



Chairman: Miss Maria GROZA (Romania).

*Expressions of sympathy in connexion with the
catastrophe in Pakistan*

1. The CHAIRMAN asked the Pakistan delegation to convey to its Government the profound sympathy of both the officers and the Committee on the recent natural disaster which had taken so many lives and caused so much damage to property in East Pakistan. If there was no objection, she would send a cable to the Pakistan Government expressing the solidarity of the Third Committee with the people of Pakistan in their hour of affliction.

It was so decided.

2. Prince Sadruddin Aga KHAN (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), Mr. ALWAN (Iraq), Princess Ashraf PAHLAVI (Iran), Mr. MOUSSA (United Arab Republic), Mrs. DAES (Greece), Mr. ACHILLE-FOULD (France), Mr. TAYLOR (Australia), Mr. MANI (India), Mrs. DINÇMEN (Turkey) and Mr. HEYMAN (Sweden) expressed their sorrow at the disaster which had ravaged East Pakistan.

3. Begum HAMIDULLAH (Pakistan) thanked the Chairman and all the members of the Committee for their expressions of sympathy and solidarity, which she would convey to the people and Government of Pakistan.

AGENDA ITEM 57

**Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for
Refugees (A/8003, chap. XI, sect. K; A/8012 and Add.1,
A/C.3/L.1810)**

4. Prince Sadruddin Aga KHAN (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that, twenty years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 428 (V), which had established the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the world situation continued to be more conducive to creating new groups of refugees than to securing peace and accelerating development. The Office was strictly a humanitarian and non-political organization and its function was not to comment on the causes of the problem but to find rapid and durable remedies for its effects. For that purpose, new initiatives and techniques were constantly required. The growing awareness that stagnation in refugee situations involved dangers to international peace and understanding was a guarantee of the unanimous support which, in the general interest, UNHCR had been receiving from the Third

Committee. The Office was not only working in close co-operation with the Economic and Social Council but was taking greater note of the debates of other United Nations bodies, in particular the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which had expressed their appreciation of the efforts made by UNHCR, within its sphere of competence, to assist refugees from the territories with which they were concerned. In accordance with its Statute, UNHCR endeavoured to alleviate the sufferings of those human beings in a pragmatic fashion, without regard for political considerations. In that way, it was making a tangible contribution to the fulfilment of the purposes of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), in particular by educating and training the refugees, preparing them so that they could return home and participate constructively in the development of their countries. For them, as for all refugees, the ideal solution remained voluntary repatriation, which UNHCR promoted whenever and wherever possible.

5. However, there were many refugees who could not yet return to their homes, and recognition of their status and their corresponding rights in the country of asylum must be ensured. He was therefore gratified to announce that sixty States had acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and that forty-two had acceded to the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. The Office also attached great importance to the work done for refugees by regional organizations: in that connexion it should be noted that the American Convention on Human Rights had been concluded at San José, Costa Rica, in November 1969, that resolution 70 (2) of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, adopted on 26 January 1970, would facilitate full integration of refugees through naturalization and that the OAU was directing its efforts towards the implementation of the Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. Despite all those encouraging measures, it must also be noted that some deplorable instances of forced return or *refoulement* had occurred. Consequently, he appealed to Governments to take account of the basic human rights of refugees and to abide by the principles enunciated in the relevant legal instruments.

6. The confidence of Governments in work of the Office of the High Commissioner had been reflected in their greater financial support. The number of countries contributing to the Programme might rise to eighty as compared to seventy-five in 1969 and fifty in 1966; government financial contributions had grown to \$4.7 million, an increase of 15 per cent over the previous year. As a result, government contributions had risen to about 80 per cent of the Programme needs, but he would like the proportion to be 100 per cent, so that assistance to meet vital needs would

not be continually subject to the vagaries of private fund-raising. The support and encouragement of Governments had enabled UNHCR to consolidate rural settlement programmes and, to that end, it increasingly sought the collaboration of the whole of the United Nations system. Many experts from the specialized agencies, including FAO, the ILO and WHO, were working so that refugees might become self-supporting, particularly in the African countries, while UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Food Programme continued to give the UNHCR programme their valuable co-operation in the form of technical skills or contributions in kind. At the same time, UNHCR had remained successful in its traditional role as a catalyst, attracting supporting contributions for refugee aid programmes. In 1969, those totalled \$7.2 million, as against \$5.4 million in 1968.

7. Nevertheless, rural programmes could become more effective if host Governments requested assistance from the United Nations system as soon as possible after the initial needs of the refugees had been met. The long-term consolidation of large refugee settlements could only be effective if they were taken into account in over-all development planning. Since that task was beyond the limited means of UNHCR and fell more within the competence of Governments and of other United Nations bodies dealing with development and financing, he appealed for consistency in governmental positions in those other forums. That was essential if UNHCR, rather than having to help the same groups of refugees year after year, could concentrate on urgent cases as they arose, and such of its functions that could not be delegated.

8. A serious problem he foresaw for the immediate future was the increasing number of individual needy refugees in the cities of Africa and also of other continents, a problem which would be solved only if national legislation concerning refugees was in line with international principles. The Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees of the Organization of African Unity must now produce tangible results. He went on to thank the Governments of the Nordic countries for their generous support for refugee education and vocational training programmes; the sums they had contributed would allow many refugees to acquire the skills necessary to enable them to cease being a burden. He also stated that UNHCR had concluded a valuable arrangement with the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa, which would avoid duplication and make maximum use of limited resources. UNHCR continued to facilitate resettlement in other countries of those refugees who could not or did not wish to remain in the countries of first asylum, appealing to that end for the most liberal immigration quotas possible.

9. Resettlement had helped tremendously in the European context. The Office's universal function had enabled it to respond to requests for assistance from many parts of the world and to use its good offices to help to solve problems of an individual, regional or localized nature brought to it by Governments. Such requests had been received from Latin American countries; in Asia, the Governments of Cambodia and the Republic of Viet-Nam had turned to UNHCR to alleviate the plight of some groups which had been uprooted. Again, the Governments of Gabon, the Ivory Coast and Nigeria had jointly invited the "good

offices" and technical assistance of UNHCR to facilitate the return of 5,000 Nigerian children who had been cared for in Gabon and the Ivory Coast during the civil war.

10. Mr. ALWAN (Iraq) said that he had listened with close attention to the statement of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and had carefully read his report (A/8012 and Add.1). His delegation fully appreciated the High Commissioner's humanitarian work on behalf of the refugees, who represented one of the gravest problems created by man. The repressive measures adopted by the Portuguese colonial authorities in Africa, for example, had led to the continent's largest exodus, and more than half a million African refugees had left Angola.

11. The problems of refugees varied with the psychological and social attitudes of each group and could not be solved by the same method in every case. The Office's efforts and material assistance were based on the three options open to refugees: voluntary repatriation, resettlement in other countries and local settlement in the host country. He believed that voluntary repatriation was the best solution. The Office of the High Commissioner concurred with that view, stating that "voluntary repatriation again proved to be particularly significant as a solution to the problems of refugees in Africa" (see A/8012, para. 73).

12. His delegation was gratified to note that the Office of the High Commissioner had broadened and intensified its efforts to care for the ever-growing number of refugees and had embarked on new projects and expanded or remodelled other projects already under way.

13. His Government had been a contributor to the Office of the High Commissioner for many years and had decided in 1970 almost to double its contribution, principally because it trusted and respected Prince Sadruddin. The people and Government of Iraq recognized and appreciated the High Commissioner's efforts to assist refugees, particularly the people of Algeria during their struggle for independence. In paying a tribute to the High Commissioner, he pledged the full support of the Iraqi people and Government for his efforts to solve the refugee problem.

14. Princess Ashraf PAHLAVI (Iran) expressed regret at the continued existence of the tragic refugee problem and especially the fact that the status of the refugees, although always regarded as "temporary", was becoming permanent. As the High Commissioner had said, the best way to prevent that was to find a permanent solution to the problem of refugees instead of being content with provisional measures. Such a solution could be achieved in two ways: by voluntary repatriation or by the acquisition of a new nationality. It was encouraging that progress had been made along those lines, making the High Commissioner's work one of the rare examples of constructive action at the international level, thanks chiefly to the determination of a man who had dedicated himself whole-heartedly to the humanitarian work entrusted to him by the General Assembly.

15. The High Commissioner's report was a source of satisfaction to everyone who believed in the ideals and objectives of the United Nations. But despite past and

present efforts, refugee problems persisted and new appeals for assistance were received every year. It was reassuring, therefore, that the High Commissioner was responding promptly to all such appeals and had always been able to suit his efforts to the special nature of each new problem.

16. The confidence inspired by the Office of the High Commissioner was made clear by the fact that more and more countries had acceded to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol and were helping to finance the assistance programme. It was also significant in that connexion that the Governments of Nigeria, the Ivory Coast and Gabon had appealed to the High Commissioner to use his good offices for the repatriation of Nigerian children evacuated during the hostilities.

17. Even more significantly, the continuing accession of countries to the international instruments governing the status of refugees and the ever-increasing support enjoyed by the High Commissioner testified to a growing awareness of the role the international community could and should play in remedying the evils resulting from conflicts which it could not prevent or stop.

18. Among the problems mentioned in the High Commissioner's report, special reference should be made to education, which was an essential element in the integration and social advancement of the refugees. She welcomed the High Commissioner's co-operation with other United Nations agencies in the field of vocational training and praised his constant endeavour to achieve closer co-ordination within the United Nations system. Concerted effort was required to solve the problem of rural settlement, especially in Africa. The same was true of the concentration of refugees in large urban centres, aggravated by the exodus from rural areas and giving rise to shanty-towns and insanitary housing, which was one of the most difficult problems confronting the High Commissioner.

19. Another serious problem was the reuniting of families in the host countries. She hoped that Governments, whether or not they were parties to the 1951 Convention, would effectively support the High Commissioner's efforts to help reunite refugee families that had been separated by circumstances.

20. The function of the High Commissioner's Office was to protect refugees. Its task was therefore an integral part of the protection and advancement of human rights, which was a fundamental objective of the United Nations Charter. Material assistance, although important and indeed necessary for the Governments of the host countries and for the purpose of enabling refugees to start living normal lives again, was intended solely to make it possible for refugees to enjoy the fundamental rights of the human person. Thus, to help solve the problems of the refugees was to implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But that could be done only if the High Commissioner had at his disposal all the necessary material means, and it was therefore essential to support his appeals and assist him in every way possible.

21. Lastly, the United Nations should take vigorous steps to reduce tensions of every kind—racial, economic and political—and to humanize the planet. Only in that way

could the refugee problem be eliminated from the Committee's agenda.

22. Mr. MOUSSA (United Arab Republic) congratulated the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on his excellent statement and his extremely useful report (A/8012 and Add.1). The three main aspects of the work of the Office of the High Commissioner were its adherence to the principles of human rights, the ever-closer links between development programmes and programmes of assistance to refugees and, lastly, the importance attached to the efforts of the High Commissioner himself.

23. During the past year the Office of the High Commissioner had continued its effective and humanitarian work with a view to putting an end to the problems of refugees. It was regrettable that, as the High Commissioner had stated, the number of refugees was increasing in some parts of the world. The Arab world, unhappily living through the tragedy of the Palestinian refugees, realized the necessity and urgency of measures to relieve the suffering of all refugees. The people and Government of the United Arab Republic were grateful to the High Commissioner for his extraordinary efforts to put an end to that suffering and to all refugee problems.

24. As for the ever-closer links between development programmes and programmes of assistance to refugees, he was pleased to note that new projects had been completed and that the execution of those which had been undertaken was continuing uninterrupted.

25. The influx of refugees often constituted an additional burden for the developing countries. The temporary settlement of refugees entailed extra expenditures in many fields, frequently for infrastructures, and the High Commissioner must be given all possible support through financial and other contributions. In that connexion he welcomed the growing co-operation between UNHCR and many of the specialized agencies, for such co-operation was essential if UNHCR was to derive the maximum benefit from United Nations activities, which would certainly contribute to the betterment of the refugees' conditions.

26. His country attached great importance to the work of the High Commissioner's Office; it had welcomed many refugees from various parts of the world and had long been co-operating with the Office as a member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The adoption by OAU in 1969 of the Convention governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa was of particular importance in that respect.

27. Stressing the great value of the personal intervention of the High Commissioner, he concluded by reminding the Committee of the observation made by the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme to the effect that the problems of refugees in Africa would easily be resolved if the resolutions of the General Assembly concerning the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples were implemented.

28. Mrs. DAES (Greece) wished first to congratulate the High Commissioner and his staff on their tireless efforts to assist the refugees.

29. The report of the High Commissioner (A/8012 and Add.1) indicated that the major refugee problems were to be found in Africa. Her delegation supported without reservation the contents of paragraphs 71-184 of the report.

30. Referring to the international protection of refugees (A/8012, paras. 13-57), she said that the refugee problem, while it had existed from time immemorial, had become a legal problem with the development of modern society; and in modern times, it having been recognized in article 14, paragraph 1, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that "everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution", it had become a fundamental humanitarian problem. Until then, the right of asylum had not been recognized. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees had filled that legal lacuna, and more recently, the Declaration on Territorial Asylum unanimously adopted by the General Assembly on 14 September 1967 in its resolution 2312 (XXII) had included principles according to which no person fleeing persecution who sought asylum in another country should be subjected to persecution. Since the Declaration was not a binding instrument, her country had incorporated specific provisions in its legislation guaranteeing the right of asylum.

31. Greece had respected and implemented the principle of *non-refoulement* to which the High Commissioner had referred. For refugees, that principle represented the most important legal guarantee, since it meant that they could not be expelled or returned to a country where their life or freedom would be threatened.

32. Regarding the acquisition by refugees of the nationality of their country of residence (see A/8012, para. 51), she said that when the branch office of the High Commissioner at Athens had been opened in 1952, there had been some 19,000 refugees under the protection of that office. Of those only 6,300 remained on 31 December 1969. That substantial reduction had been due mainly to naturalization.

33. Thanks to the close co-operation between the Greek Ministry of Social Services and the representative of the High Commissioner at Athens, about 2,000 housing units had been constructed in 1969 and 1970. Her country supported and would continue to support the High Commissioner in the execution of his humanitarian task.

34. The twentieth anniversary of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees would be an excellent occasion to assess the results achieved and to draw useful conclusions for the future. The High Commissioner could rely on the full support of the competent Greek authorities.

35. Greece fully supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.1810.

36. Mr. ACHILLE-FOULD (France) again congratulated the High Commissioner on his untiring work to help refugees to be refugees no longer. Material assistance, while necessary to meet immediate needs, must not be an end in itself; the main objective was to solve the world refugee problem. Refugee status must not become permanent, for it was synonymous with insecurity, maladjustment and isolation. Man was a social being and must belong to a society. In that connexion, it should be observed that the High

Commissioner's brilliant work had been effective to the extent that Governments had interested themselves in the human aspect of the problem. Many had done so, and none of them had regretted it.

37. His delegation supported the solutions proposed by the High Commissioner: voluntary repatriation, resettlement in another country and integration into the host community. It was understood that in every case the choice was for the refugee himself to make. However, it was necessary at times to take account of local circumstances which made one solution preferable to another. Resettlement in the host country, for instance, depended on economic and demographic conditions in that country. In that connexion, he was pleased to learn that contacts between the High Commissioner and the various agencies of the United Nations, particularly UNDP, continued to grow closer. He attached the highest importance to co-operation of that kind, for refugees must be prevented at all costs from becoming maladjusted segments of the population and eventually causing political, social and economic problems.

38. Despite all its efforts, the Office of the High Commissioner constantly had to face new problems caused by the political instability which prevailed throughout the world. Their solution would require not only rapid adaptation to the special circumstances of each case, but also constant attention to the legal protection of refugees, whose situation was particularly vulnerable.

39. Recognition of the human rights of refugees was essential; without it, material assistance would be ineffectual. It was encouraging to note that the number of countries parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees was constantly increasing, as was the number of countries which had acceded to the Protocol of 1967. It was very likely that the French Parliament would ratify the Protocol before the conclusion of the current session of the Assembly, since it represented a logical complement of France's previous commitments, such as the European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees of 1959 and The Hague Agreement relating to Refugee Seamen of 1957.

40. It was essential to ensure the rigorous application of those instruments. In the report of the High Commissioner (A/8012 and Add.1), stress was placed on the fundamental importance of the principle of *non-refoulement* of refugees to their country of origin. It was unfortunate, however, that that principle was not always observed, with consequent danger to the very lives of refugees.

41. Moreover, the activity of the High Commissioner was centred on the provision of urgently needed aid and material assistance, and in that respect much had been achieved. In Africa alone the number of refugees had reached 1 million. The High Commissioner had succeeded in assisting more than 250,000 refugees, an unprecedented figure. That success had been made possible, in large part, by the co-operation of other United Nations bodies. In Europe the refugee problem still existed, although not on a scale comparable to that of the problem in Africa, and the material assistance made available to the countries of first asylum was slight as compared with the obligations which the latter assumed. It was therefore essential that the High

Commissioner should continue to concern himself with the European refugees. At the same time, it was obvious that the main and most serious problems were those encountered in Africa. He wished to draw attention to the work of OAU in educating refugees in Africa. That activity should be broadened by such means as the granting of scholarships.

42. He stressed the usefulness of those efforts and observed that the resources available to the High Commissioner were not commensurate with the magnitude of the task entrusted to him. Therefore he was obliged to concentrate on activities that could not be delegated to others in order to be able to act quickly on new problems when they arose. The diversity of the situations with which he had to deal called for constantly changing approaches. There were many individual cases arising in urban areas in Africa that required specific solutions and original approaches which could be made possible only by an organized system of social welfare in those areas. The solutions to such problems naturally required the co-operation of the Governments and local bodies concerned, and in that connexion it might be desirable to study the possibility of setting up teams similar to those organized recently in Senegal with the co-operation of the Government of that country, UNHCR and the Government of France.

43. In conclusion, he wished to stress once again his delegation's confidence in the High Commissioner and to inform the Committee that France had decided to increase its contribution from \$189,000 to \$450,000. He hoped that the universal character of UNHCR's humanitarian mission would be increasingly appreciated and that there would be a growing number of countries contributing to a worth-while effort which should have unanimous support.

44. Mr. TAYLOR (Australia) said that his Government had from the outset been an enthusiastic supporter of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; it had provided financial contributions, was a member of the Executive Committee and had admitted more than 300,000 refugees.

45. Despite the success of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan in administering the Programme, the situation of the refugees continued to be a very serious problem for the international community. As could be seen from the High Commissioner's report (A/8012 and Add.1), there had been a noticeable trend in recent years towards a concentration of effort on problems arising in Africa and there were no indications that that would change in the next few years. While his delegation appreciated the valuable work being done by UNHCR in Africa, it hoped that the programmes to assist refugees in Europe and Asia, which were still very necessary, would not be neglected.

46. An important aspect of the work of assisting the growing number of refugees in Africa had been the extensive use of the Emergency Fund; he noted with approval the statement in the High Commissioner's report that the assistance provided by UNHCR from that Fund was intended primarily to stimulate supplementary assistance from other sources. That coincided with Australia's view that UNHCR should act as a catalyst and co-ordinator and that its role should be to stimulate international action by means of modest financial contributions which would

lead to the provision of more extensive bilateral and multilateral aid. It was not UNHCR's function to act as an aid agency in itself but to provide flexible and acceptable solutions to pressing problems so that larger programmes financed and carried out by Governments, the specialized agencies and voluntary organizations could be initiated. That approach was particularly relevant in Africa, where the great majority of refugees lived on the land and required a volume of assistance that could not be provided solely by UNHCR if they were to establish self-supporting communities which would form part of the economic and social system of the area. In that connexion his delegation noted with satisfaction the reference in Chapter V of the High Commissioner's report (see A/8012) to the considerable progress made in broadening co-operation and improving co-ordination of the efforts of the various bodies constituting the United Nations system.

47. The increase in the number of Governments contributing to the Programme and the size of the contributions were also cause for satisfaction. Subject to parliamentary approval, Australia's contribution to the UNHCR Programme for 1971 would be \$A175,000. The amount included in the Australian Government's estimates for 1970/71 for the UNHCR Programme was \$A262,000.

48. Finally, he referred to the international protection aspect of the High Commissioner's work, welcoming the steady increase in the number of countries which were becoming parties to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. The Australian Government had been reviewing its position on those instruments and was taking steps to remove its last remaining reservation to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

49. Mr. MANI (India) observed that the two main tasks of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees were to provide international protection for refugees and to promote activities designed to establish refugees economically, socially and legally in the countries in which they had found asylum or in other communities; those tasks were enormous and must be approached in a profoundly humanitarian spirit. It had been a matter of concern to every State Member of the United Nations that groups of human beings should be uprooted and obliged to live in new environments, possibly in unsatisfactory conditions; it was obvious that such persons, particularly the aged, women, children and the handicapped, needed sympathy and care. To protect the refugees and facilitate their repatriation, immigration or integration in accordance with humanitarian principles was an obligation incumbent not on the United Nations alone but on the entire international community.

50. The vast majority of refugees whom UNHCR, by virtue of its mandate, was required to assist were now those in Africa. That situation in Africa was the direct result of the inhuman policies of the colonialists, as indicated by the presence of 400,000 Angolan refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 60,000 refugees from Guinea (Bissau) in Senegal, 40,000 refugees from Mozambique in the United Republic of Tanzania and large groups from the Territories under Portuguese domination in Zambia. He drew attention in particular to the problems posed by the

arrival in Lesotho of South African refugees and the refusal of the Government of Lesotho to consent to the extradition of *bona fide* refugees who could not be described as criminals. It was obvious that blame for the sufferings of all those persons lay with the racist and oppressive minority régimes in southern Africa, which would one day be called to account for those crimes against humanity.

51. As could be seen from his report to the current session (A/8012 and Add.1) and the report submitted to the twenty-fourth session,¹ the High Commissioner, despite the serious difficulties and onerous social and economic problems confronting him, had made notable progress in providing material assistance, education and training to the refugees at all levels. He had succeeded in settling a large number of refugees in rural areas where they could take up the pursuits for which they were qualified, and the results appeared to be satisfactory. However, there were undoubtedly persons among the refugees who were capable of benefiting from opportunities for higher education so that they could become technical specialists, engineers or doctors, thus helping to meet the great demand for such personnel all over Africa. That approach would also help to facilitate the complete assimilation of refugees in the host country. The separation of refugees as a distinct entity, apart from the mainstream of developments in the nations which had given them refuge, was a negative factor and integration in the host country, including the possibility of naturalization, should remain the goal.

52. The High Commissioner had indicated that the success of UNHCR in its humanitarian work depended on many varied activities, governmental, intergovernmental, public and private. That pertinent observation should spur Governments to come forward with generous contributions towards the material assistance programme. While many African governments were fully conscious of the problem and had provided the services of volunteers working within the ambit of the OAU, it was desirable that they should decide to participate on a continuing basis in the work of international assistance to refugees. If the proposal to establish an international corps of volunteers for development under the aegis of UNDP materialized, some of the volunteers could be sent to the refugee settlements in Africa so as to help in the task of preparing those uprooted persons to become integrated in their host country and to be honest and useful citizens. In that connexion, the report of UNHCR stated that contact had been maintained with the International Secretariat for Volunteer Service; the Indian delegation would like to know what had been the result of those contacts. In addition, in view of the fact that according to the report the majority of the 650,000 refugees within the competence of UNHCR in Europe at the end of 1969 had been satisfactorily settled, his delegation would like to know the number of refugees for whom the High Commissioner was still responsible in Europe, so as to be able to assess how long it would take and what resources would be needed to resettle them, as compared with the magnitude of that effort required to solve the problems of the refugees elsewhere, particularly in Africa.

53. Referring to the budget of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, he noted that in 1970 the Office was expected to eliminate six posts, four in Europe and two in Africa. With regard to Europe, it had been considered that some representatives could be replaced by correspondents. The funds released by any reduction in the expenditure of the European offices could be made available to other United Nations agencies concerned with assistance to refugees, especially in Africa, where the problem remained acute.

54. The assistance given to refugees in the Americas seemed to be satisfactory; it was a significant development that two funds had been created for the future care of mentally handicapped refugees in Brazil and in Venezuela.

55. The refugee problem in Asia, the Far East and the Middle East was comparatively less complicated. The number of Tibetan refugees in India, Sikkim and Bhutan was estimated at 56,000 at the end of 1969. In the same year an amount of \$340,000 had been committed by UNHCR to put into effect projects drawn up in collaboration with the Government of India. While his delegation appreciated the interest taken by UNHCR in the Tibetan refugees, the Indian Government, together with some voluntary agencies, had borne the entire expenditure on housing and various other facilities for the refugees, and in its view a uniform pattern should be evolved for assistance of that kind.

56. With respect to the restoration of the legitimate economic and social rights of the refugees, it was clear that that would be a lengthy process and would require perseverance and the co-operation of all Governments and voluntary agencies. Nevertheless, the gradual withdrawal of the High Commissioner after the refugees had reached an adequate standard of living should be the chief preoccupation of the Office.

57. The budget of nearly \$6 million contemplated for the following year was a drop in the ocean when it was remembered that the needs of more than one-and-a-half million refugees were to be looked after. For that reason, the Government of India had increased its annual contribution to \$10,000 for the years 1969 and 1970. Resources could be tapped from various agencies, and additional funds had been raised with the sale of long-playing records entitled *World Star Festival*. He suggested that Nansen Medals should be struck and sold, similar to those made on the occasion of the World Youth Assembly. In addition, feature films on the life of Fridtjof Nansen could be produced to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. Perhaps other delegations might come forward with further suggestions for collecting funds for the Office's humanitarian work.

58. The innovation of table 2 in the report of UNHCR (see A/8012, annex II), giving the estimated number of refugees in Africa, was a useful one; he trusted that the information provided in it would stimulate the generosity of prospective donors. It would be useful to prepare similar tables for refugees in Asia, the Far East, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas.

¹ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplements Nos. 12 and 12A.

59. The objective of the activities of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees should be to transform the refugees into persons able to take care of their own needs. Accordingly, the emphasis should be on economic resettlement rather than welfare activities. The total elimination of colonialism would reduce the anguish of the refugees and at the same time the activities of the Office. The efforts of the High Commissioner in that respect deserved praise and merited all possible support. In conclusion, his delegation appealed to the General Assembly and to Member States to increase the resources of the Office of the High Commissioner by making adequate voluntary contributions to the needs of the refugees.

60. Mrs. DINÇMEN (Turkey) thanked the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for his excellent statement and assured him of her Government's full support in his efforts to improve the situation of refugees.

61. The Turkish Government was deeply concerned about the fate of the refugees, particularly in Africa, and the difficulties they presented for the host countries in view of the fact that most of those countries were in the process of development. The problem of the refugees in Africa could not be solved until the refugees were themselves in a position to become a productive segment of their new society. On the other hand, their situation would substantially improve as the host countries developed economically.

62. It was most commendable that in 1969 the means had been found to increase considerably the number of refugees receiving assistance, and that the implementation of several rural settlement projects had been started.

63. Her delegation agreed with the High Commissioner that voluntary repatriation remained the best solution for the problem of the refugees, failing which it was necessary to achieve the economic independence of the refugees and their integration in the life of the country. It was encouraging that the number of refugees requiring emergency assistance was gradually decreasing and that the Governments and local populations of many host countries had considerably augmented their assistance, thus enabling the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees to concentrate its efforts on other aspects of its programme.

64. Another encouraging aspect was the increasing co-operation between the Office of the High Commissioner and other United Nations agencies, particularly UNDP, the World Food Programme, FAO, the ILO, WHO, UNESCO and UNICEF. The task to be carried out was so vast that such co-operation was imperative.

65. Educational assistance to the refugees, especially in Africa, constituted another vital aspect of the High Com-

missioner's Programme. Although the receiving countries had offered the refugees educational facilities, the assistance of the Office was most helpful in view of the fact that those countries themselves needed help to provide educational services to their own people.

66. In addition to the material assistance provided to the refugees, the Office of the High Commissioner had not neglected its primary concern, the international protection of the refugees. It should be noted in that context that the number of States which had acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and to the 1967 Protocol was increasing.

67. The High Commissioner had stressed in his report how important it was that Governments should lend support and assistance in the discharge of his task. It was a matter for satisfaction that the contributions of Governments covered more than 80 per cent of the expected expenditure for the 1970 programme. That could be interpreted as a sign of their growing interest in and support for the High Commissioner's Programme.

68. In view of those considerations, her delegation was pleased to be one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1810. It reiterated its firm belief that the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees would contribute in an effective manner to the final solution of the problems of refugees.

69. Mr. HEYMAN (Sweden) said that his country would continue to give assistance to the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and to support the most valuable work which Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan was carrying out so efficiently. Sweden, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, could make its detailed views known in that forum.

70. He introduced draft resolution A/C.3/L.1810, which his delegation had sponsored with twelve other Powers, with which Austria, Cyprus, Greece, the Netherlands, the Sudan and Zambia had associated themselves. After the statement of the High Commissioner, he did not think it necessary to comment on the draft resolution. Operative paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 were more or less the same as the previous year. Operative paragraph 3 (b) referred to individual cases which the High Commissioner and several delegations had mentioned and had been included because the sponsors found it important to respond to the new challenge to the Programme.

The meeting rose at 6.5 p.m.