



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 53rd MEETING

Chairman: Mrs. MASMOUDI (Tunisia)

later: Mr. O'DONOVAN (Ireland)

CONTENTS

GENDA ITEM 83: OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER (continued)

(b) INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES IN AFRICA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

GENDA ITEM 88: UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE (continued)

(a) WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

(b) VOLUNTARY FUND FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

(c) DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AND AGAINST COLONIALISM, APARTHEID, ALL FORMS OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, FOREIGN AGGRESSION, OCCUPATION AND ALL FORMS OF FOREIGN DOMINATION: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

GENDA ITEM 89: STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

\* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room A-3550, 66 United Nations Plaza (Alcoa Building), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 83: OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES  
(continued) (A/36/3/Add.22, A/36/61, A/36/66, A/36/77, A/36/82, A/36/111, A/36/113  
and Corr.1, A/36/118, A/36/152, A/36/203, A/36/457, A/36/463, A/36/640, A/36/552  
and A/36/672)

- (a) REPORT OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER (continued) (A/36/12 and Add.1)
- (b) INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES IN AFRICA: REPORT OF  
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/36/316)

1. Mr. CHUGHTAI (Pakistan) said that as a country now facing the extraordinary responsibility of looking after 2.5 million refugees from neighbouring Afghanistan, Pakistan was well placed to evaluate the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Government of Pakistan was profoundly grateful for the invaluable contribution of UNHCR towards improving the condition of refugees all over the world, especially Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Although the statement made by the High Commissioner at the 51st meeting had included some encouraging information concerning some improvement in the protection of refugees and some cases of voluntary return or resettlement, his delegation continued to be deeply concerned over the unabated flow of refugees in many areas of the world. It was alarmed at the violation of the safety of refugee camps and military attacks against those camps. In view of the magnitude and complexity of the task before UNHCR, it was essential that the High Commissioner should continue to receive the fullest support of the international community.

2. Those nations that had refused to assist refugees by removing the root causes of the problem or through international humanitarian efforts had forfeited their right to talk of human rights and of their commitment to the United Nations Charter or other human values. The international community should urgently look into the root causes of the massive flow of refugees. At the same time, the entirely humanitarian activities of UNHCR must be unreservedly supported in order to enable it to continue its admirable task of bringing succour to refugees all over the world. The situation in Afghanistan was a classic case of man-made disaster. Following the military intervention there in December 1979, the flow of refugees had become an inundation; nearly one fifth of the entire population of Afghanistan had been compelled to flee from their homes. That was a disturbing picture of human suffering which could end only when the military intervention ceased. In spite of its serious economic problems, Pakistan had given asylum to the refugees from Afghanistan out of purely humanitarian considerations and because of Pakistan's historical, cultural and religious ties with them. Pakistan was deeply grateful to those countries which had responded positively and continued to assist it in meeting the gigantic problem of caring for nearly 2.5 million Afghan refugees. It was also grateful to the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their co-operation and assistance. Notwithstanding those generous contributions, the bulk of the financial responsibility for the upkeep of the refugees continued to be borne by Pakistan. That placed a tremendous burden on Pakistan's limited resources and entailed sacrifices for its people. His delegation hoped to see the creation of conditions in Afghanistan which would enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homes in safety, peace and honour.

(Mr. Chughtai, Pakistan)

3. Developments with regard to the flow of refugees elsewhere in the world, especially in South-East Asia, Africa and the Americas, were also of continuing concern to his delegation. The situation in Africa, especially that of the refugees in the Horn and in southern Africa, remained critical. His delegation was, of course, encouraged by the results of the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa and the fact that the High Commissioner had reported cases of voluntary return and resettlement in countries of first asylum and in third countries. The positive results achieved at the Conference must be maintained, and his delegation pledged its total support for any international, regional or national effort to end the sufferings of the refugees. In Indo-China, there was yet another example of man-made disaster: military intervention in Kampuchea had resulted in a massive flow of refugees into neighbouring countries. The situation of refugees in Africa, the Americas, Indo-China and Asia demanded a great effort by the international community to supplement the efforts of UNHCR in extending immediate relief and seeking a long-term solution to alleviate the sufferings and hardships of refugees. That meant that the international community must continue to demonstrate its support for and co-operation with UNHCR and its preparedness to provide it with adequate financial and material resources.

4. Miss ROBINSON (Canada) said that in recent years, the extraordinary increase in the size and complexity of massive outflows of refugees had increased immeasurably the responsibilities of UNHCR and had taxed the financial resources provided to it. The report of the High Commissioner (A/36/12 and Add.1) was honest and forthright in depicting a global refugee phenomenon characterized by a seemingly relentless increase in the numbers of individuals who felt obliged to leave their homelands. While the High Commissioner's mandate was strictly humanitarian and must remain so, it was nevertheless clear that the response of the international community to the modern tragedy of the massive refugee exodus could not be limited to the humanitarian concern but must encompass all aspects of the problem, including root causes. To that end, her delegation had lent its support to refugee initiatives in the Special Political Committee and in the Commission on Human Rights and had promoted a study on the question of the link between human rights violations and the massive exodus of refugees.

5. It was heartening to learn that during the period under review there had been no recurrences of the large-scale measures of refoulement of refugees which had caused so much concern in the recent past. There had also been several new accessions to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol to that Convention. Those were among the most important legal instruments the United Nations had elaborated in the humanitarian sphere, and her delegation hoped that many more Member States would become Parties to both the Convention and the Protocol.

6. With regard to the question of voluntary repatriation, all must applaud the encouraging news that during the period under review, more than a quarter of a million Zimbabwean refugees had been successfully repatriated to their homeland. Smaller but equally important and successful repatriation programmes had taken place in South-East Asia during the reporting period. However difficult it was to achieve voluntary repatriation, it was the best solution to any refugee situation and, as such, a very important part of the High Commissioner's mandate. Her delegation also wished to commend UNHCR for the pivotal role it had played in the successful planning, organization and execution of the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa.

/...

(Miss Robinson, Canada)

7. While it was encouraging that the international community had responded generously to the greatly expanded financial requirements of UNHCR, the fact remained that in 1981 there was a significant deficit in the General and Special Programmes. It was essential that an expanded effort by all nations, international agencies and non-governmental organizations should be extended even further, through greater and fairer burden-sharing, if the goals of immediate assistance to refugees and durable solutions to their problems were to be effectively pursued. Her delegation particularly welcomed the establishment on a permanent basis of a sub-committee on finance and administration within UNHCR, as well as the intended review of managerial and operational methods to be undertaken by the Administrative Management Service of the United Nations.

8. While Canada's central role in alleviating the plight of refugees had been that of a resettlement nation, its financial contributions to various programmes of UNHCR had been considerable. In addition, Canada had responded generously to the special requirements of UNHCR and made further contributions to its programmes in Africa, Pakistan, Central America and South-East Asia.

9. Mr. BROWERS (Netherlands) said that as one of the 40 members of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, the Netherlands recalled that Committee's thirty-second session with satisfaction as a gathering of fruitful co-operation and constructive decision-making. His delegation hoped that the current session of the General Assembly would carry those positive developments even further.

10. The Government of the Netherlands regretted that the refugee problem was becoming an increasingly heavy burden, affecting both international political relations and international development co-operation, to which his country attached great value. In many developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, a vicious cycle of political unrest and socio-economic weakness persisted and threatened to disrupt even further the national stability and development of the countries concerned.

11. The Netherlands remained committed to the purely humanitarian and non-political mandate of the High Commissioner, which should be kept separate from United Nations action relating to the root causes of refugee situations. It should be remembered, however, that the High Commissioner's work would be to no purpose unless there emerged a political setting in which respect for human rights and national independence and self-determination was cherished and international economic co-operation and peace was earnestly pursued. In view of the mass exoduses of today, local integration in the country of asylum and resettlement in faraway countries, socially and environmentally completely unlike the countries of origin, might in some situations no longer constitute humane solutions. There was therefore a need for conditions favouring voluntary repatriation. In that connexion, he paid tribute to those Governments in Africa that had recently implemented programmes of repatriation and resettlement of returnees, in close co-operation with UNHCR.

12. Unfortunately, most refugee situations tended to develop into long-term problems in the countries of asylum. Host countries already faced extreme social and economic difficulties, and the presence of refugees constituted an additional burden on their

(Mr. Browsers, Netherlands)

economies. Solutions had to be sought within the context of over-all development, and, the Netherlands had, on many occasions, underlined the need for early integration of material assistance to refugees into the ongoing structural development programmes of their host countries. His Government was ready to accept its full share in such an effort, through multilateral and bilateral channels.

13. His delegation welcomed the request by the High Commissioner to the Administrative Management Service to review the organizational structure and management procedures of UNHCR. The AMS review and the High Commissioner's own assessment of his role might provide a sound basis for reappraising the objectives and functioning of UNHCR.

14. With regard to international legal protection for refugees, his delegation was concerned about the numerous legal problems which were due mainly to the present large-scale flow of refugees. It was indeed fortunate that the number of States Parties to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol was steadily increasing. His delegation strongly supported the High Commissioner in his efforts to ensure the broadest possible adherence to those legal instruments and appealed to the Governments concerned to co-operate fully with the High Commissioner to that end.

15. Incidents involving violations of basic principles, such as forcible return, interdiction of escape routes of refugees, and internment of refugees and displaced persons, continued to be reported. His delegation deplored and condemned those practices as unacceptable from both the legal and the humanitarian point of view. Piracy at sea, bombardments of refugee camps, and abductions and disappearances of refugees still occurred in some parts of the world. Those cases were brutal and criminal violations of the physical safety of refugees and asylum-seekers. Refugee law should be applied everywhere and in all cases.

16. Mr. MATHEWSON (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the 10 member States of the European Community, said that the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa had marked a recognition by a large part of the international community of the special consideration which refugees in Africa deserved. As the High Commissioner had made clear in his report, the refugee problem in Africa had reached dire proportions. Happily, the Conference had been a success and the Ten applauded the joint efforts of the Organization of African Unity and UNHCR in organizing it. The figure of \$560 million pledged at the Conference should provide a base from which to meet longer-term needs. The pledge of \$157 million by the European Community and its member States reflected the importance which those States attached to refugee problems in Africa. They regretted that one group of countries, conspicuous by their absence from the Geneva Conference, apparently did not share their view of those problems.

17. It was essential that the momentum created by the Conference should be maintained; the Ten were pleased to note that the sponsors of the Conference were continuing their co-operation with a view to arranging for the necessary follow-up and that that co-operation involved all relevant agencies, including the non-governmental organizations. Such efforts should ensure that the funds pledged would be deployed in an efficient and responsible manner through existing multilateral and national channels.

/...

18. Miss NAGA (Egypt) said that global refugee problems presented the international community with an ever-increasing challenge in terms of the number of refugees, the severity of their needs and the variety of causes which created such situations. Furthermore, refugee problems affected all parts of the world. Since there were political factors involved, the international community must also deal with such problems from a political standpoint.

19. According to the report of the High Commissioner, the total number of refugees in Africa had greatly increased, and therefore the African countries, which bore the heaviest burden, should receive the most aid. The International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, held at Geneva in April 1981, represented a positive step in that direction; it had also helped to increase international awareness of the situation of refugees in Africa.

20. Resolutions aimed at strengthening co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity should be implemented effectively, so as to meet the urgent needs of refugees in Africa. In that connexion, she paid tribute to the countries of asylum, which continued to assume economic and social burdens that exceeded their resources; the international community must continue to help those countries to support that burden.

21. Her delegation welcomed recent positive developments in Africa, such as the voluntary repatriation of refugees described in the High Commissioner's statement and agreed that voluntary repatriation was the best way to solve the problems of refugees, provided that their return was truly voluntary. In that regard, she drew attention to chapter I, section D, of the High Commissioner's report (A/36/12, p. 12) and commended the co-operation established between the Government of Zimbabwe and the High Commissioner's Office in connexion with the voluntary repatriation of Zimbabweans. Her delegation also welcomed the establishment of a tripartite commission, comprising Angola, Zaire and UNHCR, to facilitate the repatriation of Angolan and Zairean refugees and the arrangements being envisaged for the return of refugees from Chad (A/36/12, para. 55).

22. In Asia, the suffering of refugees still created a potentially explosive situation, which had acquired new dimensions as a result of events in Afghanistan. Those events had produced a veritable exodus of refugees to Pakistan, who currently numbered over 1.5 million, mainly women and children, and steps must be taken to deal with that problem. The situation in Kampuchea was complex and difficult, and refugees from Kampuchea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam represented a great problem for Thailand. Accordingly, her delegation welcomed the repatriation of refugees in that part of the world, as well as the positive developments concerning refugees from Bangladesh.

23. The growing number of refugees in Latin America showed that no region was spared in that regard. Refugee problems concerned the international community as a whole, and every effort must be made to alleviate the suffering of refugees, who had been forced to leave their homes and to relinquish their most fundamental human rights. Although the situation of refugees varied in different parts of the world, human suffering was their common denominator, and refugees of all ages suffered similarly. Egypt assumed its share of the burden in that connexion and appealed to all States to do the same.

24. In conclusion, she announced that in May 1981 Egypt had acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and to the 1967 Protocol.

/...

25. Mr. FERGUSON (Australia) pointed out that, despite the relentless progression of the refugee problem in magnitude and complexity and the growing demands for assistance, there had been positive developments, in particular the absence of any large-scale refoulement, the increased resettlement rate of refugees from countries of first asylum in South-East Asia, the increase in voluntary repatriations in all areas and the expanding role played by voluntary agencies. In that connexion Australia wished to pay tribute to the voluntary groups throughout the world which provided humanitarian assistance for refugees. Australian voluntary organizations had raised some \$A 13 million for Kampuchean relief operations and had commenced public appeals for funds to benefit refugees in East Africa and Pakistan.

26. The changing role of the High Commissioner, resulting from the great increase in the number of refugees, had important implications for the world community. Accordingly, the concept of burden-sharing was of particular concern to his Government. However, the search for lasting solutions must focus primarily on the problems of genuine refugees and not on those who might more accurately be described as migrants. Unless that distinction was made, genuine refugees would suffer.

27. Along the same lines, responsibility for the consequences of a mass exodus could not be left to the country of first asylum alone. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the concept of temporary asylum and the progress made towards defining it (A/36/12, para. 16). The concept of temporary asylum established the idea of admission to a country of first asylum on a temporary basis, which included the provision of protection and assistance, pending a more lasting solution.

28. Also in accordance with the idea of burden-sharing, the notion of traditional countries of resettlement should be re-examined, because current refugee problems could not be solved by a few countries alone. Of course, Australia would continue to accept genuine refugees, within the limits of its economic resources and the absorptive capacity of its social system, but the burden of accepting refugees for resettlement could be broadened. However, he stressed that, in the long run, voluntary repatriation was the best solution.

29. His Government's concern about the enormous problems relating to refugees in Africa was reflected in its contribution of \$A 10 million through the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, which constituted another example of burden-sharing.

30. The international community must help to share the great burden being imposed on Pakistan by the Afghan refugee problem, until voluntary repatriation could be achieved. The outflow of refugees from Indo-China continued to impose a heavy burden on the countries of first asylum. It was therefore important to make arrangements for their orderly departure and to ensure that third countries maintained their resettlement rates. However, he also welcomed the progress made in the voluntary repatriation of refugees in that area.

31. His Government, like many others, was particularly distressed by the high incidence of piracy committed against refugees in the South-East Asian seas. Australia was prepared to work with other Governments of the region and with the international community to combat such crimes and would examine any practical proposals to that end.

(Mr. Ferguson, Australia)

32. While UNHCR acted as the necessary catalyst and central co-ordinating agency in emergency situations involving mass exoduses of refugees, the other organizations in the United Nations system should co-operate in the ways best suited to them. His delegation had therefore taken a special interest in the discussions on the role each agency and UNHCR itself should play in such situations. Because of the changing nature of refugee situations, UNHCR must maintain sufficient flexibility and efficiency to meet the changing demands placed on it. Therefore his delegation fully supported the High Commissioner's decision to ask the United Nations Administrative Management Service to review the Office's structure and management.

33. In conclusion, he pointed out that UNHCR's role was to provide humanitarian assistance after a refugee situation had arisen; it could not prevent such situations, nor could it solve all the problems they entailed. The status of refugees therefore involved the political responsibility of the world community and required whole-hearted international effort.

34. Mr. GONZALEZ de LEON (Mexico) said that the report of the High Commissioner (A/36/12) reflected the magnitude of the refugee problem in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It was therefore necessary to seek the best ways of dealing with the specific causes of refugee problems. The outflow of refugees not only affected the countries of temporary and permanent asylum but also represented a real tragedy for the countries they left.

35. The effort to establish the most effective machinery and formulas to ensure protection and respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of refugees was both costly and complex. The wide variety of reasons why refugees left their own countries also raised the problem of determining their status, which in turn determined the extent of the aid and protection they received. Frequently, the concepts applicable to persons seeking asylum, to refugees and to displaced persons were confused, or were used loosely. While the High Commissioner's Office had formulated an operational understanding of those concepts for its own purposes, Governments had not clearly distinguished between the three categories and had therefore not clarified their policy in connexion with the reception, protection and assistance to be accorded each category.

36. Mexico included in the category of asylum-seekers only those persons who, for political reasons, had been persecuted or had felt that their freedom, their safety or their life had been threatened. It was a well-known tradition for Mexico to receive people thus threatened for political reasons, without distinction as to their personal status or ideology.

37. As to refugees, his Government felt that the word was often used quite loosely and that a distinction should be made between political refugees and "economic" refugees. Further distinctions between refugees and displaced persons became increasingly difficult. Mexico's experience in that connexion had been limited to the 1930s, when, as a result of the Spanish Civil War and Nazi and Fascist persecution in Europe, it had received thousands of people, who had since become integrated in Mexican society, to his country's benefit. However, the alarming situation in neighbouring countries, particularly in the republics of Central America,

/...

(Mr. González de León, Mexico)

had recently resulted in a growing flow of refugees to Mexico. That situation had been rightly recorded in the High Commissioner's report. The flow of refugees often entered Mexico through irregular channels, and his Government did not know exactly how many refugees or displaced persons had come into the country; any speculation concerning their number would be misleading. However, the situation was becoming more serious, and the necessary steps were being taken to assist refugees, either by settling them in the country or by offering them temporary protection.

38. For that reason, in 1981, his Government had established the Mexican Commission for Aid to Refugees, an interministerial body responsible for co-ordinating the activities of both public and private institutions dealing with refugee problems. His Government was also actively studying the possibility of acceding to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, which offered the best framework for international co-operation for the benefit of refugees. Furthermore, Mexico was considering accession to Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. He hoped that his delegation would soon be able to announce that his Government had taken a favourable decision in that respect.

39. Mr. O'Donovan (Ireland) took the Chair.

40. Mr. CORTI (Argentina) expressed deep concern at the continuing seriousness of the refugee situation, but he welcomed that fact that international solidarity had proved commensurate with the gravity of the problem and that generous contributions had been provided to the competent agencies. Unfortunately, such a favourable attitude towards removing the causes of that situation did not yet exist in the political context. In addition, the burden of meeting the needs of refugees was not evenly distributed, and entire regions of the world were taking no part in the solution of that problem.

41. However, an example of international solidarity could be found in the success of the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, which had been especially important in providing support for those countries which, with very meagre resources, were bearing the heaviest burden. The Argentine Republic, despite its limited capabilities, had pledged a contribution of some \$500,000 in grain. Moreover, Argentine merchant vessels on the high seas had taken aboard more than 100 refugees from South-East Asia in 1981. On each occasion, his Government had granted the protection required of countries of first asylum. In that connexion, he deplored the persistent problems of the "boat people" and the acts of piracy committed against them.

42. The alarming increase in the number of refugees during the first half of 1981 fully justified the essential aid provided by UNHCR. However, it was important to ensure that the aid thus provided did not become an incentive for people to leave their countries for purely economic reasons. The magnitude of the needs to be met by the High Commissioner's Office was such that no diversion of its resources to other activities, however important, could be permitted.

(Mr. Corti, Argentina)

43. The Argentine Republic was traditionally a country of asylum, welcoming refugees from all parts of the world, and the concept of territorial asylum was firmly rooted in Latin America. Unfortunately, the violence and terror in Central America had resulted in the displacement of many people. As a result, the countries of the area were generously receiving and assisting refugees from neighbouring countries and were assuming a burden which often pushed them to the limits of their capabilities.

44. He paid tribute to those countries and to all such countries of first asylum throughout the world. The enormous economic, social and political problems which refugees created for countries of first asylum were frequently overlooked in the quest for contributions in cash or in kind. The sacrifices those contributions entailed for the donor countries could scarcely be compared with the sacrifices made by the countries of first asylum, almost all of which were developing countries.

45. Wishing to participate, to the extent of its capabilities, in international efforts on behalf of refugees from South-East Asia, the Argentine Republic had received more than 1,300 refugees from that region and, with the invaluable aid of the High Commissioner, was dealing with the problem of their cultural readjustment. He expressed his country's appreciation for the excellent work done in that regard by the High Commissioner's Office, with which his Government was actively co-operating, but he hoped to see the day when every individual would be able to live in his own homeland in peace and security.

46. Mr. MI Guojun (China) said that the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees had carried out wide-ranging humanitarian activities to alleviate the suffering of refugees in various parts of the world and had achieved outstanding results. Noting that its work had been highly commended by the international community, he congratulated UNHCR on receiving the 1981 Nobel Peace Prize.

47. Turning to the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, he said that the Chinese Government and people sympathized with and were greatly concerned about the tragic fate of refugees in Africa; despite its limited resources, his Government had actively supported and participated in the Conference, and, together with the other participants, had made its contribution to the best of its ability.

48. Refugees could be driven out of their countries by either natural or man-made circumstances. Since no one could completely control natural disasters and the economic strength of many developing countries was still inadequate to overcome the difficulties they caused, refugee problems resulting from such events were unavoidable and understandable. The large-scale refugee problems created by man were, however, quite a different matter, especially when caused by such intolerable factors as foreign aggression and occupation. In the Middle East, millions of Palestinian Arabs were displaced as a result of the policy of aggression and expansion pursued by the Israeli authorities. The South African racist authorities' policy of persecution and expansionism had driven countless black Africans from their native land. In Asia, Soviet and Vietnamese hegemonists had invaded and occupied Afghanistan and Kampuchea by armed force, compelling many Afghans and Kampuchians to become refugees. New waves of refugees from those countries were imposing great strain on the neighbouring countries, especially

/...

(Mr. Mi Guojun, China)

Pakistan and Thailand. China had great sympathy and respect for those countries of asylum and for their peoples which had shouldered such heavy burdens in a humanitarian spirit. The international community should not only extend humanitarian assistance but should also seek a fundamental solution to those problems, which were caused by foreign aggression. A certain delegate had tried to shift the burden onto others, to divert the attention of the Committee and extricate her own country, but such attempts were useless. Only by forcing the aggressors to implement the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, withdraw their troops from the countries concerned and abandon their aggressive and expansionist policies could the man-made massive flows of refugees be eliminated. The Chinese Government and people had great sympathy for refugees and favoured emergency assistance of a humanitarian character. However, it maintained that the elimination of the aforementioned man-made factors not only was in conformity with humanitarian principles but also was necessary in order to defend world peace.

49. His Government supported the humanitarian activities undertaken by the international community to assist refugees and had, in the same spirit, borne tremendous economic and social burdens. It had accepted and settled over 260,000 Indo-Chinese refugees and had already spent the equivalent of \$US 600 million on them. Though still beset by many economic difficulties and affected by serious natural disasters, his country was ready to support the relief work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees to the best of its ability. It had already decided to make a contribution to the General Programme of the Office for 1982.

50. In conclusion, he said that his country's co-operation with UNHCR had further progressed in recent years. The High Commissioner had recently paid a friendly visit to China and had met with the leaders of the country and officials of the departments concerned. They had held talks on the strengthening of co-operation between UNHCR and China, and positive results had been achieved. He expressed the hope and the conviction that there would be greater co-operation between his country and UNHCR in solving refugee problems.

51. Mr. ADOSSAMA (International Labour Organisation) said that the International Labour Organisation had played an active part in the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa. Following that Conference, several inter-institutional meetings had been held to determine the projects to be undertaken by each of the institutions taking part. It had been decided that ILO should carry out projects in such areas as employment, vocational training, the development of small-scale business activities and labour-intensive public works. Seventeen projects had been drawn up in consultation with liberation movements and the Governments of countries hosting a large number of refugees.

52. In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 35/117, a meeting had been held at Geneva in April 1981 between the General Secretariat of the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Secretariat and the secretariats of organizations within the United Nations system, including the International Labour Organisation. That meeting had considered matters of common concern, including information, research, vocational training, staff problems and assistance to liberation movements.

/...

(Mr. Adossama, ILO)

53. ILO and OAU had co-operated very closely for more than 16 years. The agreements concluded between the two organizations included arrangements whereby either organization could be represented at meetings of the other. ILO provided technical assistance to OAU and would continue to do so whenever required.

54. The International Conference on Sanctions against South Africa had been convened at Paris in May 1981 with the aim of determining what new international measures should be undertaken with a view to eliminating apartheid in South Africa. He had already spoken, at the 21st meeting of the Third Committee on 16 October 1981, of the results of the tripartite international meeting organized by ILO at Livingstone, Zambia, in May 1981 and of the proposed revisions to the 1964 ILO Declaration on Apartheid.

55. In conclusion, he said that ILO had been gratified at the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, an organization with which ILO had always co-operated closely in providing assistance to refugees, whether in the field of technical and humanitarian assistance or in that of legal protection. His organization also co-operated very closely with other United Nations bodies such as UNESCO, FAO and UNICEF and with non-governmental organizations in implementing projects to train refugees and to find them work in countries where there was a shortage of manpower and where highly qualified refugees could be employed. In that connexion, ILO had given technical assistance to OAU to educate and place refugees.

AGENDA ITEM 88: UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE  
(continued) (A/C.3/36/L.50, L.51, L.53)

- (a) WORLD CONFERENCE ON THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/C.3/36/L.47)
- (b) VOLUNTARY FUND FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/C.3/36/L.49, L.52)
- (c) DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY AND AGAINST COLONIALISM, APARTHEID, ALL FORMS OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, FOREIGN AGGRESSION, OCCUPATION AND ALL FORMS OF FOREIGN DOMINATION: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/C.3/36/L.48)

AGENDA ITEM 89: STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)  
(A/C.3/36/L.54)

56. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would begin its consideration of draft resolutions A/C.3/36/L.50, A/C.3/36/L.51 and A/C.3/36/L.53, all relating to agenda item 88 as a whole, draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.47, which concerned agenda item 88 (a), draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.48, which came under agenda item 88 (c) and draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.54 under agenda item 89. The Committee would consider draft resolutions A/C.3/36/L.49 and A/C.3/36/L.52, both of which related to agenda item 88 (b), at a future meeting.

/...

Draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.50

57. Mrs. DEVAUD (France), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.50 entitled "Consideration within the United Nations of questions concerning the role of women in development", sponsored, in addition to France, by Chad, Italy, the Ivory Coast, the Philippines and Romania, said that that draft resolution involved more a question of procedure than one of substance. She observed that draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.26/Rev.1, on a theme similar to the one under consideration in the Third Committee, had been submitted to the Second Committee and was to be considered later by the Third Committee. She had always regretted that the work of various committees was divided, as it were, into watertight compartments; with questions involving a number of different aspects, it was sometimes useful and often necessary that different committees should consider the same item and that there should be communication and a transmittal of documents between them. The draft resolution therefore recommended, in the light of paragraphs 80, 81 and 82 of the Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Social Aspects of the Development Activities of the United Nations (E/1981/3), that questions relating to social development and, in particular, the integration of women in development, should be considered both by the Second and by the Third Committee and that the documents relating to those questions should also be made available to the two Committees. That was already the practice in a number of national parliaments when a specific item touched on the fields of competence of more than one committee. For example, when the education budget was being discussed in the French parliament, the item was considered by both the financial committee and the education committee.

58. The approach suggested in the draft resolution would also enable the General Assembly to consider the question of development as a whole, rather than splitting it into two halves, economic and social development. She expressed her support for the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group and emphasized the need to stop dividing the whole question of development into various compartments such as "women in development", "men in development", "social development" and "economic development" and into those aspects of development which should be dealt with in the Second Committee and those which should be considered by the Third.

Draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.51

59. Mr. CORTI (Argentina), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.51, of which the Bahamas and Venezuela had now also become sponsors, said that work on the establishment of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women had been encountering some difficulties. The Government of the Dominican Republic had signed an agreement with the United Nations to host the Institute, and building work was under way. Meanwhile, the United Nations had continued with work in New York on a limited scale. A Director had been appointed, but financial resources appeared insufficient. The sponsors of the draft resolution wished to make clear the present state of progress in establishing the Institute.

60. Referring to General Assembly resolution 31/135, which approved the establishment of the Institute, the new text underlined the importance of the Institute in the United Nations Decade for Women and as part of the International Development Strategy. The first operative paragraph related to the final establishment of the Institute. The sponsors wished to emphasize that, in so far

(Mr. Corti, Argentina)

as the Dominican Republic was concerned, there only remained a few technical aspects to be completed. Paragraph 2 expressed the need for the Institute to work in close co-operation with all relevant organizations, particularly with the regional commissions and centres. In view of the lack of resources, duplication of effort must be avoided in order to achieve the best possible results. Paragraph 3 linked the Institute with the work of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and paragraph 4 appealed to Governments to consider contributing to the Institute, not only financially but also by offering it other forms of support. The final paragraph of the draft resolution was aimed at ensuring full co-operation between the Institute and other bodies in the United Nations system. He hoped that the Committee would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.53

61. Mr. NORDENFELT (Sweden) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.53 on behalf of the sponsors. There was no agenda item dealing with measures to create equality between men and women, although that would have been better than referring only to questions relating to women. Over the past two years those questions had been dealt with in relation to the United Nations Decade for Women, and efforts to create an equal footing had been geared to improving the status of women. At the Copenhagen Conference many delegations had emphasized the importance of a greater share for women in the decision-making process at all levels. At the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, after the Copenhagen Conference, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 34/155, paragraph 4 of which called upon Governments to take steps to ensure effective participation of women in the decision-making process with respect to foreign policy and international economic and political co-operation, including steps to ensure that they had equal access to diplomatic functions and that they were represented in the United Nations and other international organizations. There was still a long way to go in that respect. One small step that might be taken towards reversing the traditional picture of women's role was to deal with the problem encountered by spouses of members of diplomatic missions or consulate posts and staff members of intergovernmental organizations who had their own professional careers. All members of the Committee were aware of the problems of family life that arose on appointment to diplomatic posts for either men or women whose spouses had their own professional careers. The posting abroad of a man in that situation would mean the disruption of his wife's career, while women often found it difficult to accept posting abroad because of the effect on their husbands' careers. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic and Consular Relations had not excluded the possibility that family members might work in the receiving State, and if that were arranged, many of the problems of posting abroad could be overcome. It was important to establish conditions enabling equal rights of men and women to pursue their own careers, and the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.53 believed that it was both possible and desirable to promote such conditions by asking Governments to give favourable consideration to applications for work permits from spouses accompanying members of diplomatic or consular posts or members of intergovernmental organizations. The sponsors hoped that it would be possible to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.47

62. Mr. BOUYOUCEF (Algeria) said that the Group of 77, which was proposing the draft resolution, had already put forward a resolution on the subject at the thirty-fifth session, subsequently adopted as resolution 35/136. The Group of 77 was following up that action because it attached special importance to the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women. Paragraph 17 of resolution 35/136 embodied a decision to convene in 1985, at the conclusion of the Decade, a World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the Decade, as indicated in the first preambular paragraph of the present draft resolution. The second and third preambular paragraphs referred to the establishment of a new international economic order and to the International Development Strategy for the Third Development Decade, which the Group of 77 regarded as necessary conditions for promoting the advancement of women. The fifth preambular paragraph emphasized the importance of the recommendations made in the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade, while the sixth preambular paragraph welcomed the entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, a development that had been welcomed by many delegations in the Third Committee. The seventh preambular paragraph emphasized the need to give the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) the assistance it needed to begin to operate as early as possible.

63. Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the operative part affirmed the importance of the complete integration of women into the development process and called on Governments to continue taking measures to implement the Programme of Action, while paragraphs 3 and 4 pointed to the need for more extensive use of United Nations bodies, including the regional commissions, to that end. Paragraph 6 emphasized the role of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and paragraph 7 asked the Commission on the Status of Women, which met only every two years, to give priority to the question of the preparations for the 1985 Conference. Paragraph 8 dealt with the need for close and continuing co-operation between the United Nations Secretariat and INSTRAW.

64. The draft resolution had been drawn up very carefully in order to take account of the positions of various delegations and facilitate its adoption. He thanked all the delegations that had co-operated on the project.

65. The CHAIRMAN said that the two draft resolutions on the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women would be introduced at a subsequent meeting.

Draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.48

66. Ms. SAELZLER (German Democratic Republic) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.48 on behalf of the sponsors. Algeria, Mali and Yemen had asked to be added as sponsors of the draft resolution.

67. The sponsors believed that the adoption of the proposed draft declaration in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 35/429 was a major task of the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session. It would be helpful in implementing the aims of the United Nations Decade for Women and was an important step towards the general

(Ms. Saelzler, German Democratic Republic)

realization of women's rights. It was fully in harmony with the demand for specific steps to promote women's participation in the struggle for peace, a demand made both in the General Assembly and at the Copenhagen World Conference. General Assembly resolution 3519 (XXX) already contained some basic elements of the draft declaration. General Assembly resolution 32/142 requested the Commission on the Status of Women to consider the question of drafting a declaration as a contribution to the preparation of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women held at Copenhagen. The question had been considered at the twenty-eighth session of the Commission and subsequently at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. In 1979, the German Democratic Republic had submitted to the Secretary-General a draft declaration contained in document E/CN.6/626/Add.1, together with the comments of 19 States and some specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations. In 1980 the Copenhagen World Conference, in its resolution 11, had appealed to the General Assembly to prepare a declaration on the basis of the comments received. At the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly the German Democratic Republic had submitted a draft declaration sponsored by 28 countries, which was the basis of the present draft. The Third Committee now had before it the comments of 25 Member States in document A/36/476 and Add.1, and she wished to thank all those States which had adopted a constructive approach to the draft declaration. Even States that had voiced reservations had not denied the relevance of peace and of women's participation in the maintenance of peace. Some States had claimed that the draft declaration called for separate rights for women, but the General Assembly had already taken a number of decisions on the rights of women in such specific spheres as employment, education and public health, and there had been no complaint on those occasions about the separation of women's rights. The maintenance of peace, and the elimination of colonialism, racism and apartheid were the main requirements for guaranteeing social rights. The aim of the draft declaration was to create such conditions with the equal participation of women.

68. The sponsors had shown their readiness to co-operate by incorporating amendments proposed by different States. That was reflected in the second preambular paragraph, referring to the appeal in the final document of the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi in 1981, for the removal of obstacles and constraints with regard to the participation of women in national development. Proposals made by Morocco, Iraq, Syria and Ecuador were already embodied in the text of document A/C.3/36/L.48. After consultation with a number of Member States the following further amendments had been accepted.

69. In the fourth preambular paragraph the words "cultural" had been added in response to a proposal by Portugal, and the word "and" had been substituted for the word "or" in response to a proposal by Burundi, so that the phrase after the words "public offices" now read "in the cultural, social, economic, administrative and political field".

70. In response to a proposal by Portugal, the following new preambular paragraph had been inserted after the fourth preambular paragraph:

"Having in mind that the above-mentioned access depends to a large extent on the achievement of a balanced and equitable distribution of roles between women and men in the society as a whole and in the family".

/...

(Ms. Saelzler, German  
Democratic Republic)

71. In what would then become the sixth preambular paragraph, the phrase "foreign aggression and occupation" had been changed to "foreign intervention, aggression and occupation", as proposed by Singapore.
72. In the new seventh preambular paragraph, the phrase "fundamental and indispensable prerequisites" after the reference at the end of the paragraph to the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, had been changed in response to a proposal by Portugal to "important and indispensable factors".
73. In the new eleventh preambular paragraph, as a result of a compromise on proposals made by Portugal, the phrase "in various parts of the world" had been deleted and the phrase "vital international problems" at the end of a paragraph had been replaced by the phrase "vital national and international problems".
74. In part I of the draft declaration, the following passage had been added to the end of article 1, in response to a proposal made by Portugal:
- "The above-mentioned participation of women depends to a large extent on a balanced and equitable distribution of roles between women and men in the society as a whole and in the family".
75. In article 3, the phrase "foreign aggression" had been replaced with the phrase "foreign intervention and aggression", in response to a proposal by Singapore, and a proposal by Portugal had resulted in the replacement of the phrase "to create essential prerequisites" with the phrase "as important obstacles".
76. In part II, the phrase "collective communications media" in the fourth subparagraph had been replaced with the phrase "mass communications media". In the fifth subparagraph, in response to a proposal by Singapore, the word "intervention" had been inserted between "racial discrimination" and "aggression".
77. In part III, in response to a proposal by the Secretariat, the word "biennially" had been replaced with the word "regularly" in order to avoid additional costs. In addition, the word "intervention" had been inserted at the end of line 4 between the words "foreign" and "aggression", in response to a proposal by Singapore. She said that she would submit the revised text to the Secretariat in writing.

Draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.54

78. Mr. NORDENFELT (Sweden) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.54 on behalf of the sponsors. They regarded the entry into force on 3 September 1981 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as a major step towards the achievement of equal rights for women. It was most encouraging that the Convention had been signed by 87 States and ratified or acceded to by 29 States. He looked forward to the establishment of the committee to monitor compliance with the Convention. The draft resolution reflected the satisfaction of States with the Convention and with its entry into force and invited States to become parties to it. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution could be adopted without a vote.

/...

79. Mrs. DOWNING (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Federal Republic of Germany, Romania, Rwanda, Uruguay and Viet Nam had been added as sponsors to draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.54, and that Lesotho and the United States of America had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/36/L.53.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.