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Eleventh session  
Agenda item 67

QUESTION CONSIDERED BY THE SECOND EMERGENCY  
SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FROM 4 TO 10 NOVEMBER 1956

Interim report by the Secretary-General on  
refugees from Hungary

1. The General Assembly, at its second emergency special session, adopted three resolutions (A/RES/393, 398 and 399) concerning in part the refugees who have left and are leaving Hungary as a result of recent events in that country. The following is a brief interim report describing the steps taken by the Secretary-General in implementation of the relief provisions of the above resolutions in so far as they concern refugees, by way of introduction to a report by the Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees.
2. The text of A/RES/393 was transmitted to Member Governments by the Secretary-General by a note of 4 November and the texts of A/RES/398 and 399 by a note of 10 November.
3. On 4 November, the Secretary-General appointed Mr. Philippe de Seynes, Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs, to be responsible for the implementation of the relief provisions of the resolutions referred to in paragraph 1 above.
4. The Secretary-General on the same date asked the Deputy High Commissioner to consult with the appropriate international agencies and interested Governments with a view to making speedy and effective arrangements for refugees and informed him that special contributions from Member States for this purpose would be made available to him.

5. Since the adoption of the resolutions the Secretary-General has received the sum of \$1 million from the United States Government. Pledges have also been made by a number of other Governments; these are listed in the annex to the attached report of the Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees. A number of contributions from individuals and private groups have also been received.

6. The Secretary-General presented, on 14 November to the Government of the Federal Republic of Austria the sum of \$500,000 for refugee relief and on 19 November the sum of \$300,000 to the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, on receiving from the Deputy High Commissioner a provisional estimate of needs based on the number of refugees in Austria on 17 November.

7. The Secretary-General has the honour to present to the General Assembly a report which he has today received from the Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees.

REPORT TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON  
REFUGEES FROM HUNGARY

Submitted by the Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees

1. From 28 October to 18 November some 34,000 refugees have entered Austria, and although some 6,000 have already been taken from there into other countries the flow continues at an average rate of 2,000 a day. This is undoubtedly a heavy burden on a small country like Austria, which already contains 150,000 refugees under the mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees, 30,000 of whom are still living in camps.
2. Another country which has received refugees coming directly from Hungary is Yugoslavia. However, according to an official communication from the Government of Yugoslavia the **problem in that** country is as yet a small one. On 15 November there were, it is stated, no more than 300 such refugees in the country to whom the Government was providing food, lodging, clothing and medical care. The Yugoslav Government has therefore indicated that it does not need assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees for the present but has reserved its position in case the number of refugees should increase.
3. On 5 November the Government of the Federal Republic of Austria addressed an urgent appeal to the Office for two forms of assistance: on the one hand, for the early temporary acceptance of as great a number as possible of the refugees by other States, and on the other hand for financial assistance.
4. The Deputy High Commissioner immediately addressed such an appeal to the members of the UNREF Executive Committee by cable and eventually to a great many other Governments which have demonstrated their interest in and devotion to the solution of refugee problems.
5. The response to this appeal to the Governments to give temporary asylum to these refugees and thus quickly alleviate the burden upon Austria, was a remarkable one. A summary of these offers is contained in the annex to the present report. Switzerland was the first country to take the refugees on a large scale, but other countries also have been prompt to send missions to Austria in order to get the refugees away rapidly. This is a sharing of burdens which those in refugee work have always looked upon as the ideal, but until now it has not been a "realistic possibility".

6. In spite of the generous offers of asylum received, it is clear that several factors will be operating which will affect the rate at which refugees from Hungary can be resettled. In the first place, the attitude of the refugees is a paramount consideration, and many Hungarian refugees now in Austria have indicated that they do not wish to be settled outside Austria, while others have indicated they would prefer a nearby country. Secondly, the various criteria under which the several resettlement schemes operate will mean that not all refugees wishing to go to a particular country can do so. Lastly, there is a very wide variation in the rate of implementation of resettlement movements made under the different offers of asylum, and it is quite clear that many of them will not get underway for several months.

7. For all these reasons it is obvious that, in spite of the fact that the total number of offers of asylum exceeds the number of Hungarian refugees presently in Austria, planning must be done on the supposition that a considerable number of the Hungarian refugees now in Austria will remain there for at least six more months; to this figure must be added the numbers of new refugees who are now entering Austria at a daily rate of 2,000. It is estimated, therefore, that there will be a minimum of 20,000 refugees in Austria for at least six months and, if the rate of resettlement does not keep pace with the rate of influx, the figure may go even higher.

8. On this basis, it has been estimated that \$9 million of extra expenditures for the six months' period are required to meet this unforeseen situation. Of this, \$2.5 million represents the value of supplies already furnished by the International Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies and other international agencies; this figure was based on assistance given to some 30,000 refugees during the opening stages. The actual expenditures for the Austrian Government are therefore \$6.5 million for the 20,000 refugees who will stay at least six months.

9. If a large proportion of these 20,000 refugees remain in Austria for a further six months, and very few new refugees arrive, the expenses for Austria for the year might be \$11 million.

### Action required

10. From the above description of the situation created by the influx of refugees from Hungary to Austria it is clear that:

(a) An increased effort must be made to provide the resources through which emergency assistance can be given to the continuing number of refugees arriving in Austria. Minimum requirements for food, clothing and medical care have not yet been met for all the refugees who have arrived.

(b) Urgent expenditure is required to provide at least immediate accommodation for the continuing influx of refugees and for those refugees who will remain in Austria when present offers for resettlement outside Austria are exhausted.

(c) Every effort must be made to accelerate the acceptance and transportation from Austria of the Hungarian refugees to the various countries which have offered asylum and urgent consideration should be given to the feasibility of increasing opportunities for the resettlement of Hungarian refugees.

(d) Every possible assistance should be given to the Austrian Government to meet the increased costs which have been occasioned by the recent influx of refugees from Hungary.

### Estimated costs

11. At the time of writing the present report some 34,000 refugees had arrived from Hungary, with a daily average rate of arrival of 2,000. Of this number some 6,000 refugees had left Austria by 18 November; it is estimated that a further 8,000 may leave within the next thirty days.

12. Unless there is a substantial increase in the rate of departures and offers for resettlement it would seem reasonable to anticipate that there will, for the next six months be on Austrian territory at least 20,000 refugees from Hungary. On this assumption the following estimates of expenditure have been prepared in close consultation with the Austrian Government.

(a) Care and maintenance. The average daily per capita cost for care and maintenance for each refugee is one dollar. For 20,000 refugees for a period of six months the cost of care and maintenance will be \$3.6 million. It is not considered reasonable to deduct the value of the emergency feeding/

provided by the Red Cross during the first month, as the number of refugees on Austrian territory during that period exceeds considerably the 20,000 average figure on which the calculations are based.

(b) Financial and welfare assistance. In addition to care and maintenance, it is necessary to make provision for financial and welfare assistance for each refugee, which is estimated at ANS 1,000 (approximately forty dollars) per capita for six months. For 20,000 refugees this would amount to \$800,000.

(c) Transportation within Austria. The average cost of the transportation of the refugees from the border to the collecting point and from there to the camps or other accommodation in Austria is estimated at ANS 100 (approximately four dollars) per capita. For 20,000 refugees this would amount to \$80,000.

(d) Repair and adaptation of accommodation. It is estimated that, of the 20,000 refugees who are likely to remain in Austria for the next six months, some 6,000 may find accommodation in installations which do not require repair, such as existing federal camps and private accommodation of various types. For the remaining 14,000 the accommodation will have to be found at short notice in buildings which are at present in a poor state of repair. In addition to the cost of repair of the buildings an estimated fifty dollars per capita must be provided for the furnishing of the buildings. The cost of adaptation of fourteen installations to house 14,000 refugees would be \$1.2 million, while the cost of furnishings at fifty dollars per capita would amount to \$700,000.

(e) Increased administrative costs. For the servicing of the new installations which will be required to house refugees, and for the increases in the staff of the federal and provincial authorities responsible for refugees, it is estimated that there will be a rise in administrative expenditure of \$150,000 for six months.

Estimated cost for six months

13. The total estimated financial cost for six months, caused by the influx of Hungarian refugees into Austria, apart from the immediate care furnished by the Red Cross and other agencies in the opening stages of emergency assistance, is therefore \$6,530,000.

ANNEX

OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES FROM HUNGARY RECEIVED BY THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES AND THE INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION

as at 17 November 1956

<u>Country</u>	<u>Numbers of refugees offered asylum</u>	<u>Cash contribution for use through</u>		<u>Remarks</u>
		<u>UNHCR</u>	<u>ICEM</u>	
Argentina	3,000 (orphans)	-	\$10,000	None.
Australia	3,000	Aus.£ 30,000		The 3,000 refugees will include a certain number of adults above the normal immigration age. The contribution of £250,000 is to be divided between UNHCR, ICEM and the voluntary agencies. This will be used primarily for refugees from Hungary in Austria, but the allocation of the total amount between these refugees in Austria and in other areas is still to be decided.
Belgium	4,300	-	-	Arrangements for the reception and maintenance of the refugees in Belgium will be made by the "Centre d'initiation pour réfugiés et étrangers".
Bolivia	Unspecified	-	-	None.
Canada	-	\$100,000	-	Immigration priority will be given to refugees from Hungary.
Chile	1,000	-	-	Particular emphasis will be laid on selection of refugees suitable for employment in agriculture. The selection will be made by the Chilean Embassy in Austria.

Country	Number of refugees offered asylum	Cash contribution for the category	Remarks
		UNHCR ICEM	
Colombia	10,000	-	Arrangements could be made for the immediate reception of 1,000 refugees. The Colombian Government would want financial assistance from international organizations for their transportation and reception.
Denmark	200 (women and children)	\$30,000	Information has been requested by the Danish Government on the categories and numbers of refugees needing asylum, and on what aid in kind would be required from Denmark.
Dominican Republic	20,000	-	None.
Ecuador	Unspecified number of families and unaccompanied children	-	Agricultural workers would be preferred. They would be established on land made specially available by the Government.
France	Unspecified number	-	The French Government has declared that it will accept any refugee who expresses a wish to go to France.
Germany	5,000	-	None.
Greece	-	30 tons of raisins, value \$10,000	None.
Ireland	1,000	-	None.
Italy	2,000 (temporary asylum)	\$50,000	The possibility of admitting refugees from Hungary, now in Yugoslavia, pending their emigration elsewhere, is being considered.
Luxembourg	"Within limits of possibilities"	-	None.
Netherlands	"Over 1,300"	-	None.



Country	Number of refugees offered asylum	Cash contribution for use through	Remarks
		UNHCR ICEM	
New Zealand	500	-	Early consideration is being given by the New Zealand Government to a financial contribution.
Norway	-	-	No final decision has yet been taken, but the Norwegian Government has expressed its readiness to take a number of tuberculosis cases, and also refugees who are handicapped or are in some way specially difficult cases.
Portugal	A certain number of children and mothers	-	None.
Rhodesia and Nyasaland	30 children (orphans under five)	\$10,000	The children will be admitted under the auspices of the Child Protection Society. More children will be accepted later.
Spain	Unspecified number of children	-	None.
Sweden	1,000	-	The first group of 100 children and their mothers, could be received immediately.
Switzerland	4,000	-	None.
Turkey	500	-	None.
Union of South Africa	Several hundred artisans	£10,000) £ 5,000)	The amount of £10,000 is a contribution to the ICEM Transportation Fund; £5,000 is for payment at £20 a head, for 250 unsponsored refugees to be resettled in the Union of South Africa.
United Kingdom	2,500	-	None.
United States of America	5,000	\$1,000,000	"45 per cent Maximum financial contribution to ICEM - of total \$150,000. contributions"

<u>Country</u>	<u>Number of refugees offered asylum</u>	<u>Cash contribution for use through</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
		UNHCR	
		ICEM	
Council of Europe	-	Fr. Francs 1,000,000	Token contribution.

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