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*Chairman:* Mr. Erik NETTEL (Austria).

## AGENDA ITEM 51

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/7203, chap. XIII, sect. A; A/7211 and Corr.2 and Add.1, A/C.3/L.1622)

1. Prince Sadruddin KHAN (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) thanked all the delegations which had supported his re-election. Introducing his report for 1968 (A/7211 and Corr.2 and Add.1) he said that, since it described the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in detail, he would simply give a general outline of those activities and of the main achievements during 1968, particularly in Africa, since the bulk of his Office's work was now on that continent.

2. The year 1968 had been a period of consolidation and progress, and the main successes had been achieved in three essential fields: protection, which was still the principal task of the High Commissioner, international co-operation in its most general sense, and the settlement of African refugees in rural areas. Particularly striking results had been achieved with regard to protection. Fifty-five countries had signed the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the most recent being Madagascar, Finland and Botswana. Twenty-seven countries had already become parties to the Protocol to that Convention—a record number for an instrument opened for signature in 1967. Those instruments emphasized the importance of refugee status as a condition for economic integration and complete assimilation, as well as for voluntary repatriation. A satisfactory legal status, enabling the refugee to lead a normal life and protecting him against direct or indirect pressure, was the prerequisite for a free choice.

3. The holding of conferences on the refugee problem also showed the growing interest being taken in that subject in larger spheres and geographical areas. He particularly welcomed a resolution<sup>1/</sup> adopted by the International Conference on Human Rights at Teheran, which stressed the importance of the principle of

non-refoulement, voluntary repatriation, family reunion and naturalization. The Summit Conference of African States held at Algiers in 1968 had discussed the possibility of drawing up a regional convention on African refugees, which would undoubtedly be most useful. In addition, it had recommended that those States which had not already done so should sign the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol. Twenty-three African States had already signed the Convention and nine had signed the Protocol.

4. With regard to international co-operation, the Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees, established in pursuance of a decision taken at Addis Ababa in 1967, by the Conference on the Legal, Economic and Social Aspects of African Refugee Problems, was now functioning and had achieved most encouraging results. It was a basic instrument for the co-ordination of efforts in Africa and the smooth solution of individual cases which could not be solved within the framework of projects for collective settlement. The Bureau, whose role and importance would grow with the years, would provide educational opportunities to African refugees and contribute to avoiding the brain drain.

5. Inter-agency co-operation was no longer a goal; it had become a reality. In that connexion, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was a key element in the rural integration of refugees in Africa. Burundi was the first convincing example of what could be expected from an "integrated approach" to the problem, involving the co-ordination of the assistance provided by various agencies. Co-operation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had gained new impetus from the discussions held with its Executive Director. The Office was now receiving \$25,000 in medicaments for Senegal and was considering the possibility of obtaining medical equipment for Uganda and the Sudan. The aid from the World Food Programme—about \$1 million in foodstuffs per year—was of vital importance during the whole pre-settlement period. Indispensable assistance of various kinds was being provided by the World Health Organization (WHO): systematic vaccination campaigns, the establishment of medical posts, dispensaries and mobile clinics, the recruitment and training of health officers and the eradication of the tsetse fly in areas where refugees were being settled. The Office also had the co-operation and expert advice of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). As a result, its action had acquired a new dimension. Governments had a better understanding of the contribution which refugees could make to

<sup>1/</sup> See Final Act of the International Conference on Human Rights, Teheran, 22 April to 13 May 1968 (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.XIV.2), resolution XIII, p. 13.

economic and social development, which also made the protection function easier.

6. The new integrated approach to refugee problems, which was in line with the relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and with the recommendations of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), was another example of the dynamic character of UNHCR action and of the catalytic role of an Office which was taking an increasingly active part in the concerted efforts of the United Nations system as a whole.

7. Where the settlement of refugees in Africa was concerned, the solution for the great majority was rural integration. In that connexion, he noted that, out of more than 850,000 refugees, only 70,000 still needed and were receiving daily food rations. That did not mean, of course, that all the others had been completely settled, since integration was a long process. Nevertheless, it was encouraging that, after so short a time, more than 80 per cent of the refugees were at work and in a position to take care of themselves. It was encouraging too, that the competent United Nations agencies would continue the Office's activities when the stage was reached where the consolidation of integration depended only on development plans.

8. One of the main problems which had arisen during 1968 was the steady increase, both in the number and in magnitude, of refugee problems in Africa: more than 40,000 new refugees had arrived in various African countries since the beginning of the year. That figure did not of course, include displaced persons within the territory of their own country, who were not refugees in the sense of the High Commissioner's mandate.

9. Before the recent events in Central Europe, the refugee problem in that continent was no longer critical. Because of those events, there were a number of persons outside their country of origin, staying in various European countries. A certain number had asked for asylum whilst others had decided to emigrate overseas. At the request of the Austrian Government, the High Commissioner's Office had been able to provide assistance. Close touch had also been kept with the other Governments concerned, in order to ensure that the human problems of the persons concerned were solved, either through repatriation, integration or resettlement abroad. In achieving that goal, he stated that the objective and impartial efforts of his Office would be greatly facilitated if his Office could count on the direct co-operation of all Governments concerned.

10. Where objectives for 1969 were concerned, the general aim would be to pursue action in connexion with protection, assistance and international co-operation, concentrating on certain areas.

11. The first of those areas was protection, which remained a fundamental task of the High Commissioner. He had repeatedly stressed the importance of providing an adequate legal status to refugees. It was not enough to become a party to the international instruments relating to refugees; all their essential provisions should be properly implemented. That applied particularly to Africa, where he intended to

strengthen his action in that regard as part of his global approach to refugee problems.

12. The second area was repatriation. Although the Statute listed voluntary repatriation as the first solution, the fact that the number of repatriations continued to be limited might give the impression that that was a theoretical rather than a practical solution. He was, of course, perfectly aware of the obstacles impeding repatriation, but he had no intention of abandoning the search for solutions. The refugee's choice between repatriation and provisional or final settlement in another country must be truly free. That implied, firstly, that the authorities of the country of asylum should not exert any pressure on the refugee to oblige him to return to his country of origin and, secondly, that the refugee should be given accurate information about the living conditions he might find in his country of origin if he decided to return there, in order to determine whether those conditions were acceptable to him. In that connexion, he welcomed the contacts which had taken place between many African countries and the agreement concluded among them to facilitate voluntary repatriation. He, for his part, would spare no effort to ensure that refugees desiring to return to their country were provided with various forms of aid (documents, transport, etc.) and to spread the idea of assistance by the United Nations specialized agencies to restore the economy of areas which had suffered through internal strife.

13. With respect to naturalization, his Office had endeavoured from the outset to obtain increased facilities from Governments. Its efforts in that direction would be continued, particularly in densely populated countries where naturalization was subject to stricter conditions than in countries of large immigration. He also hoped that the refugees themselves would be induced to take full advantage of the facilities afforded them. The voluntary agencies were playing an important role in that connexion.

14. Where education was concerned, he said that, if refugees were to occupy the place to which they were entitled in the economic, social and cultural life of their adoptive country or of their country of origin, should they return there, they must enjoy the same facilities as nationals. In the developing countries, however, that implied outside aid from the start, since there could be no question of creating structures specially intended for refugees. On that realistic and, after all, very modest assumption, UNHCR had begun with primary education. Countries like Burundi, Senegal and the Democratic Republic of the Congo had taken over responsibility for the primary schools set up in areas where refugees had been settled. Thanks to the generous contribution from the Scandinavian countries, the Office hoped to expand its efforts in 1969 to cover secondary and vocational education, in close co-operation with UNESCO, UNICEF and the other competent authorities.

15. Lastly, in the sphere of inter-agency co-operation, no effort would be spared to strengthen co-operation with all interested members of the United Nations system, and in connexion with rural integration action would be intensified in areas where internal difficulties had prevented plans from being carried out.

16. In view of the need to pursue or intensify UNHCR material assistance, especially in Africa, and of the increasing number of refugees on that continent, the financial target had had to be increased by \$1 million.

17. Turning to the financing of the programme, he said that twenty Governments, notably those of the Scandinavian countries, had substantially increased their annual contributions, and as a result 75 per cent of costs were covered by governmental contributions, as against 63 per cent previously. Sixty-three countries were now contributing to the programme—the highest number ever registered.

18. The activities of UNHCR enabled thousands of persons, who had often been brutally uprooted from their countries, once more to live a normal, peaceful and active life, and to do so in the shortest possible time and at minimum expense. UNHCR was prepared to continue its work in the framework laid down by the General Assembly, and its constant desire was to serve as a bridge between the country of origin of the refugees, the country of asylum and the countries which were giving financial, moral and political support to the work of UNHCR. If the General Assembly wished the tasks entrusted to UNHCR to be satisfactorily carried out or even expanded, the necessary qualified staff must be made available. He therefore hoped that the competent organs of the United Nations would take account of that situation, and of the imperative and changing nature of those activities which were intended merely to cover minimum needs and enable the refugees to live a decent life.

19. Mr. ØSTTVEIT (Norway) congratulated the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on his re-election. The report of the High Commissioner made clear the changing nature of refugee problems. The centre of gravity had gradually shifted from Europe to Africa, where most of the High Commissioner's work was now being carried out. As a result, most of the 850,000 African refugees were now able to cover their basic needs by their own work, mainly as farmers.

20. Assistance to refugees in Africa and other developing regions was closely connected with economic and social development programmes; the assistance provided by the international community had therefore had to be co-ordinated, and that had resulted in the active participation by the High Commissioner in the Inter-Agency Consultative Board of UNDP.

21. At the country level there had also been further progress in inter-agency co-operation; in that context, co-operation was viewed as a strengthening of the concerted United Nations efforts, by enabling each agency to benefit from the activities of other agencies and thus to achieve maximum results at minimum cost.

22. His delegation agreed that the High Commissioner should pursue his efforts along the same lines in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2197 (XXI). It also endorsed the views expressed by the 1967 Conference on African Refugee Problems with respect to the importance of integrated zonal development for the benefit of refugees and the local population alike.

23. One particular aspect of refugee settlement projects in Africa deserved special attention, namely refugee education, since the settlement projects were often in areas with little or no social and economic infra-structure. Primary education was generally a component part of settlement projects, but it had not been possible to include secondary education in the High Commissioner's Programme, and an education account had therefore had to be established by the High Commissioner outside the Programme. The Government of Norway had been contributing to that account since its inception, and intended to increase its contribution for the coming year. Education was so important for the success of refugee integration that secondary education should also be included in the High Commissioner's annual material assistance programme. In connexion with refugee education in Africa, his Government believed that the Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees had a very important task, and had placed \$30,000 at its disposal, through the High Commissioner.

24. With respect to the financing of the Programme, he said that Norway had increased by 25 per cent its 1968 contribution which amounted to approximately \$140,000, and his Government had proposed to Parliament that the 1969 contribution should be increased by a further 25 per cent. Those increases were based on the conviction that it should be the responsibility of Governments to provide the resources for the High Commissioner's Programme, so that the voluntary agencies, which were so active and efficient in that field, could take care of much-needed supplements to the Programme.

25. Where the international legal protection of refugees was concerned, he was pleased to note that the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees had now been ratified by fifty-three countries and that twenty-seven countries had acceded to the 1967 Protocol on that subject. If integration of refugees was to be successful, it was important that they should enjoy the status provided for in the Convention and in other international instruments relating to refugees.

26. In conclusion, he introduced a draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1622) of which his delegation was one of the sponsors and which he hoped would be adopted unanimously by the Committee.

27. Lady GAITSKELL (United Kingdom) said she was pleased to note that in the report of the High Commissioner (A/7211 and Corr.2 and Add.1) the period under review was described as having been largely a period of stabilization; that meant that the major portion of the programme funds had been devoted to helping the refugees to become self-supporting, so that their economic and social situation should be similar to that of the local population and they could become assimilated into the community in which they found themselves. In that connexion, no praise was high enough for these African countries—hardly affluent themselves—which had given work and shelter to refugees from surrounding countries.

28. The solution of refugee problems was costly, and consequently she was pleased to hear that Governments had increased their contributions; she agreed that the main support must be provided by Govern-

ments. Her Government had contributed £120,000 in spite of financial difficulties, and hoped to respond to the 1969 Programme as generously as possible.

29. Her Government had acceded to the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees—though in fact it had at no time rejected a claim for asylum—merely because of the deadline in the Convention. Those two legal instruments provided the rigid framework for action by Governments and obliged them to adopt certain standards of behaviour. The Declaration on Territorial Asylum adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second session (resolution 2312 (XXII)) was also of great importance as a statement of world opinion.

30. The right of asylum, which was recognized in article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, was the corner-stone of the High Commissioner's activities. It was therefore particularly fitting that the International Conference on Human Rights at Teheran had adopted resolution XIII on co-operation with the High Commissioner, it was at the request of the United Kingdom delegation that operative paragraph 3 had been included, dealing with the vital principle of non-refoulement—the principle that a refugee should not be compelled to return to a country in which he had been persecuted.

31. The measure of the success attained by the High Commissioner's Office within the limits of its resources was to be found in the breadth and wisdom of its approach to the general refugee problem and its exploring of every possible means of solving it.

32. Mr. de GUZMÁN (Colombia) said one human right that had not been defined was the right to a home country. Refugees were persons who, for political, economic or other reasons, did not find in their home country conditions propitious to their attainment of progress and development. The refugee problem would exist as long as there were men on earth, and there must therefore be an international agency to concern itself with those who had been violently expelled from their countries and to help them to settle in some other place where they would be safe from political hazards. That being so, his delegation's support for the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was dictated by conscience.

33. The report of the High Commissioner was a document of the highest importance, because it brought together a number of facts relating to the politics of the day. It was natural that attention should be concentrated on the refugee situation in the African continent, which was the hub of the politics of the present and the future.

34. His delegation was a sponsor of the draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1622) introduced by the representative of Norway, because of a national commitment, in that Colombia was a signatory of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and, although the Protocol to that instrument had not yet been approved, it had been submitted to the Colombian Parliament for that purpose.

35. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran) repeated the congratulations his delegation had addressed, in the General Assembly,

to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on his re-election. The work of his Office was characterized by militant realism: realism, in that it was everywhere adapted to specific situations; militant, since it represented a commitment to the struggle for a noble cause.

36. Despite the serious and difficult nature of the refugee problem, the High Commissioner's report, like his statement, inspired optimism, for both showed that the past year had been a stage of consolidation and progress.

37. A notable feature of the report was the success of the rural integration programme for refugees in Africa, which was all the more significant in that it had been carried out in such a short time and with such limited means. While in no way excluding the possibility of individual or collective repatriation for the refugees, that programme made it possible for them, in the meantime, to lead a peaceful, active and useful life in the communities which gave them refuge.

38. Another important point was the progress which had been achieved with respect to co-operation, as a result of which the High Commissioner's activities in Africa had been able to take on a new dimension, enabling each organization to derive the maximum benefit from the activities of others and to obtain better results at the lowest possible cost. In short, the activities of the United Nations as a whole would be strengthened, and such co-operation should serve as a model in other fields.

39. He supported the view of the High Commissioner concerning the importance of education for refugees. The co-operation provided by UNESCO and the ILO, which was mentioned in paragraphs 24 and 90 of the report (A/7211 and Corr.2), offered a very interesting example of the progress which could be made by developing co-operation to the full.

40. If there was cause for satisfaction in the work accomplished by the High Commissioner, he must be provided with the means to continue that work. The expansion in the Programme for the next year would require a minimum of personnel, and he therefore trusted that the competent organs of the United Nations would give careful consideration to the High Commissioner's remarks about his administrative budget.

41. In regard to financial resources, he was somewhat concerned by paragraph 241 of the report, which stated that a considerable effort would need to be made to ensure that the 1968 Programme would be fully financed. He hoped that contributions would increase in size and number. In that connexion, he wished to pay tribute to the activities of voluntary agencies and non-governmental organizations in both the advanced and the developing countries, which were referred to in paragraphs 35 and 39 and chapter IV.

42. On the whole, the report of the High Commissioner was reassuring for it not only gave evidence of appreciable progress, but also showed the continuity of the humanitarian work of his Office. It was a complete, concise document which encouraged the



reader not to be satisfied with the results achieved and drew attention to the fact that voluntary repatriation was still the ideal solution to the refugee problem, but that, in the interim, there was only one alternative, which was the rapid and complete assimilation of refugees into the communities in which they had to live.

43. He hoped that one day the word "refugee" would be used only in a historical sense, but, until then, full support should be given to the High Commissioner and his staff, in the great humanitarian task in which they were engaged. He therefore hoped that the draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1622) co-sponsored by his delegation would be adopted unanimously.

44. Mr. GREGH (France) congratulated Prince Sadruddin Khan on his re-election as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and thanked him for his clear and precise statement on the activities of his Office.

45. The humanitarian assistance provided by the Office of the High Commissioner must be a political, in order to benefit victims of political vicissitudes in an era of change. UNHCR must therefore take specific practical action to protect refugees impartially, regardless of their origin; that presupposed a mutual trust between the High Commissioner and the Governments of Member States. In addition, it meant that a portion of the funds of the Office of the High Commissioner should be reserved for emergency assistance.

46. The activities of the Office of the High Commissioner must to a certain extent be linked with development aid. After the initial period of emergency aid, international assistance should be directed towards the establishment of the refugees in their countries of asylum. His delegation therefore welcomed the fact that the High Commissioner, together with the directors of the main bodies of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, had been invited to participate in meetings of the co-ordination of development aid. His Office should seek to bring about a permanent improvement in the economic and social condition of refugees in areas of asylum, encouraging their integration into their new communities. Such integration must not be compulsory, either economically or legally, particularly as far as the naturalization of refugees was concerned. The possibility of returning to their country of origin should not be ruled out, and he congratulated the Office of the High Commissioner on the aid it had provided in 1967 to refugees who wished to return to the Congo.

47. Since two thirds of the financial programme of the Office of the High Commissioner for 1968 was earmarked for the resettlement of refugees in Africa, it was natural that the programme should often take the form of participation in multi-sectoral area development projects. The role of UNHCR should basically be to act as a catalyst, so that Governments and international bodies specializing in development aid could soon take over from it. A \$4.5 million aid budget could not be burdened with excessively long-term operations without running the risk of losing its flexible nature, which should continue to be one of its essential characteristics. Similarly, it was impossible to increase the number of special funds, such as the one for secondary education and vocational training

for African refugees, without, in the long run, jeopardizing refugee work as such.

48. He congratulated the High Commissioner on his activities and, referring to resolution XIII on co-operation between Member States and the High Commissioner which had been adopted unanimously at the Teheran Conference, said that Governments must continue to give attention to the status of refugees throughout the world.

49. He fully supported the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Norway, of which his delegation was a co-sponsor.

50. Miss CAO-PINNA (Italy), after congratulating Prince Sadruddin Khan on his unanimous re-election as High Commissioner, said that recent events in central Europe had created new groups of refugees and unexpected burdens for countries of first asylum and for UNHCR. After twenty years of effort, the situation of European refugees showed signs of improvement, although problems remained with regard to the international protection of refugees and with respect to aged and handicapped refugees. The situation had changed, and more families would be tempted to leave their countries, with all the human problems that entailed. That showed the importance the role of the High Commissioner still had to play in Europe.

51. She also congratulated the High Commissioner on the comprehensiveness and clarity of his report and on his brilliant introduction. Her delegation wished to reiterate its position with respect to the variety of needs which the High Commissioner had to meet in order to help refugees integrate themselves into countries of first asylum or resettlement. The budget of UNHCR was small and could support only the material needs of the first period of displacement and resettlement of refugees. Its main role was only that of a catalysing agent for prompt action by the specialized agencies. She therefore trusted that the High Commissioner would not expand direct action of that type and would succeed in meeting the educational needs of refugees through the normal channels and through concerted efforts on the part of his Office, UNESCO and other educational bodies.

52. Finally, she repeated that her Government had decided to increase its contribution to the Office of the High Commissioner from \$2,000 to \$20,000, subject to parliamentary approval. That contribution was still a token, since her country had spent and continued to spend large amounts for assistance to refugees and provided them with a network of well-organized services. The increase in her country's token contribution was a further expression of the interest and the appreciation with which the Italian people followed the High Commissioner's humanitarian work.

53. Mr. PETERSEN (Denmark) said that the clarity of the UNHCR report justified the confidence enjoyed by the High Commissioner and his staff. It was encouraging that the refugees would be enabled, through co-operation with the specialized agencies, UNDP and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to contribute to the progress of their adopted countries.

He therefore hoped that there would be a favourable response to the appeals for an increase in contributions by Governments and believed that the number of participating countries should also increase. Denmark would raise its contribution by 40 per cent, subject to parliamentary approval. His Government attached great importance to refugee education and therefore made periodic contributions to various programmes. He reaffirmed his delegation's full support for the work of UNHCR.

54. Mr. TOREES-CARRILHO (Brazil) said that his country, which had given asylum to many refugees, had followed the High Commissioner's excellent work with great interest and was glad that he had agreed to continue at his post. He congratulated the High Commissioner on his informative report and his brilliant introduction to it.

55. Mrs. SIPILÄ (Finland) joined in congratulating the High Commissioner on his excellent report and the progress made by UNHCR in solving the problems of the refugees by repatriation, local integration or resettlement.

56. She was happy to report that in September 1968 Finland had ratified the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. That action demonstrated her Government's desire to give refugees a legal status comparable with that of nationals of the countries in which they lived. The same applied to their economic and social status, and she welcomed the local integration of refugees through successful community development projects in various countries, especially in Africa, in the absence of final repatriation, which would always be the most desirable solution.

57. The Government of Finland had demonstrated its interest in material assistance to refugees by increasing its contribution to UNHCR in 1968 by more than 100 per cent, from \$15,000 to \$40,000.

58. The people of Finland had shown the extent of their concern through their participation in the European Campaign for Refugees, 1966, and, as a result, the Finnish Refugee Council and other organizations, including the Church, were able to support various projects presented to them by UNHCR.

59. The Refugee Councils of the Nordic countries were considering concentrating their efforts in joint campaigns, in which they would take advantage of opportunities to disseminate information by radio and television programmes in order to arouse interest in assistance. There were various projects for educating public opinion which would be reflected mainly in the assistance Governments could provide through public funds.

60. She wished the High Commissioner continued success and welcomed the co-operation that had been maintained with his Office. She hoped that the draft resolution introduced by the representative of Norway, which her delegation had co-sponsored, would be adopted unanimously.

61. Dame Mabel MILLER (Australia), congratulating the High Commissioner on the report and his introduction, observed that Australia had not only co-operated with the UNHCR programme from the be-

ginning but also had provided hundreds of thousands of refugees with new homes and resettlement opportunities. Her delegation appreciated the efforts of UNHCR to relieve the suffering of refugees and find a final solution to their problems. It was glad to know that the High Commissioner would remain at his post for another term.

62. Her delegation noted with satisfaction that the past year had been a period of consolidation for the programme of UNHCR. It was encouraging that a growing number of African refugees were passing beyond the initial stage of emergency relief with the aid of the host countries and international organizations and that settlement programmes in Asia and Africa were achieving their objectives by offering refugees a choice between voluntary repatriation and integration into the host country.

63. She welcomed the substantial progress made in the sphere of co-operation between UNHCR and the specialized agencies, UNDP and the World Food Programme. That activity accorded with the Australian view that UNHCR should not act as an aid agency by itself but should act as a catalyst for programmes to be undertaken by the host countries, United Nations agencies and voluntary and non-governmental organizations. It was pleasing that UNHCR was continuing to co-operate closely with voluntary organizations.

64. Although overall the situation was no longer as serious as it once was, there were still refugee problems in Europe, and UNHCR was working hard to solve them. As a result of events in Central Europe that year, several thousand refugees had emigrated to Australia.

65. Her delegation welcomed the fact that UNHCR continued to allocate funds for assistance to Tibetan refugees, European refugees in Hong Kong and Chinese refugees in Macau.

66. With regard to the financial problem created by an expected deficit of \$300,000 in the annual target of \$4,631,600 set by the Executive Committee for 1968, she welcomed the fact that a number of countries had announced their first contribution to the UNHCR budget and that others had increased their contributions. Australia would again contribute \$150,000 to the UNHCR budget in 1968, subject to parliamentary approval.

67. Her delegation hoped that the demands confronting UNHCR in coming years would enable him to avoid progressively higher annual budget targets, particularly if costs continued to exceed contributions. It also trusted that there would be continued progress and co-operation with specialized agencies and non-governmental and voluntary organizations, with a view to relieving the financial burden of the Programme.

68. She was sure that UNHCR would continue to perform its duties as efficiently as during the past year, and she wished it every success.

69. Mr. MATHYS (Canada) congratulated the High Commissioner for Refugees on his re-election and thanked him for the realistic presentation of his report. Canada was continuing its efforts to improve the situation of refugees; in 1967 it had welcomed more than 1,400, and an equally large figure was expected

for 1968. In addition to the ordinary programmes for refugees, Canada had just initiated a special programme to support fifty handicapped refugees.

70. Since the problems of refugees were constantly changing, Canada had re-examined its policy in the light of recent events. It had received assistance from UNHCR in planning its programmes and, as in the past, his Government would give careful study to the High Commissioner's evaluations and recommendations.

71. Steps had been taken for Canada's early ratification of the 1951 Convention and the Agreement relating to Refugee Seamen.

72. Mr. MEHIRI (Tunisia) joined in congratulating the High Commissioner on the confidence shown in him by his re-election and on his clear and concise report. He was also to be congratulated on his wise and efficient management of vital activities on behalf of refugees, including, in particular, almost one million Africans.

73. Tunisia had co-operated with the High Commissioner in his work, especially in connexion with the Algerian war, and understood the difficulties which it involved: first, emergency measures must be taken to save refugees and give them physical protection, secondly, there must be long-term action to set up a system in which they could at least survive and, thirdly, arrangements must be made for their resettlement.

74. The High Commissioner's efforts would be fruitless without the support, understanding and co-operation of the international community. It was to be hoped that the financial means available to UNHCR, especially voluntary contributions from Governments, would be increased. Governments themselves should also help solve the problem of resettling refugees temporarily or permanently in their territory.

75. Tunisia would do everything in its power to help the High Commissioner provide every refugee with hope and the opportunity for a decent life safe from fear, servitude and hunger.

76. He hoped that the draft resolution submitted by Norway and a number of other countries, including Tunisia, would be adopted by the Committee as a sign that it appreciated the High Commissioner's work and gave him its full support.

77. Mr. BABAA (Libya), speaking on behalf of his Government and his delegation, warmly congratulated the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on his re-election and felt sure that his ability and dynamic leadership would find a solution to the varied and difficult problems of the hundreds of thousands of refugees throughout the world. He thanked the High Commissioner for his statement and was particularly satisfied with his encouraging remarks about present trends in the refugee situation, especially in Africa, as regards international protection, co-operation with various international bodies and the settlement of African refugees in rural areas. He also welcomed the effective co-operation between UNHCR and other agencies, such as UNDP, UNICEF, WHO and FAO.

78. His country would continue to give moral and material support to the High Commissioner's tireless efforts to solve the problems of refugees. In response to the High Commissioner's repeated appeals, Libya had increased its modest annual contribution and would give favourable consideration to increasing its contribution to the programme in 1969. It had also undertaken to contribute to another refugee aid programme in the Middle East. The number of refugees in that area and in Africa was increasing as a result of foreign intervention and racial and colonial policies. His delegation felt that the international community should take preventive measures to solve the problem of refugees through the elimination of colonialism. It also believed that those States which had created the refugee problem should consider the possibility of making at least a token contribution to the work of UNHCR. Lastly, he hoped that in view of the humanitarian nature of the draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1622) which his country had co-sponsored, the Committee would adopt it unanimously.

*The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.*