Pakistan. UNHCR continued to fund cross-border projects implemented by non-governmental organizations in areas of Afghanistan from which high numbers of refugees originated. Of total 1989 disbursements of some \$24.8 million, \$14.2 million was for activities inside Afghanistan, and the remainder was disbursed for activities in Iran and Pakistan.

In Iran, there were more than 2 million Afghan refugees and 500,000 others, mainly Iraqis. UNHCR's assistance to the Afghan refugees was aimed at extending the rural health delivery infrastructure, water and sanitation systems, access roads, educational facilities and some income-generating activities. About 90,000 Iraqi refugees in Iran received assistance in the areas of health, sanitation and housing facilities.

The UNHCR regional office for the Middle East in Bahrain continued to assist refugees and asylum-seekers in Middle Eastern countries, including cases of refoulement, deportation and expulsion. Due to the prevailing security situation in Lebanon, UNHCR was not able to maintain an international presence in Beirut.

In Algeria, of an estimated 165,000 Sahrawi refugees living in camps around Tindouf, 80,000 persons received assistance from UNHCR, including food, education, health and water. Most were women, children, handicapped and elderly persons. Beginning in April, a group of about 22,000 Senegalese refugees found refuge in Mauritania. A multi-sectoral emergency programme was implemented.

During 1989, UNHCR voluntary funds expenditure in South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East totalled \$104.2 million, of which \$60.2 million was under General Programmes and \$44 million under Special Programmes.

Refugee protection

Protection involved using law and principles to secure the rights, security and welfare of refugees. During 1989, continued and improved consultations took place between States and UNHCR on

region-specific concerns. Governments increasingly addressed refugee problems in a comprehensive manner with a view to developing broad strategies to respond positively to those problems.

In October, the UNHCR Executive Committee expressed(5) deep concern that refugee protection was seriously jeopardized in some States by expulsion and refoulement of refugees or by measures that did not recognize the special situation of refugees. It called on all States to refrain from taking such measures. The Committee called on the High Commissioner to convene an open-ended working group to examine protection and solutions in a comprehensive manner.

Refugee law

International instruments

As at 31 December 1989, the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees(27) had been ratified or acceded to by 102 States as a result of the 1989 accession by Hungary. The 1967 Protocol to the Convention(28) had 103 States parties as a result of the 1989 accession by Hungary and Mozambique.(31) While the majority were parties to both instruments, some were parties to only one; the number of parties to one or both instruments, therefore, totalled 103.

Other intergovernmental legal instruments benefiting refugees included the 1957 Agreement relating to Refugee Seamen and its 1973 Protocol, the 1959 European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees, the 1969 Convention governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, the 1969 American Convention on Human Rights, Pact of San José, Costa Rica, and the 1980 European Agreement on Transfer of Responsibility for Refugees.

As at 31 December 1989, there were 36 States parties to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons(32) (Madagascar had acceded to the Convention in 1962, but denounced it in 1965) and 15 States parties to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.(33)

In many countries, the High Commissioner reported that implementation of these instruments was satisfactory, particularly where specific legislative and/or administrative measures to implement them had been adopted, and where they were known and understood by the concerned officials. There were even countries where such laws and measures went beyond the minimum standards of the instruments. At the same time, however, a number of obstacles of a socio-economic, legal, policy or practical nature impeded the full and proper implementation of the instruments in the territory of many contracting States.

In October, the UNHCR Executive Committee requested(5) the UN High Commissioner to pre-

pare a detailed report on implementation of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol.

Promotion and dissemination of refugee law

In 1989, despite severely limited financial resources, UNHCR pursued its traditional promotion and dissemination activities with respect to refugee law and protection principles. The Centre for Documentation on Refugees continued to strengthen and systematize information and documentation policies. It published the quarterly *Refugee Abstracts* and the *International Journal of Refugee Law*, and helped develop the publication by the International Refugee Documentation Network of an international thesaurus on refugee terminology.

UNHCR continued to advise and train government officials and others on how to determine refugee status. It also assisted all receiving countries in South-East Asia in establishing procedures for determination of refugee status.

In October, the Executive Committee of UNHCR urged(5) the High Commissioner to ensure that protection training courses continued on a significant scale.

Rights of refugees

The granting of admission and asylum and protection from refoulement were indispensable components of the international system for the protection of refugees, according to UNHCR. Many States continued to respect their commitments in that field and the vast majority of the world's refugees were admitted into the territory of States, granted at least temporary asylum and protected from refoulement. However, in a number of instances, admission and asylum were denied on various grounds. These included the refusal of States to examine asylum requests based on a strict application of the notion of "country of first asylum", even where the persons concerned were not permitted to re-enter or remain in the country from which they had last come or where it was far from clear that they would receive humane treatment.

In October, the Executive Committee of UNHCR adopted(5) a conclusion on the problem of refugees and asylum-seekers who moved in an irregular manner from a country in which they had already found protection. The Committee recognized that return to a country in which individuals had already found protection might take place only if the persons concerned were protected there against refoulement and permitted to remain there and be treated in accordance with recognized basic human standards until a durable solution was found. It also drew attention to problems posed by false documents or lack of documents, which were often compounded by the application by certain States of immigration measures restricting the number of persons who could seek admission and

asylum. Another growing practice was the restrictive interpretation of various elements of the refugee definition contained in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, coupled with the demand that applicants for refugee status satisfy an excessively stringent burden and standard of proof. In addition, a few countries limited or discontinued their previous practice of granting asylum to persons who were compelled to leave their countries of origin as a result of generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances that seriously disturbed public order.

Other violations of rights of refugees reported during the year included refoulement, unjustified detention of refugees, military and armed attacks on refugee camps and settlements, and forced recruitment of refugees into armed forces.

Protection of refugee women and children

Although there had been a gradual increase in recent years in the general awareness of the protection problems of refugee women, serious violations of their safety and well-being continued, according to UNHCR. An evaluation of the impact of the UNHCR guidelines on refugee women indicated that, while identification of the problems of refugee women and formulation of necessary remedies had improved considerably, the guidelines had to be expanded if the objectives for which they were issued were to be fully met. Refugee children continued to be exposed to physical violence, detention, sexual abuse and forced recruitment into armed forces. The number of unaccompanied minors also increased.

In October, the UNHCR Executive Committee called(5) for the reinforcement of preventive measures and for States and concerned agencies to strengthen their support of the protection activities of UNHCR relating to refugee women by providing resettlement places for women at risk. It requested the UN High Commissioner to prepare a revised and expanded version of the internal guidelines relating to the international protection of refugee women.

Also in October, the Committee, noting the increasing incidence of nutritional problems among refugee children dependent on food aid, called on UNHCR to initiate formal discussions with relevant UN bodies, donors and other humanitarian organizations to develop strategies for alleviating the problems. It requested the High Commissioner to continue to give special attention to the needs of unaccompanied minors.

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