

UNITED



NATIONS

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT
of the
UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS : SIXTEENTH SESSION

✓ SUPPLEMENT No. 11A (A/4771/Rev.1/Add.1)

NEW YORK

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NOTE

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REPORT ON THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

(Geneva, 6-10 November 1961)¹

Section I. Introduction

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme held its sixth session from 6 to 10 November 1961 at the Palais des Nations, Geneva. Mr. K. Salvesen (Norway), Chairman in office, opened the sixth session and welcomed members of the Committee.

2. In accordance with rule 10 of the rules of procedure under which officers of the Committee are elected to serve for all sessions during the same year, Mr. K. Salvesen (Norway), Mr. E. Arango (Colombia) and Mr. W. A. Higgin (Australia) continued in office as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur, respectively.

3. The members of the Executive Committee were represented as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Australia | Israel |
| Austria | Italy |
| Belgium | Netherlands |
| Brazil | Norway |
| Canada | Sweden |
| China | Switzerland |
| Colombia | Tunisia |
| Denmark | Turkey |
| Federal Republic of Germany | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
| France | Ireland |
| Greece | United States of America |
| Holy See | Venezuela |
| Iran | Yugoslavia |

4. The Governments of New Zealand, Portugal, Togo and the United Arab Republic were represented by an observer, as was the Sovereign Order of Malta.

5. The International Labour Organisation, the Council of Europe, the European Economic Community, the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration and the League of Arab States were also represented by observers.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Committee agreed that an item "Resettlement" should be included on the agenda for each session of the Committee; a summary might be presented at the autumn session and a full review of the development of resettlement at the spring session.

7. The Committee adopted the following agenda, it being understood that item 4 should be discussed together with the relevant section of item 3 (b):

(1) Adoption of the agenda

- (2) Introductory statement by High Commissioner
- (3) UNHCR regular programme for 1962

- (a) Priorities for 1962
- (b) Material Assistance Programme
- (c) Legal Assistance Programme
- (d) Grant-in-aid towards administrative expenditure

- (4) Far Eastern Operation

- (5) Assistance to refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia—proposed budget for 1962

- (6) Report on the use of the Emergency Fund

- (7) Report of the Board of Auditors on the financial statements for 1960 and comments thereon by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

- (8) Provisional financial statements for the period 1 January-31 August 1961 and related financial matters

- (9) Proposed changes in the presentation of financial statements—proposed relevant amendments to the financial rules

- (10) Results of the UNHCR/UNRWA Stamp Plan

- (11) Commemoration of the centenary of Fridtjof Nansen

Section II. Statement by the High Commissioner and other general statements

STATEMENT BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

8. The High Commissioner in his opening statement² gave the Committee an account of progress achieved by his Office and of new developments in the problems of refugees since the fifth session of the Executive Committee.

9. In his statement, the High Commissioner, after referring to the progress made in solving the problems of "old" refugees, brought to the Committee's attention those new refugee situations with which his Office had been called upon to deal during the period under review, including, in particular, refugees in Cambodia, Tibetan refugees in Nepal, refugees in Laos, Angolan refugees in the Congo, Cuban refugees in Spain, and refugees in Togo. Members of the Committee expressed their appreciation of the statement made by the High Commissioner and of the progress achieved.

10. The representative of the Holy See recalled that five years had passed since the Hungarian refugee emergency: an event which had focused world attention on

¹ Issued previously under the symbol A/AC.96/146.

² The full text of the High Commissioner's statement is reproduced in the annex to this report.

the plight of refugees. He was pleased to note that the Hungarian refugee problem had now been practically solved. He also drew attention to the problem of Chinese refugees in Macao in which his delegation was taking as much interest as it was in Chinese refugees in Hong Kong. He also expressed his appreciation of the way in which the High Commissioner was approaching new refugee problems. These problems alone would justify the existence and activities of the Office of the High Commissioner.

11. The Committee noted with appreciation the progress made in the field of resettlement and particularly the liberalized criteria for the acceptance of handicapped refugees adopted by numerous immigration countries as reflected in the High Commissioner's statement and in the information document concerning the resettlement of tubercular refugees in Canada (A/AC.96/INF.4).

12. In this connexion, the Executive Committee, apprised of the retirement of Sir Tasman Heyes, Permanent Head of the Department of Immigration of Australia, unanimously decided to address a warm tribute to him for his magnificent achievements in promoting the resettlement of refugees in Australia.

13. The Committee was gratified also to note that, thanks to the generosity of the Belgian Government, the financial resources available under the United States Escapee Program and the close co-operation of the Government of Yugoslavia, measures were now being taken to resettle in Belgium some 400 refugees from the Geroovo camp in Yugoslavia. This combined action would ensure the possibility of an early closure of the camp.

14. With reference to the movement from Geroovo the representative of the United States expressed the hope that, in the interest of facilitating the resettlement of refugees in the future, selection missions from countries of immigration and voluntary agencies might have regular and continuing access to refugees in Yugoslavia.

15. Members of the Committee showed a particular interest in the new refugee situations mentioned in the statement of the High Commissioner, and especially in the general principles on which he was basing his action in respect of these refugees. The representatives who spoke on the subject expressed their agreement with the policy outlined by the High Commissioner and voiced their appreciation of his humanitarian and non-political approach which should enable him to bring essential relief both under the terms of his mandate and in accordance with the good offices resolutions of the General Assembly.

16. The observer for Portugal drew the attention of the Committee to the problem of Chinese refugees in Portugal's overseas province of Macao. This problem had been the subject of a plan which the Portuguese Government had submitted to the High Commissioner.

17. With regard to the legal protection of refugees, the representative of the Holy See stated that the Holy See had just advised the Secretary-General of the United Nations that it had decided to extend its obligations under the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees by adopting formula (b) of paragraph 1, section B, of article 1 of the Convention, which applies to persons who became refugees as a result of events occurring "in Europe or elsewhere" before 1 January 1951. He expressed the hope that this gesture might encourage other States to adopt the less restrictive clause. The representative of the International Labour Organi-

sation informed the Committee that the Joint Maritime Commission of the Organisation had adopted a resolution concerning refugee seamen which would be submitted to the Governing Body of the ILO.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS³ AND NEW RESETTLEMENT SCHEMES

18. In the course of the session, the representative of Australia announced that the Australian Parliament had approved a contribution of 50,000 Australian pounds (\$112,000) to UNHCR programmes in 1961 and a contribution of a similar amount to the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration towards the joint UNHCR/ICEM operation for refugees of European origin in the Far East.

19. The representative of Belgium confirmed that his Government had decided to make a total contribution of \$200,000 to UNHCR for 1961. This amount included, in addition to \$45,000 for the UNHCR regular programmes, \$45,000 for refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia, \$60,000 for transportation of refugee migrants from Belgium, and an amount of \$50,000 composed as follows for assistance in new refugee situations: including, among others, \$8,000 for refugees in Cambodia, \$14,000 for Tibetans in Nepal, \$14,000 for Angolans in the Republic of the Congo (Leopoldville).

20. The representative of Brazil stated that the Government of Brazil, which had accepted large numbers of refugees, would continue, with the co-operation of the services of ICEM, to admit refugees who were able to meet immigration criteria and would also give asylum to refugees on humanitarian grounds. The Government of Brazil was studying the possibility of making a contribution in kind to UNHCR.

21. The representative of Sweden informed the Committee that his country, which had received 1,300 refugees in the course of 1961, was prepared to admit another group of at least 600 refugees.

STATEMENT BY THE OBSERVER FOR THE REPUBLIC OF TOGO

22. The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Togo made a statement to the Committee on the refugee problem which had arisen in his country. He drew the attention of the Committee to the economic and social aspects of the problem resulting from the presence of the refugees. He addressed to the Committee an appeal for immediate emergency aid and also for long-term technical and financial assistance from the international community towards the integration of these refugees within the framework of a wider plan for the economic and social development of a specific area in his country.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE STANDING CONFERENCE OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WORKING FOR REFUGEES

23. Mr. J. Chenard, speaking on behalf of the Standing Conference of Voluntary Agencies working for refugees, expressed satisfaction at the fact that the Office of the High Commissioner had started to deal with new refugee situations outside Europe. He also expressed

³ Except for the joint programme of UNHCR and the League of Red Cross Societies for assistance to refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia, details of which are included in section V below.

the hope that, while the assistance programmes for "old" refugees in Europe should be completed, priority consideration would be given to residual problems of European refugees in North Africa and the Middle East and to the problem of Chinese refugees in the Far East. With regard to resettlement, he emphasized the plea made by the Standing Conference in May 1961 that equal resettlement opportunities should be given to all refugees. As far as protection was concerned, he looked forward to further improvements in the status of refugees.

Section III. UNHCR regular programme for 1962

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

24. The Committee considered the UNHCR regular programme for 1962 submitted to it by the High Commissioner in documents A/AC.96/132 to 135.⁴

25. The detailed programmes before the Committee had been established on the basis of country allocations approved by the Committee at its fifth session within the total financial target of \$5 million adopted by the Committee for 1962.

PRIORITIES FOR 1962

26. In introducing the note on priorities (A/AC.96/135), the representative of the High Commissioner indicated that the over-all target of \$5 million for 1962 included \$4.3 million for material assistance, \$120,000 for legal assistance, and \$580,000 for administrative expenditure.

27. The same priority rules were submitted for the 1962 programme as those approved for 1961, with the additional specification that last priority would be given to open fund projects for which previous allocations had not been fully used.

28. In reply to a question, the representative of the High Commissioner informed the Committee that there might be a shortfall of approximately \$500,000 in the \$6 million target which had been set for the UNHCR regular programme for 1961. If such a shortfall arose, the allocation for an open fund in the 1961 programme for Austria might need to be cancelled and the adjustment, if necessary, made in a subsequent programme.

29. In reply to inquiries concerning the priorities to be given to physically and socially handicapped refugees, respectively, the representative of the High Commissioner recalled that in carrying out its programme for non-settled refugees the Office was following the directives which had been adopted by the Committee at its third session in respect of the extent of international assistance to be given to refugees (A/AC.96/78, section V).

30. The Executive Committee, in order to ensure that funds which become available are utilized in accordance with the relative urgency of the needs, approved the following order of priority for the implementation of the UNHCR regular programme for 1962:

(a) Continuing projects which cannot be interrupted and administrative expenses;

(b) The Far Eastern Programme;

⁴ Document A/AC.96/137 concerning the Far Eastern Operation was considered jointly with item 3 (b), section II, of the UNHCR regular programme for 1962 (A/AC.96/132).

(c) Other projects according to their relative urgency, priority being given to those for handicapped refugees with the exception of projects mentioned under (d) below;

(d) Open funds for which the 1961 allocations have not yet been fully used.

31. The Committee further agreed that it would be the High Commissioner's responsibility to ensure that no project with a low priority be implemented until the financing of all projects with a higher priority which were ready for implementation was assured. As in the past, the projects for which specifically earmarked contributions were received would be implemented as soon as possible.

MATERIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR 1962— GENERAL DISCUSSION

32. In introducing the Material Assistance Programme (A/AC.96/132 and Add.1) the representative of the High Commissioner recalled that within the \$4.3 million target approved at the fifth session, \$2.8 million had been allocated for programmes in Austria, the Far East, France, Germany, Italy, the Middle East, Morocco and Turkey, for some common projects and for a reserve.

33. In consultation with the Greek Government, a programme in an amount of \$1 million was being submitted for that country, instead of the amount of up to \$1.4 million which had been envisaged by the Committee at its fifth session. The balance of \$100,000 would if necessary be included in the 1963 programme.

34. Within the total unallocated balance of \$200,000, an allocation of \$90,000 was being submitted for a material assistance programme in Latin America (A/AC.96/132/Add.1).

35. So far as supporting contributions were concerned, the representative of the High Commissioner informed the Committee that, in most countries, arrangements had been made in accordance with the principles which the Executive Committee had approved at its fifth session. In Germany, negotiations were expected to result in a contribution of \$2 million, which, together with UNHCR allocations totalling \$1.2 million, would suffice to ensure the settlement of all hardship cases among the handicapped non-settled refugees. In Australia, negotiations were still in process.

36. With regard to the presentation of UNHCR programmes, the representative of Australia, supported by other members of the Committee, suggested that at each session succinct documents should be presented to the Committee which would enable Governments to ascertain readily the general trend in refugee statistics. He stressed also the necessity for such information to be comprehensive and yet simply and clearly presented. He further suggested that a glossary of terms and abbreviations in current use in UNHCR be issued to members of the Committee.

37. The High Commissioner welcomed the suggestion that statistics should be presented to the Committee in a comprehensive and simplified form. Within the scope of existing possibilities, his Office would endeavour to present over-all statistics in accordance with the proposal made. A glossary of terms was in the course of preparation and would be distributed to the Committee before its next session.

38. In the course of discussions on supporting contributions, the representative of Austria stressed that

the decision taken by the Committee at its fifth session constituted only broad directives for the High Commissioner. He stated that, especially in the case of projects the implementation of which would lead neither to an increase of the economic potential nor to a decrease of financial responsibility for the country concerned, supporting contributions ought to be negotiated with every country on the merits of each particular case. In the case of Austria, other factors should also be taken into account, such as the considerable amounts spent on refugees under social welfare legislation in Austria and the fact that part of the administrative expenditure of the out-of-camp programme had been assumed by the Austrian authorities, thereby substantially reducing the expenses of UNHCR. He had to make a reservation in respect of paragraph 22 of document A/AC.96/132, since the Austrian Government was unable at present to commit the Länder on which the granting of supporting contributions depended.

39. Furthermore, an Austrian contribution of 10.5 million dollars had been made towards the Austrian Camp Clearance Programme initiated on the occasion of World Refugee Year which would result in the construction of some 3,000 housing units.

40. It was pointed out by certain representatives that the principles adopted in this respect at the Committee's previous session were to be observed by the High Commissioner in his negotiations with Governments of countries where UNHCR programmes were being put into effect.

41. The representative of Belgium pointed out that, apparently, no supporting contributions were obtained from public sources, for projects for counselling, case-work and follow-up throughout the programme, and he wondered whether such projects were of interest to the Governments on whose territory the refugees lived. The representative of the High Commissioner stated on this point that, in several countries, part of the cost of these activities was met by the voluntary agencies.

42. Several representatives stressed the importance of supporting contributions and it was suggested that negotiations on this matter should be left to the discretion of the High Commissioner, pursuant to the directives given to him at the fifth session, who would report to the Executive Committee on the arrangements that had been concluded.

43. The representative of Italy stated that, in view of the steady influx of foreign refugees into his country, emigration was the only satisfactory solution. He had to make a reservation in respect of paragraph 6 of document A/AC.96/132, stating that the main responsibility for those refugees who wished to stay in the country of asylum rested with the Government of the country concerned.

44. The representative of the United Kingdom reminded the Committee that his Government had always maintained the view that, in the long run, ultimate responsibility for refugees must rest with host Governments.

45. The Committee noted from a statement by the representative of Greece that the bill submitted to the Greek Parliament in respect of the granting of ownership to refugees of dwellings provided under the UNHCR programme in Greece would be considered in the near future by the newly-elected Parliament.

46. The Committee heard from explanations given by the representative of the High Commissioner that

the programme submitted in respect of Latin America in document A/AC.96/132/Add.1 had been conceived mainly for a limited number of refugees who had been resettled in that area for many years but who, owing to ill health, old age or other handicaps, were unable to fend for themselves.

47. In the course of discussions on various parts of the programme submitted to the Committee, further statements were made by the representatives of Austria, Greece and Germany concerning refugee problems in those countries, and answers were given to enquiries concerning specific aspects of the programme. The details may be found in the summary records of the 51st and 52nd meetings.

STATEMENT BY THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION

48. In the course of the debate, Mr. Epinat, Acting Director of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, made a statement (the details of which may be found in the summary record of the 52nd meeting) in which he informed the Committee that 35,000 refugees were to be moved. The total cost of all movements of refugees and migrants would amount to \$24 million under ICEM's budget for 1962.

49. He stressed the close co-operation which had developed between his organization and the Office of the High Commissioner in the field of resettlement and particularly in the joint operation of ICEM and UNHCR for the resettlement of refugees of European origin from the Far East. He also stressed the need for further assistance to handicapped refugees and for the resettlement in other countries of a number of European refugees who had difficulty in finding employment opportunities in certain countries in the Mediterranean area.

FAR EASTERN PROGRAMME

50. The Committee considered projects submitted to it in chapter II of document A/AC.96/132 together with the report on the Far Eastern Operation contained in document A/AC.96/137 which showed that the caseload of European refugees had been reduced to 5,000, of whom 4,700 were on the mainland of China and 300 in Hong Kong.

51. The Committee had heard from the statement made by the Acting Director of ICEM that the organization had enough funds at its disposal to cover the movement of some 3,800 refugees. In the course of the first ten months of 1961 it had moved 2,000 refugees from Hong Kong to countries of resettlement.

52. In introducing the subject, the representative of the High Commissioner explained that it had been possible recently to resume arrangements for assistance to refugees on the mainland of China.

53. The question arose as to whether the unused portion of the allocation of \$103,000 mentioned in paragraph 14 of document A/AC.96/137 should be maintained for its original purpose in view of the fact that the reserve referred to in paragraph 169 of document A/AC.96/132 could be called on in case of need.

54. The representative of Australia, recalling that his country was admitting for resettlement more than half of the refugees concerned, suggested that part of

the unused portion of the allocation of \$103,000 might be used to provide the refugees with small resettlement grants in cases of need.

55. The representative of the United Kingdom announced with regret that his Government were now unable to contemplate any new scheme for accepting further groups of refugees for permanent residence.

56. The representative of the High Commissioner expressed the view that it was desirable that the unused portion of the allocation of \$103,000 made for assistance to refugees on the mainland be utilized in order to provide supplementary assistance and medical care to refugees who had not received such assistance on the mainland and were particularly in need of it on their arrival in Hong Kong.

57. The Executive Committee took note of document A/AC.96/137 and authorized the High Commissioner to utilize, where necessary, uncommitted funds allocated for projects for supplementary assistance to refugees on the mainland of China for the provision of similar assistance to refugees in transit in Hong Kong.

58. The Executive Committee also approved the Far Eastern programme for 1962 as described in paragraph 32-34 of document A/AC.96/132.

APPROVAL OF THE MATERIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

59. The Executive Committee approved the Material Assistance Programme for 1962 as described in documents A/AC.96/132 and Addendum 1.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

60. The Committee considered the Legal Assistance Programme submitted to it in document A/AC.96/133 and Addendum 1. The question was raised as to whether this type of assistance was necessary in countries with an advanced system of social legislation where refugees could presumably receive free legal aid. It was pointed out, on the other hand, that the specific country allocations had been approved by the Executive Committee at its fifth session. Furthermore, in countries where certain free legal aid facilities existed, legal assistance often was a useful means of helping refugees to become firmly settled. It was suggested that the High Commissioner should review the Legal Assistance Programme in consultation with the Governments of countries where it was being implemented and report his findings to the Committee at its seventh session.

61. The Executive Committee agreed to this suggestion and approved the Legal Assistance Programme for 1962 as described in paragraphs 2, 4 and 10 of document A/AC.96/133 and paragraphs 2-4 of document A/AC.96/133/Add.1.

62. The Committee also authorized the High Commissioner to finance from the reserve of \$12,500, referred to in paragraph 3 of document A/AC.96/133, such legal assistance projects as might prove to be necessary, it being understood that the implementation of these projects would be reported to the Executive Committee in the same way as other parts of the Legal Assistance Programme.

GRANT-IN-AID TOWARDS ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE

63. The Committee considered the administrative expenditure for 1962 submitted in document A/AC.96/

134 which proposed a grant-in-aid of \$650,000 for 1962, including \$580,000 from the voluntary funds contributed for the UNHCR regular programme and \$70,000 from the funds for the assistance programme for refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia. In introducing the document, the representative of the High Commissioner informed the Committee that the net figure proposed for the administrative budget of the Office for 1962 was \$1,457,300. The proposed budget had been approved by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly on first reading subject to a slight reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. He pointed out that certain increases in salaries had been approved and that other increases were being considered by the United Nations; if adopted, they would also be applicable to UNHCR and would affect its budget.

64. One representative drew attention to the high proportion of administrative expenditure in relation to the financial target of the UNHCR regular programme for 1962.

65. The High Commissioner explained that the administrative expenditure submitted to the Committee for approval covered a wide range of activities including international protection, the UNHCR regular programme, the programme for refugees from Algeria and other assistance programmes and the good offices activities of his Office. Furthermore, material assistance projects had been put into effect on a large scale, culminating in the \$12 million target for World Refugee Year. These projects, many of which were complex, were still in the course of implementation. It was difficult therefore to reduce administrative expenditure at the same rate as the decrease in the size of the programmes.

66. After consideration of the document, the Executive Committee approved a grant-in-aid from voluntary funds of \$650,000 for 1962, of which \$580,000 would be provided from the Voluntary Funds for the High Commissioner's Programme, as decided by the Committee at its fifth session, and \$70,000 from the funds for the programme for refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia and proposed in document A/AC.96/138, paragraph 25.

Section IV. Financial questions

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF AUDITORS ON THE ACCOUNTS OF THE VOLUNTARY FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1960

67. The representative of the High Commissioner pointed out that the report of the Board of Auditors had been submitted to the General Assembly since document A/AC.96/139 was issued. The Assembly had adopted the standard resolution accepting the accounts and taking note of the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. He pointed out that progress had been made during 1961 in respect of better accounting and it was expected that by the end of the year a considerable improvement would have been made in the other matters referred to by the Auditors compared with the situation at the end of 1960. Further evidence of the attention which the High Commissioner was giving to this matter was to be seen in the revised form in which the provisional financial statements for the first eight months of 1961 had been presented to the Committee (A/AC.96/142).

68. Upon the proposal of one representative, it was agreed that every possible effort would be made by UNHCR to finalize the accounts of outstanding projects, in particular of UNREF projects, to cancel any UNREF projects which need not be implemented and to utilize the funds for other projects. A full report on the financing of outstanding UNREF projects would be submitted to the seventh session of the Committee.

69. The Executive Committee took note of the report of the Board of Auditors for the year ended 31 December 1961 (A/AC.96/139).

PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 JANUARY TO 31 AUGUST 1961 AND RELATED FINANCIAL MATTERS

70. The representative of the High Commissioner explained that, in accordance with a recommendation of the Board of Auditors, the provisional financial statements submitted in document A/AC.96/142 had been presented to the Committee in a simplified form. This revised form of accounting had necessitated a revision of certain articles of the Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds. This revision was submitted to the Committee in document A/AC.96/140 as corrected (see paragraph 77 below).

71. The Executive Committee took note of the provisional financial statements for the period 1 January to 31 August 1961 contained in document A/AC.96/142.

72. The Committee also considered document A/AC.96/141 concerning refunds and adjustments on camp clearance projects. In introducing the document, the representative of the High Commissioner stated that, as had been envisaged at the fifth session, a review of camp clearance projects showed that there would be surpluses on a certain number of projects and deficits on others. Furthermore, the camp clearance reserve appeared not to be sufficient to cover all deficits.

73. The Executive Committee consequently authorized the High Commissioner to finance unforeseen requirements of camp clearance from savings effected in the existing projects of the Camp Clearance Scheme, it being understood that the total of the allocation of the scheme would not be exceeded. Savings not required for this purpose would be credited to the current regular programmes envisaged in document A/AC.96/118.

74. The Committee also considered document A/AC.96/145 concerning the financing of commemorative badges put on sale on the occasion of the centenary of Fridtjof Nansen.

75. The Committee approved the proposal of the High Commissioner that expenditure incurred on the scheme should be debited to the Special Public Information Fund, project VAR/Z/61, and that proceeds accruing to UNHCR from the sales of the badges should be credited to the Fund.

76. The Committee also agreed that the terms of reference of the Fund set out in document A/AC.96/120, paragraph 24, be amended to read as follows: "to engage in the promotion and production of films and television programmes or to undertake other promotional activities in direct connexion with the activities of UNHCR which do not come within the scope of the existing administrative arrangements, and to take adequate action in the field of public information when

special international efforts are required to meet refugee emergencies."

PROPOSED REVISION OF THE FINANCIAL RULES FOR VOLUNTARY FUNDS

77. The representative of the High Commissioner stated that the proposed amendments to the Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds submitted to the Committee in document A/AC.96/140 as corrected had arisen out of experience of working with the rules since they were promulgated in January 1959.

78. The Executive Committee approved the Revised Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds administered by the High Commissioner, it being understood that they would be submitted to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions before being promulgated by the High Commissioner.

DISTRIBUTION OF PROCEEDS OF THE JOINT UNHCR/UNRWA STAMP PLAN

79. The Committee considered A/AC.96/143 which provided information on the distribution of the proceeds of the Joint UNHCR/UNRWA Stamp Plan initiated by UNHCR and providing for a world-wide simultaneous issue of postage stamps on 7 April 1960, with the object of drawing attention to the needs of refugees and of obtaining funds for their assistance.

80. The representative of the High Commissioner explained that an amount of \$1.5 million had already been received by the Stamp Plan administration and it was expected that the final figure might reach \$1,600,000. It had been agreed between UNHCR and UNRWA that 25 per cent of the proceeds should be used to meet needs of refugees from Palestine in the Middle East and 75 per cent would be used to meet needs of refugees in other parts of the world who come within the competence of UNHCR according to its statute or come within the purview of the good offices entrusted to the High Commissioner by resolution 1388 (XIV) of the General Assembly. The share of the proceeds to be administered by UNHCR might, therefore, amount to some \$1.2 million. Some \$750,000 of this amount represented earmarked contributions which had already been disbursed in accordance with the wishes of the donors. The High Commissioner had submitted over-all proposals for the allocation of the outstanding amount of some \$560,000 in the document which was before the Committee. A detailed report on the utilization of these funds would be given to the Executive Committee at its seventh session.

81. A full report on the Stamp Plan had been prepared and would be circulated to members of the Committee after the settlement of a few technical and financial details.

82. The Executive Committee took note with satisfaction of the results of the Joint UNHCR/UNRWA Stamp Plan. The Committee endorsed the view of the High Commissioner that, in accordance with the universal character of the Plan, the proceeds to be administered by his Office should be distributed on a world-wide basis. The Committee therefore approved the plan, contained in the annex to document A/AC.96/143, for the distribution of the UNHCR share of the proceeds of the Plan to refugees within the mandate of UNHCR and to those who could be assisted under the good offices resolutions of the General Assembly.

Section V. Assistance to refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia

83. The Committee considered document A/AC.96/138, in which the High Commissioner submitted for the joint relief programme of the League of Red Cross Societies and his Office for 1962 a budget in the amount of \$8,331,500, including an estimated \$2,181,000 required in cash.

84. In introducing the subject, the High Commissioner informed the Committee that the Board of Governors of the League had unanimously decided to continue the Joint Operation until at least 30 June 1962, while giving its President and Secretary-General powers to extend the operation if necessary until the meeting of the Executive Committee of the League, scheduled to be held in September 1962. It was understood however, that the League had required a financial guarantee from UNHCR for the continuity of the Joint Operation. Largely in view of the availability of the Emergency Fund, it had been possible to provide this guarantee.

85. The High Commissioner stressed the purely humanitarian character of the operation which had made it possible for twenty-nine Governments to contribute to the programme since 1 February 1959. While the necessary funds were available to continue the programme through 1961, he would have to appeal again if the programme had to be continued through 1962. He looked forward with interest to the forthcoming pledging conference of the General Assembly. He pointed out that although, as was hoped, the end of the operation was not too far away, plans had to be drawn up in order to ensure its continuity. It was necessary also at this stage to make provision for the orderly return of the refugees to Algeria.

86. The High Commissioner also informed the Committee of a number of factors which had recently emerged and which could have a considerable impact on the operation. The total registration of 132,000 refugees in Morocco included some 58,000 persons registered as Moroccan nationals. Further, the payment for the transportation of relief supplies and related costs in Morocco was in question. The Moroccan Government had originally agreed to assume this responsibility which was essential in order to ensure the continuity of the operation. Another problem was caused by the fact that the Tunisian Government was experiencing certain difficulties in taking advantage of the generous offer made by the United States Government to make available to the Tunisian Government supplies of edible oil for refugees, and for which no cash expenditure was included in the budget for 1962. He hoped that these problems would be satisfactorily solved.

87. Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary-General of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, confirmed the High Commissioner's announcement that the League would continue the relief operation on the understanding that the necessary contributions would be forthcoming from governmental sources. The League, for its part, had appealed to each of its national Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies to support the action of its Board of Governors to intensify gifts in cash and in kind to maintain the present level of relief provided to nearly 300,000 refugees without means of livelihood in the asylum countries of Morocco and Tunisia.

88. The representative of Tunisia informed the Committee that his Government had contributed in 1960 20,000 dinars (\$47,500) for the transport of relief supplies for refugees. The difficulty over the importation of edible oil was that it would present a problem for the Tunisian economy in so far as the production of olive oil was of major importance in the economy of his country. He emphasized that the refugees were receiving only the basic minimum of subsistence and appealed to the Governments and voluntary agencies which had contributed to the success of the joint relief operation to pursue their magnificent efforts until the problem could be solved finally by the return of the refugees to Algeria. He also stressed that most careful thought should be given to plans for the orderly repatriation of the refugees and for their return to normal life, and that the financial provision included in the proposed budget for that purpose might have to be increased.

89. The representative of the United States said that, in view of the difficulties encountered by the Tunisian Government in connexion with the import of edible oil, the United States had offered to contribute wheat in exchange for oil to be obtained within Tunisia for the refugees. Noting that his Government had already contributed nearly \$6 million in cash and kind for refugees in Tunisia and Morocco during the past ten months, he expressed the hope that the negotiation with the Tunisian Government to provide oil through this means could be successfully concluded.

90. The representative of the United Kingdom announced that the "reasonable ceiling" to the 10 per cent matching formula announced by his delegation at the fifth session had been fixed at £30,000, (\$84,000) and that the United Kingdom contribution would therefore substantially exceed the \$55,000 mentioned in Conference room document No. 1.

91. In the course of the ensuing discussions, the following further contributions were announced:

(a) An amount of 100,000 Danish kroner (\$14,478) from the Government of Denmark for assistance to refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia;

(b) A contribution of 200,000 Swedish kronor (\$38,662) by the Government of Sweden in addition to participation by the Swedish voluntary agencies in the Joint Relief Operation;

(c) A contribution in kind announced by the observer for the Sovereign Order of Malta.

Together with contributions announced to UNHCR since the fifth session of the Committee by the Governments of Cambodia, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, India, Laos, Liberia, Netherlands, Norway, Sierra Leone, Switzerland and Venezuela, the total funds paid, pledged or promised by Governments for the relief programme for 1961 thus amounted to \$1,498,648.

92. The representative of Yugoslavia referred to previous contributions made by his country towards the relief of refugees from Algeria and to the campaign launched in Yugoslavia, by the Society for the Protection of Children, as a result of which 139 million dinars had been collected which would be used, *inter alia*, for the purchase of clothing and shoes for refugee children from Algeria.

93. The Chairman stated that the interest evidenced by members of the Committee would be a valuable support for the High Commissioner and the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in pursuing

their course in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly. On behalf of the Committee, he expressed the sincere hope that, in accordance with the usual practice, the outstanding questions referred to in the statement of the High Commissioner would be settled between his Office and the interested Governments for the benefit of the many thousands of refugees concerned.

94. After consideration of document A/AC.96/138, the Executive Committee noted with appreciation the progress achieved in the joint operation of the Office of the High Commissioner and the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for assistance to refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia, and agreed that it was essential for the programme to be continued for the time being. It expressed its gratitude to the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for their decision to continue the joint operation; and approved the operational budget for the period 1 January 1961 to 31 December 1962, submitted to it by the High Commissioner in document A/AC.96/138 in a total amount of \$8,331,500, including an estimated \$2,181,000 in cash and \$6,150,000 in kind.

Section VI. Report on the use of the Emergency Fund

95. The Committee considered a note on the use of the Emergency Fund (A/AC.96/136), in which the High Commissioner reported that the uncommitted balance of the Fund amounted to \$347,477. He recalled that since the establishment of the Fund, in 1958, up to the end of 1960, \$9,000 had been allocated for refugee victims of the Agadir disaster. Since the beginning of 1961, \$10,000 had been allocated for refugees in Cambodia, and \$100,000 for Angolan refugees in the Congo, of which \$25,000 had so far needed to be disbursed. Although only sparing use had been made of the Fund, it represented more than a modest stand-by. It had proved of great value in allowing his Office to give without delay limited financial assistance in the case of refugee emergencies. By thus bridging the gap more serious developments could often be prevented. Furthermore, the mere existence of the Fund had, on several occasions, enabled his Office to contribute towards the solution of an urgent refugee problem without actually using the Fund. In some cases, the Fund had fulfilled the role of a priming pump setting off favourable reactions from other quarters; on other occasions as, for instance, in the case of the relief programme for refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia it had enabled the High Commissioner to give financial guarantees on which the continuity of the Joint Operation depended.

96. Thus, the Emergency Fund appeared to be an indispensable instrument in the pursuit of the task of his Office. It had also emerged from consultations which the High Commissioner had had with Governments in respect of new refugee situations that such an instrument was essential to enable him adequately to discharge the duties conferred upon him by his mandate and by the good offices' resolutions adopted by the General Assembly (1388 (XIV) and 1499 (XV)).

97. The High Commissioner intended to mention the question of the Emergency Fund in the course of the forthcoming consideration by the Third Committee of the General Assembly of the refugee problems facing his Office. He expressed the hope that the Third Committee in interpreting resolution 1166 (XII), under

which the Fund had been established, would take into account the developments, both factual and legal, which were reflected in the above-mentioned good offices' resolutions of the General Assembly.

98. The representative of Canada expressed the great interest of his delegation in the information given by the High Commissioner on the utilization of the Emergency Fund. He wished to draw attention to the general directives adopted by the UNREF Executive Committee in documents A/AC.79/120 and 124 (pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1166 (XII)) which authorized the High Commissioner to give interim financial assistance from his Emergency Fund pending action by the Committee and which requested him to report at each session on the use made. He felt that these directives were based on the desirability of consultation on the use of the Fund between the High Commissioner and the Executive Committee and suggested that the High Commissioner endeavour formally or informally to consult the Executive Committee as much as possible on the use of the Fund.

99. The representative of the United Kingdom also agreed generally with the suggestion of the representative of Canada about the desirability of some form of consultation between the High Commissioner and the Executive Committee before substantial disbursements were made from the Emergency Fund.

100. In the course of the ensuing discussion, all the representatives who spoke expressed general agreement with the use which the High Commissioner had made of the Emergency Fund.

101. The representative of Australia, though sharing this view, stated that he could not commit his Government, in principle, to agree to the Emergency Fund being used for assistance to refugees falling outside the mandate of the High Commissioner.

102. The representatives of Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States expressed their agreement with the policy considerations put forward by the High Commissioner in respect of the use to which the Emergency Fund should be put in bringing assistance to refugees. These representatives also considered that adequate flexibility should be left to the High Commissioner in making use of the Fund.

103. The Netherlands and other delegations expressed the view that the Committee should leave the matter to the discretion of the High Commissioner who would have recourse to the Emergency Fund in accordance with the general directives adopted by the Committee and would put the resources of the Fund to the best use at any given moment in the light of prevailing circumstances.

104. The Committee took note of the report on the use of the Emergency Fund (A/AC.96/136). Many delegations expressed the view that it should be left to the High Commissioner's discretion to decide on the degree of consultation which would be necessary when a situation arose which, in the High Commissioner's view, required the use of the Emergency Fund, bearing in mind that such consultations should not delay appropriate action.

Section VII. Commemoration of the centenary of Fridtjof Nansen

105. The representative of the High Commissioner informed the Committee of the action taken to comply with the request made at its fifth session that the High

Commissioner promote a suitable commemoration on 10 October 1961 of the centenary of the birth of Fridtjof Nansen. He gave an account of the measures which the Office of the High Commissioner had taken and of the world-wide response which the commemoration had evoked. There had been many newspaper articles, broadcasts and telecasts on Nansen's work and achievements. A detailed account of the statement is contained in the summary record of the 54th meeting.

106. The representative of the Netherlands thanked the High Commissioner and his staff for the manner in which they had carried out the request of the Committee to assist in the promotion of the centenary. The Netherlands Government was particularly gratified that the Nansen Medal for 1961 had been presented to H.M. King Olav of Norway. The representative felt that the centenary commemoration had served to keep alive awareness of the refugee problem and considered that the Norwegian people were to be congratulated on following the example set by Nansen, who was a symbol of hope for refugees.

107. The High Commissioner expressed his gratitude to the Committee and to the Netherlands delegation whose initiative had resulted in the commemoration of the centenary of Fridtjof Nansen. It had made the international community more conscious of his humanitarian ideals and of the task which still lay ahead.

108. The representative of Norway expressed his Government's sincere thanks to the delegation of the Netherlands for the initiative it had taken and paid tribute to the work of UNHCR which had promoted the commemoration of the centenary of Fridtjof Nansen throughout the world.

ANNEX

Introductory statement by the High Commissioner to the sixth session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme

At the Executive Committee's last session, I tried to define the attitude which I thought should be adopted by this Office in the present circumstances. At the session to be held next spring, I shall submit to the Committee an over-all plan for the winding-up of the major programmes of assistance to "old refugees". As you are aware, the Committee itself decided to hold its main session in the spring and to devote the autumn session mainly to the consideration of detailed assistance programmes for the following year. I should nevertheless like, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, to make a brief survey of the progress achieved since June in the various branches of UNHCR work, dealing first with the "old" refugees and then with the new problems to which my Office's attention has been drawn during the same period.

Let us first see what the position is so far as concerns the execution of the major programmes of assistance to those whom I shall call the "old refugees", as distinct from the new refugees whose situation results from more recent events.

In accordance with the decisions adopted by the Executive Committee at its fifth session, no general progress report on current material and legal assistance programmes is submitted at the present session. An annual report describing the situation at 31 December next will be submitted to the Committee at its spring session. I should nevertheless like to tell the Committee that the number of refugees who can be regarded as firmly settled as a result of the assistance they have received from the High Commissioner's Office increased, during the first half of 1961, by about 5,500, bringing the total number settled to date to more than 51,700. These figures are appreciably better than those for previous half-years, the improvement being largely due to the exceptional contribution of World

Refugee Year and the increased efforts of Governments, public bodies and voluntary agencies participating in the execution of the High Commissioner's programme. The Camp Clearance Programme itself is still making satisfactory progress, more or less in accordance with forecasts. The number of refugees benefiting under this Programme who have finally left the camps rose, during the first half of 1961, to 2,330, thus reducing the number of refugees still living in camps on 30 June 1961, and eligible under the Programme, to 8,360. This figure includes 5,860 refugees in Germany, 1,100 in Austria and 380 in Italy. During the same period, seven camps were closed, five in Austria, one in Germany and one in Greece.

Under the current programme for 1961, one hundred new projects, the UNHCR contribution to which amounts to \$1,800,000, had been put in hand by the end of October. The problem now confronting us is that of the budget deficit for this year's programme. Government and private contributions already paid or promised to UNHCR for financing the regular programme for 1961 amount to date to a total of \$3,534,814, which is \$2,465,186 short of the \$6 million target. I nevertheless hope that with the help of the contributions expected during the next two months, and also of income from various sources (surpluses, interest, part of the proceeds of the sale of stamps during World Refugee Year) the total funds available for financing the 1961 programme will amount to approximately \$5,400,000, thus reducing the deficit to about \$600,000. Since it is also expected that some parts of the programme will not be put in hand immediately, it is a reasonable supposition that finance will be available by the end of this year for the whole of that part of the 1961 programme which must be carried out.

The priority given to the Camp Clearance Programme has somewhat delayed implementation of the programme for material assistance to non-settled refugees living outside camps. Nevertheless, when the execution of the Material Assistance Programme for 1962 and the preceding years has been completed, a great step will have been taken towards solving the problem. The programme for 1962 may indeed be expected to be the last important programme for Germany. In Greece, Italy and Turkey, this programme constitutes the second instalment of the over-all plan for the settlement of all non-settled refugees. In France, on the other hand, more work remains to be done, since the problem was tackled at a later stage and with more limited resources.

While attending to the work thus performed in countries in which the objectives we have set ourselves are practically on the point of being achieved, my Office has been able to turn its attention to other countries in which problems, and sometimes acute problems, arise, also in connexion with old refugees. I have in mind particularly some North African and Middle Eastern countries for which an over-all plan is being studied in close co-operation with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, the United States Escapee Program, and the voluntary agencies. In Latin America too, there is a fairly large number of refugees who left their countries as a result of the First World War and so are now between sixty and seventy years of age, some of whom are living in extreme poverty. Spain also has a problem which is now being studied.

At its fifth session, it will be remembered, the Executive Committee adopted some fairly strict rules concerning supporting contributions from sources outside the United Nations. In accordance with that decision, negotiations have been conducted with the Governments of the countries concerned. I am pleased to say that these negotiations have on the whole been successful, particularly so far as France, Greece and Italy are concerned. In the case of Austria and Germany, negotiations are continuing and I am rather optimistic as to their outcome.

It is well known that in some countries there is a serious housing problem which affects refugees in particular, whether handicapped or not. My Office is still studying this question, in accordance with the desire expressed by the Committee last June, after it had noted with interest the preliminary study prepared by Mr. Seip. I hope the Committee will in due course have a further opportunity of discussing this question on a more solid basis.

Emigration, as repeatedly stated in this Committee, represents one of the solutions most universally desired by refugees in search of new foundations on which to rebuild their lives. In this field UNHCR, as you know, works in close collaboration with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, which is more specifically responsible for the transport of refugees to their destination. I have not the exact figures of the number of refugees who have been able to emigrate since the Committee's last session, but I can assure you that we have not slackened, and do not intend to slacken, our efforts in this vital section, on which largely depends the success of our efforts to prevent the re-emergence of the problem caused by the accumulation of refugees in camps.

In this connexion the Committee will certainly appreciate the information supplied by the Canadian delegation about the admission of tubercular refugees to Canada, as given in document A/AC.96/INF.4. The figures for the number of tubercular refugees thus resettled in Canada: 325 patients, plus 501 members of their families, or a total of 826 persons, are certainly extremely encouraging, the more so as we have been told by the Canadian authorities themselves that the resettlement of these refugees and their integration into the country's economy have not given rise to any particular difficulty but have been effected much more rapidly and satisfactorily than had been expected. In combination with a similar effort undertaken by the Swedish Government, this programme, if only it is continued, should make it possible to solve the problem of non-settled tubercular refugees completely in the near future.

With regard to the problem of handicapped refugees, which, as you know, is one of the most complex and delicate we have to face, I should like to mention that the systematic investigation undertaken in Italy with the assistance of Dr. Jensen, whose services have very kindly been loaned to us by the Australian Government, is now proceeding and will shortly be completed. In conjunction with the parallel study in Austria, this investigation will, I am sure, make it easier to settle appropriately refugees suffering from very serious handicaps which have so far prevented their resettlement in any form.

I have just referred, Mr. Chairman, to the co-operative spirit shown by the Australian Government in this matter, and I think the Committee will allow me to pay a special tribute to one of the men who, in that Government, have taken a particularly active part in framing an immigration policy adapted to the needs of the refugees. I am speaking of Sir Tasman Heyes, who until recently occupied the important post of Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Immigration at Canberra and has now retired. I have been able personally to appreciate his very human understanding of refugee problems, and I know of his unceasing efforts to overcome the difficulties resulting from the conflict between the usual immigration criteria and the special needs of refugees. And I take this opportunity to remind you that only through the maintenance and development of the co-operation established between this Office and the chief countries of immigration will it be possible to solve some of the still outstanding problems, notably the handicapped refugees problems and to prevent their recurrence in an equally acute form at some future date.

Before concluding my remarks on emigration, I should like to mention that since the entry into force of Public Law 86,648 by 30 June last, a favourable decision on their applications for admission to the United States had been given in the case of 7,264 refugees living in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany and Greece of whom 2,600 had already reached the country. I think there is no need for me to stress the beneficial effects of this legislation and the important contribution it is making to our campaign to reduce the number of non-settled refugees in Europe.

As regards the Far Eastern Operation, the situation, as you will see from the document before you, has undergone relatively little change since last June. The problem, however, has now been reduced to such proportions that an early final solution might be possible, if difficulties of which you are aware were not preventing these refugees from leaving the Chinese mainland.

I should not like to leave the subject of resettlement without saying a word on an operation now in progress which will, I am sure, be warmly welcomed by all delegations present at this meeting. Thanks to the generosity of the Belgian Government, which has agreed to receive 400 refugees now at the Gerovo Camp in Yugoslavia, it has been possible to conclude with the Yugoslav Government an agreement under which the camp will in future cease to be used for the accommodation of refugees. The Yugoslav authorities have agreed to evacuate the remaining refugees, about ninety persons, as soon as these 400 have left for Belgium. They have, however, reserved the right in principle to re-open the camp should they be faced with a substantial influx of new refugees before they can complete a new reception centre near Belgrade, a project for which they would like to receive some financial assistance through UNHCR. Needless to say, in the meantime no effort will be spared to promote the re-settlement of these ninety refugees, who also wish to emigrate. There is reason to hope that some of them will be able to join a number of compatriots to whom France has already extended its traditional hospitality.

I am also happy to be able to inform the Committee of the substantial progress made with regard to the protection of refugees. In the first place, the Convention of 28 July 1951 recently came into force in Colombia; it will also come into force shortly in Argentina and Turkey, since these countries have already ratified the Convention and it only remains for them to carry out the formal act of depositing their instruments of ratification. In addition, Niger has stated that it considers itself bound by the Convention. Thus twenty-nine States, not including Argentina and Turkey, are parties to the Convention while a number of others are contemplating acceding to it.

The Agreement relating to refugee seamen has recently been ratified by the Federal Republic of Germany, thus bringing up to eight the number of countries parties to this Agreement, which will enter into force on 27 December this year.

The Federal Republic of Germany has also acceded to the European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees, thus also bringing up to eight the number of countries parties to this Agreement, namely, Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

Still within the European context, the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, on 27 September this year, adopted a resolution inviting its members to urge their respective Governments and parliaments to extend the benefit of the agreements and conventions concluded under the European integration programme to refugees normally resident in the territory of the contracting parties. This appeal will, I am sure, find a ready response in all those countries.

After prolonged discussions, in which my Office took an active part, the United Nations finally adopted, on 29 August 1961, a Convention on the reduction of statelessness. This Convention has already been signed by Israel, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Its essential purpose is to enable children who would normally have been stateless to acquire a nationality. The provisions of this Convention relate to *de jure* stateless persons, but the Conference adopted a resolution recommending that persons who are *de facto* stateless should, wherever possible, be treated as *de jure* stateless to enable them to acquire a new nationality. More detailed information on this subject is given in document A/AC.96/INF.5.

As regards the Agreement concluded with the Federal Republic of Germany for the indemnification of refugees who, on account of their nationality, were victims of Nazism, over 11,000 applications have been received to date by the appropriate department of UNHCR. The majority of these are from refugees of Polish origin at present residing in France, Germany or the United States. Positive decisions have been taken on over 300 of these and so far a total of \$57,000 has been paid out.

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These, in short, are the main developments that have occurred since last June in this Office's normal fields of activity.

Other interesting and important events have also taken place during this period in another sphere, namely, new refugee situations. Before dealing with the situations most recently brought to our attention, I should like to say a few words about our operation in North Africa, a subject on which I shall have more to say when we come to discuss item 5. The outstanding event here has been the decision by the League of Red Cross Societies to continue their co-operation with UNHCR in carrying out the programme of material assistance to Algerian refugees in Morocco and Tunisia. The Committee will certainly join me in expressing gratification at this decision and in warmly thanking the League for its assistance, which is obviously of inestimable value.

A few moments ago I made a distinction between "new refugee" and "old refugee" problems. The reasons for this distinction are not merely chronological: they go to the very heart of the problem and so to the type of action required of UNHCR. Now that the big assistance programmes for European refugees are nearing completion, legal protection, as defined and elaborated in the Statute of the High Commissioner's Office, is on the way to becoming once more our main concern so far as these refugees are concerned. On the other hand, the problem raised by the new groups of refugees to which my attention was drawn some time ago, is essentially, at the moment, a problem of material assistance and not of legal protection. It is perhaps tempting to draw a parallel between the historical fact represented by the appearance of new groups of refugees in parts of the world in which UNHCR has not previously been asked to intervene, and the recent trend reflected, so far as UNHCR activities are concerned, by the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1388 (XIV) and 1499 (XV), under which material assistance can be given, through this Office, to refugees not normally coming within its mandate. I must emphasize, however, that there cannot be any true relationship between the terms of this two-fold development, both on the factual and the legal plane, or any necessary and exclusive link between the mandate and the "old refugees" on the one hand, and good offices and the "new refugees" on the other. What is important is that the work of this Office should be constantly adapted to the needs it has to meet. UNHCR now possesses this necessary flexibility by virtue of the above-mentioned resolutions, which enable it to take action in situations and in ways where, without an express decision of the Assembly, it would have had no authority to act. The duality of situation, and of historical and legal considerations, to which I referred just now, can and must thus be resolved into a single line of policy and action based solely on the interests of the refugees themselves.

It was in this spirit, Mr. Chairman, that I considered the fresh refugee problems brought to my attention since the Committee's last session and of which I would like to speak briefly now. It was also with these considerations in mind that I decided to draw on the Emergency Fund to meet urgent and at the same time very limited needs for which a special appeal to the international community would not have been either justified or appropriate. I shall revert to this point when I come to deal with the document relating to the Emergency Fund.

I reported to the Committee at its fifth session that I had been approached by the Royal Government of Cambodia with regard to refugees on its territory. After an investigation on the spot, by one of my colleagues, I had offered my good offices to the Government to assist with the problem. I had at the same time offered a sum equivalent to \$10,000, as a contribution to the exceptional expenses resulting from this influx of refugees. Since the fifth session, the Government of Cambodia has on several occasions reported a fresh influx of refugees and has recently again asked for more substantial help than that already provided. I am keeping in touch with the representatives of the Cambodian Government on this subject.

The Office of the High Commissioner has continued to devote attention to the problem of refugees from Tibet. We have received relatively large sums of money to be used for Tibetan refugees in Nepal and have handed this money over

to the International Committee of the Red Cross which is co-operating with the Government of Nepal in carrying out an aid and resettlement programme for Tibetan refugees.

Through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Government of Laos informed me of its anxiety with regard to 50,000 Laotian refugees who had been forced by events to leave their homes and of whom some 30,000 needed assistance. From conversations with the International Committee of the Red Cross and its local representative, however, it transpired that the majority of these refugees were concentrated in areas which were not easily accessible as a result of recent events. In these circumstances, it seemed that the International Committee of the Red Cross was, at least for the time being, the organization best able to provide effective assistance to these refugees, whom the Government of Laos is itself trying to help as much as it can.

After its first appeal to the United Nations in May last in connexion with the problem created by the large influx of refugees from Angola, the Government of the Republic of the Congo asked me to help with these refugees. This is a fairly large-scale problem since, according to figures supplied by the League of Red Cross Societies, which is co-ordinating assistance operations, at the beginning of October there were nearly 140,000 refugees, including a high proportion of women and children. The United Nations services in the Congo were able to provide food straight away to meet the refugees' immediate needs. As the League informed me, however, that it was in urgent need of funds with which to buy vehicles to transport the food, I immediately decided to assist by providing \$25,000 from the Special Fund. I then considered it advisable to earmark a further \$75,000 from the same fund to meet any further urgent needs in the near future.

Side by side with this immediate assistance, carried out jointly with the Congolese Red Cross and two voluntary agencies already working in the country, the League, in full agreement with the Congolese authorities and in close collaboration with the local authorities, worked out a plan for the integration of these refugees, at least on a temporary basis. Plots of vacant land are being found for them, together with the necessary tools and seeds. This constructive measure, which should soon render the distribution of food unnecessary, is now being carried out. The League, as well as the United Nations mission in the Congo, believes that by January next the great majority of these refugees will be in a position to provide for themselves. Their integration is facilitated by the fact that they belong to the same tribe as the local population. Thus there has been no serious accommodation problem, the local population having taken them into their own homes as they arrived. Two of my colleagues recently went to Leopoldville to make contact with the Congolese Government and ONUC authorities and examine how the HCR could assist, should that prove necessary. I decided, after this visit, to post an officer to the Congo to follow developments and see that the refugees' essential needs are met. This officer will also be able to play a useful part in co-ordinating the efforts of the various public and private bodies now providing aid, as well as in giving expert advice to the Congolese authorities on certain problems, both technical and otherwise, on which they may wish to consult him. To sum up, my Office, apart from the small financial contribution which I have already mentioned, has not so far had to participate directly in assistance operations under ONUC auspices, which should in the ordinary course of events be brought to a successful conclusion towards the end of this year. None the less, the fact that it was, and still is, in a position, if requested by the Congolese Government, to lend its good offices to help in finding a solution to the problems raised by the presence of this mass of refugees, is also noteworthy. It shows the interest which, through UNHCR, the international community takes in these problems and furnishes a good example of what this Office can do when faced with new situations in many respects different from those it has been accustomed to deal with. The question of the Angolan refugees in the Congo has, as you know, been placed on the agenda of the General Assembly, and I myself shall very soon be attending the discussions on this question in the Third Committee.

Since the Executive Committee's last session, my Office has also been in touch with the Spanish Government, which has asked for help in coping with the difficulties of caring for a group of more than 5,000 refugees from Cuba. One of my staff paid a visit to Spain and as a consequence a co-ordinated programme has now been drawn up which should enable these refugees either to be settled in Spain or—which would be more generally the case—to emigrate as they wish and as opportunity offers. This plan, which would involve the co-operation of the Spanish authorities, is now being studied in Madrid. The two voluntary organizations which, jointly with the Spanish Government, have been providing temporary relief for these refugees have not enough funds left to meet all the needs; accordingly, I placed at the disposal of one of them the sum of \$5,000, generously contributed by the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief. This sum will enable the organization concerned to satisfy some of the most urgent requirements of the neediest of these refugees for about two months.

I have similarly been informed by the Government of the Togolese Republic of the critical situation resulting from the presence of a large group of refugees in its territory. A report on this subject was also sent to me by the resident representative of the United Nations Technical Assistance Board in Togo. I therefore decided, at the express request of the President of the Togolese Republic, to send one of my staff to that country to determine the magnitude and nature of the problem. As a result of this inquiry, in which this staff member received the valuable and constant assistance of the experts of the specialized agencies of the United Nations at present working in Togo, it was established that the number of refugees now on Togolese territory is at least 10,000, which is a large figure for a country whose total population is not more than a million-and-a-half. Only a few thousand refugees have been integrated in the Togolese economy. Hence there remain nearly 8,000 who have not yet been able to find work in the country, which is one of the poorest in resources in the whole of Africa. It is only through the hospitality of the local population, whose food and housing they share without being able to make any contribution to the country's productive effort, that these refugees manage to survive.

The first problem is that of additional aid with which to satisfy the immediate needs for food, medical care and clothing. For this purpose I expect to receive assistance in kind from various Governments who are in a position to contribute either on a bilateral basis or through UNHCR.

More permanent solutions would involve a more searching study, in which my Office would be ready to share if the

Government of Togo was itself prepared to consider such plans. The contacts made by my representative in Togo, both with the Togolese authorities and with the representatives of the United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, suggest that it may not be impossible to institute a comprehensive programme in which provision would be made for the refugees.

As you will see, Mr. Chairman, there is already a long list of new refugee problems which have been brought to the notice of my Office and for which its help has in general been requested. Other requests, on which consultations are now proceeding, have reached the Office. In no case, of course, can my Office commit itself to any large-scale operation unless the international community has first been consulted, through its competent organs.

The function of the High Commissioner's Office, as I understand it, is accordingly rather that of a catalyst capable, by reason of its experience, of mobilizing or of making optimum use of the available resources by enlisting the co-operation of all the public or private organizations which can play a useful part in helping to solve the problems involved. There is evidence to show that joint and co-ordinated action by the High Commissioner's Office and the technical assistance services and other United Nations bodies or specialized agencies can in many cases be most useful and effective. By inviting this form of co-operation, by promoting or co-ordinating efforts, while not actually itself undertaking any operational scheme, the UNHCR will best be able, I think, to fulfil its obligations with respect to the new problems which arise almost daily. I think that the Office will also have to remind the Governments concerned, at every opportunity, of their fundamental responsibility as regards the welfare of the refugees on their territory and as regards the quest for solutions adequate for the problems posed by the conditions under which they live.

Before closing, I should like to say a word about the recent commemoration of the centenary of the birth of Fridtjof Nansen.

In accordance with the wish expressed by the Committee at its fifth session, UNHCR approached the Governments of the States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies and drew their attention to this event. Pamphlets and publications as well as films were supplied to them so as to help to make the occasion memorable and impressive. As you will gather from the relevant document, a great many countries honoured the memory of this eminent man whose good work still benefits the world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.