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President: Mr. PÉREZ GUERRERO (Venezuela).

AGENDA ITEM 21

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/4555)

1. Prince Sadruddin AGA KHAN (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), introducing his annual report (E/4555), said that, on the whole, the position in regard to the refugee problems falling within his Office's competence had hardly changed during the past year. Among the new problems that had arisen, mention should be made of the Lumpa community refugees who had left Zambia and were now in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. With regard to the Biafra refugees, a subject on which world opinion was now roused, UNHCR was not in a position to intervene, since his mandate required him to concern himself only with refugees outside their country of origin. But UNHCR was helping Ibo refugees living in other countries, such as Cameroon, Ghana and Dahomey, and Biafran students abroad who could not return to Nigeria. It was co-operating with other United Nations bodies and with voluntary agencies to help such Biafrans if they needed assistance.

2. In Africa, where there were over 70,000 new refugees, the number of those repatriated amounted to 10,000, an appreciable figure if one considered that the conflicts which had caused them to flee had not yet ended. The total number of refugees coming within his competence in Africa alone thus amounted to some 850,000. In Latin America, UNHCR programmes were aimed at progressively eliminating the problem presented by a limited number of sick or handicapped refugees, although a new problem had arisen with Haitian refugees.

3. The main point in Africa was that only 70,000 of the 850,000 refugees still needed regular food aid, which meant that the vast majority of them were already able to meet their own immediate basic requirements. So far as they were concerned, therefore, the process of settlement had already started. It was not complete, however; firm and lasting settlement was in general a long-term process.

4. The objective of UNHCR remained the same: if refugees felt unable to return to their country of origin, UNHCR had to offer them the possibility of integration in the receiving country and acquisition of its nationality. Refugee status was an anomaly which had to be eliminated, since every human being should participate in the

life of the community and contribute to its enrichment. Consequently, all UNHCR's efforts were aimed at enabling refugees who could not be repatriated to acquire a new nationality. It had two means of achieving that objective, protection and material assistance, which were complementary.

5. In Africa, for instance, some refugees (students, craftsmen, etc.) did not want to settle in the rural areas where plans had been made for settlement so other solutions had to be found for them. It was chiefly in order to examine that problem that the Conference on the Legal, Economic and Social Aspects of African Refugee Problems had been held at Addis Ababa in 1967, with the participation of twenty-two African States, ECA and many of the specialized agencies. A recommendation made by that Conference had led to the decision to set up under the Organization for African Unity (OAU) a bureau for the settlement and placement of African refugees, a body to which UNHCR would be giving constant assistance.

6. With regard to the protection of refugees, the 1967 Protocol to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees had already been signed by eighteen countries. The refugee problem was inseparable from other problems being dealt with by the Council, especially human rights, a particularly topical matter since 1968 had been designated International Year for Human Rights, and the International Conference on Human Rights held at Teheran had stressed the need to encourage the conclusion of agreements and conventions on the protection and status of refugees and had drawn attention to the aspects of protection relating to the right of asylum, *non-refoulement* and assimilation in the receiving country (resolution V). He hoped those provisions would help to make Governments fully aware of the importance of the status of refugees.

7. The refugee problem had its origin in a violation of human rights following political upheaval or national or international conflict. Only political action could remedy the causes, and such action had to be taken by Governments themselves. The task of UNHCR was more modest, namely, to remedy the effects of those conflicts by purely social and humanitarian action. Experience showed that if such action was to be really fruitful it had to be entirely free from all political considerations. The African Governments had understood that, and he wished to pay tribute to the generosity of those countries which had applied the policy of asylum in a humanitarian spirit.

8. The refugee problem was also related to another, larger problem, namely, under-development and the utilization of human resources. As the Secretary-General stated in his report on the development and utilization of human resources (E/4483, para. 82), refugees should be given full opportunity to participate in development projects and to contribute to the economic and social

life of the country, side by side with its own citizens. There was no permanent solution which did not involve economic development and far from hampering such efforts refugees helped to speed them up.

9. In most of the refugee-settlement areas in the Congo, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, and the Central African Republic, not only had roads and bridges been built, marshes been drained and the tse-tse fly been eradicated, but new farming methods had been introduced, producer and consumer co-operatives had been set up and the nucleus of an agricultural training system had been organized. It had been found everywhere that such advances spread and that the local population benefited either directly or indirectly from them. That explained why population groups of different ethnic origin had been able to live together in peace and harmony.

10. In pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 2270 and 2311 (XXII), his Office was helping refugees from Angola, Portuguese Guinea and Mozambique, most of whom were at present in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Senegal and Tanzania. Under its annual programmes, UNHCR had already spent \$2.5 million on rural settlement plans and on setting up special centres, thanks to which those refugees were now beginning to grow their own crops and sell their produce with the support of the local authorities. If, however, the international community wanted UNHCR to do more for the refugee groups in question, Governments' contributions would have to be increased, since there was no possibility of giving them more aid under the current programme of some \$4.5-\$5 million.

11. One aspect of the refugee problem could not be overstressed, namely, the very high proportion of young people—the cadres of tomorrow—among refugees (about 50 per cent). If they were not to become rebels, they had to be prepared for the role awaiting them either in their country of origin or in the country of asylum. Education was therefore of vital importance, both for the refugees' future and for their integration.

12. The refugee problem was linked with the other major problems of the day and could not be isolated from the global development strategy of which the Secretary-General had spoken (1531st meeting). Co-ordinated action between UNHCR and the other United Nations bodies was therefore essential. Citing examples of co-operation with UNDP, FAO, WFP, ILO, UNESCO and WHO, he said that UNDP, for instance, had undertaken an interim project designed to smooth the transition from a rural settlement programme carried out by UNHCR to a subsequent development programme. UNDP also expected to send preliminary missions to Uganda and the Central African Republic. The Director-General of FAO had given priority status to the mobilization of human resources in the rural areas. The settlement of large groups of refugee farmers provided an excellent opportunity for implementing plans of that kind. Emergency aid was still being distributed in Tanzania, Zambia and Uganda under WFP. The ILO had completed the Kivu project and UNESCO was planning an increasing number of educational and training projects in Africa. It should be remembered that UNHCR co-operated not only with

other United Nations bodies, but also with non-governmental organizations, whose help was essential for its activities in Africa and elsewhere.

13. Turning to the financing of the programme, he said that UNHCR must have a minimum of financial resources and that Governments were in duty bound to contribute them. Encouraging progress had been made in that respect, but the amount of contributions received was still insufficient; by the end of the year they were expected to reach \$3.5 million, only 75 per cent of the \$4,631,000 target set for the 1968 budget. In 1967, the proportion had been only 62 per cent. The improvement was explained by the fact that fifteen Governments had decided to increase their contributions and that eight countries had contributed for the first time. UNHCR also expected to receive \$800,000 by way of private contributions, although that still left a deficit of \$300,000.

14. In conclusion, he said that refugees should not constitute a backward stagnant element in a dynamic and fast-changing world when they could be such a stimulus to progress. UNHCR's ambitions went beyond its immediate assistance work; it aimed to become an instrument for economic and social progress and, hence, for stability and peace.

15. Mr. TUBBY (United States of America) said that the High Commissioner's excellent report showed that UNHCR had continued to make progress in its humanitarian task by offering new possibilities of international protection and material aid to thousands of refugees throughout the world. His delegation congratulated the High Commissioner on the steps he had taken to make known, through public information media and in co-operation with other United Nations bodies, the extent of the refugee problem and the ways in which it could be solved. It was particularly appropriate to issue publications concerning the international protection of refugees in connexion with the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The United States Government had always attached great importance to the work UNHCR was doing with respect to the right of asylum and the legal and political protection of refugees. The success it had achieved in that work was strikingly illustrated by the number of countries that had ratified the 1967 Protocol to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Although the political and legal rights of refugees were already provided for in United States law, accession to the Protocol was now being considered on an urgent basis by his Government.

16. Similarly, UNHCR had made a major contribution to the Addis Ababa Conference on the Legal, Economic and Social Aspects of African Refugee Problems, which had made important recommendations concerning the definition of such terms as refugees, asylum, social rights of refugees, travel documents and voluntary repatriation, and on the establishment of a bureau for the settlement and placement of African refugees within the OAU secretariat.

17. His delegation also congratulated UNHCR on the efficiency of its material assistance programmes. The main purpose was to help refugees to meet their own

requirements and obtain a status equivalent to that of the local population in the shortest possible time. As groups of refugees thus became economically independent, new funds became available for helping other refugee groups.

18. The High Commissioner had stated in his report that UNHCR worked in collaboration with the countries in which refugees were living and that other countries and organizations were making a substantial contribution to the well-being of the refugees with which it was concerned. The United States had, through UNHCR, supplied over \$1 million in the form of food aid to African refugees and over \$3 million in the form of fellowships. As aid to the Chinese refugees in Hong Kong and the Tibetan refugees in India and Nepal, the United States had provided \$1.5 million in the form of food and \$400,000 in other forms, besides the annual contribution which it paid direct to the UNHCR programme.

19. His delegation noted with particular satisfaction the growing collaboration which existed between UNHCR and the other United Nations bodies in such fields as the settlement of developing regions, international protection, employment, education and training. In that process of co-operation, UNHCR served as a catalyst, transforming emergency solutions into programmes designed to integrate refugees into their new social environment, thus considerably increasing the chance of resettling them.

20. The continuing progress made by UNHCR in the accomplishment of its task augured well for the future, and the United States Government would continue to give it firm support.

21. Mr. AZIMI (Iran) thanked the High Commissioner for his most interesting statement, particularly the description of the various problems he would have to face in fulfilling his humanitarian task in the future. His delegation had also studied the annual report of the High Commissioner with keen interest.

22. As one who had participated for several years in the work of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme he had some general comments to make. In Europe the number of refugees within UNHCR's competence had amounted to some 730,000 but its efforts had resulted in more or less permanent solutions in recent years. On the other hand, the extent of the refugee problem in Africa and the continual increase in numbers there needed close attention.

23. It was noteworthy that although the number of refugees in Africa had increased by nearly 60,000 between 1966 and 1967, a growing proportion of them had passed the stage of immediate relief on the way to settlement in the receiving countries, thanks to UNHCR assistance and the efforts of the Governments of those countries.

24. The recommendations adopted by the 1967 Addis Ababa Conference and the establishment of the bureau for the settlement and placement of African refugees gave hope of further progress in improving the lot of refugees in Africa.

25. It was encouraging that in the Central African Republic, despite transport difficulties, 21,000 refugees

had been successfully conveyed from the frontier areas and settled in the interior with the help of \$1.4 million allocated by the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme and that in Senegal the local authorities and the Government had played a substantial part in solving the problem of some 57,000 refugees from Portuguese Guinea. It was also encouraging to note that in Burundi and in some parts of the Congo refugees had reached the market economy stage and to learn that in Africa, as the High Commissioner had just stated, 10,000 refugees had been repatriated. The achievements in providing an infrastructure (roads, bridges and drinking water supplies) to facilitate refugee settlement projects were likewise remarkable. He hoped that through the efforts of UNHCR the problems of the Lumpa community refugees in the Congo would be satisfactorily resolved.

26. As to the 50,000 Tibetan refugees in India, it was to be hoped that projects for their assistance would be successfully implemented through UNHCR, with the efforts and substantial aid of the Indian Government and of charitable contributions.

27. In Nepal, settlement projects for which \$71,000 had been earmarked in 1967 and \$65,000 for 1968 would consolidate the results already achieved through the collaboration of the Nepalese authorities, the Nepal Red Cross Society and the Swiss Association for Technical Assistance.

28. In the Far East, although the number of refugees in transit in Hong Kong was relatively small and did not appear to create any problems, there had still been some 74,000 refugees in Macao at the end of 1967, whose fate deserved special attention. The sum of \$145,000 allocated under the 1967 programme would, it was hoped, facilitate a solution of the various problems besetting those refugees, in particular the provision of housing and a vocational training centre.

29. In the Middle East there were still some 10,000 refugees (excluding the Palestinian refugees, who did not come under the High Commissioner's mandate), most of whom were in Lebanon and the United Arab Republic. An allocation of \$144,000 had been set aside for them under the 1968 programme, as compared with \$85,000 for 1967, in addition to some \$272,000 allocated for housing projects for Armenian refugees in Lebanon. UNHCR's efforts to settle those refugees on the spot or resettle them in other countries were encouraging, as were its projects of a special nature.

30. In Latin America there were about 115,000 refugees coming under the mandate of UNHCR; it was trying to facilitate the local integration of aged and handicapped refugees and had contributed to the voluntary repatriation of some of them.

31. After a varying period of emergency material assistance, UNHCR sought more or less permanent solutions, (e.g. settlement or integration in the receiving country) with the object of improving the lot of refugees by enabling them to fend for themselves as far as possible, while participating in the economic life of the country of asylum.

32. The ultimate stage in the integration of refugees was naturalization and acquisition of the nationality of the

country of residence. The competent authorities of countries of residence should consider such steps in studying the possibility of completing the integration of refugees in a new community in the interests of both the country concerned and the refugees.

33. But the real permanent solution to the acute refugee problem—a solution which unfortunately was not always feasible or in accord with the wishes of those concerned at the time—was undoubtedly voluntary repatriation.

34. While material assistance to refugees was one of the important aspects of UNHCR's non-political, social activities, the international protection of refugees, basically a legal and humanitarian mission, also fell within its competence. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, together with the 1967 Protocol broadening its scope, formed the basis for action in that area. As an increasing number of countries acceded to those instruments, it was to be hoped that the international protection of refugees would be more generally and effectively secured. In the same area, the principle of the right of asylum and *non-refoulement*, as inscribed in the Declaration on Territorial Asylum unanimously adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second session (resolution 2312 (XXII)), should be universally observed. In that connexion it was encouraging to find that the Council of Europe in June 1967 and the Addis Ababa Conference in October 1967, as well as some non-governmental organizations, had shown very keen interest in the question of right of asylum; and that the International Conference on Human Rights held in Teheran had, by its resolution V, called upon Governments to accede to the international instruments dealing with the protection of the rights of refugees and had affirmed the importance of the principle of *non-refoulement*. In his delegation's opinion, legal protection should provide refugees with the same degree of protection, under national legislation or international agreements, as the citizens of the receiving country.

35. International co-operation, which should cover the activities of Governments, local authorities, United Nations bodies, other inter-governmental organizations and voluntary institutions, was of paramount importance to UNHCR in its non-political, humanitarian mission on behalf of refugees. The 1967 Addis Ababa Conference had been a striking example of international co-operation. The same was true of the 1966 campaign mounted by voluntary organizations in eighteen European countries, Australia and New Zealand to collect money in aid of refugees in the developing countries.

36. It was gratifying that co-operation between UNHCR and United Nations bodies such as the ILO, UNESCO, FAO, WHO, UNDP, WFP and UNICEF was developing to an increasing extent in such fields as information, education, vocational training, human rights, emergency aid and rural settlement of refugees. For instance, in 1967 alone WFP had supplied refugees with food to the value of about \$1.6 million; and encouraging results had come from collaboration by the ILO and FAO with UNHCR in Africa, as well as from UNDP's 1968 contribution of \$200,000 to the development project in the north-eastern area of Burundi, where most of the refugees were located. Then, too, the part played by voluntary

agencies and non-governmental organizations collaborating with UNHCR in the refugee cause should not be overlooked. Such institutions were taking a most active part in the work of international assistance to refugees, coping with problems of day-to-day aid; their financial contribution was also substantial and had amounted to more than \$1 million in 1967.

37. With reference to finance, the regular programme, which was normally financed by voluntary contributions from Governments, played a catalytic role, encouraging the private sector to meet the refugee needs which were not covered by the regular programme. In recent years contributions from Governments had not been sufficient to cover the regular programmes; in 1967 for instance, the target had been \$4,826,230 and the contributions paid by the Governments of fifty-three countries had amounted to only \$3,068,655. The difference had been met by the proceeds of the 1966 European Refugee Campaign, which had brought in about \$18 million, most of which was to go toward programmes of aid to refugees in Africa and Asia, in accordance with the wishes of the national committees representing the voluntary agencies; the sum of \$1.8 million, however, had been allotted to make good the deficit in the UNHCR programme for 1965, 1966 and 1967. In 1968, contributions had been no more than \$3.5 million for a target of \$4,631,600; \$800,000 would be provided by non-governmental sources, but some \$300,000 was still needed.

38. In the circumstances, he hoped that the High Commissioner's appeal to Governments would meet with a favourable response and that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 2294 (XXII), Governments would consider increasing their annual voluntary contributions; in future more countries should participate in financing UNHCR work to enable the regular programmes to be financed solely from annual contributions by Governments.

39. In conclusion, he stressed once more the non-political, social nature of the work of UNHCR, and wished the High Commissioner every success in fulfilling his humanitarian task.

40. Mr. GREGH (France) said that his delegation took a keen interest in the work of UNHCR and considered it unfortunate that, while the United Nations was quite properly concerning itself with man's living conditions, several hundred thousand human beings were still in a situation revolting to the conscience of mankind. The main task of UNHCR was to remedy the physical, social, domestic and intellectual distress of the refugees. Everything which could help to attenuate their misery and restore to them a little of the human dignity to which they were absolutely entitled was both welcomed and supported by the French Government.

41. In his statement, the High Commissioner had dwelt on the trends discernible in the development of refugee problems during the past year. Leaving aside known ground, his delegation noted with satisfaction that the work being done to improve the situation of refugees throughout the world, to integrate them locally, particularly in rural communities, and to educate and provide vocational training for young people, had continued

unremittingly and produced encouraging results. During 1967, the activities of UNHCR had been marked by a clear trend towards increasingly active co-operation with international organizations, and particularly with those in the United Nations family. The French representative on the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme had for years been insisting on the need to find international bodies willing and able to carry UNHCR action further. His delegation hoped that the co-operation instituted with UNDP, FAO, UNESCO and the other United Nations bodies would be increasingly developed, with a view to making the work of UNHCR part of a global strategy of the sort referred to by the Secretary-General in his opening statement.

42. Alongside its material assistance work, UNHCR efforts in regard to the international protection of refugees had produced impressive results, particularly in Africa, where the number of refugees had risen from 785,000 in 1966 to about 845,000 in 1967. It was interesting to note that only 60,000 of that total still needed outside food aid, and that the vast majority were now able to meet the bulk of their requirements by their own efforts, whilst 10,000 persons had already been repatriated.

43. The 1967 Addis Ababa Conference, the establishment of a bureau for the settlement and placement of African refugees and the decisions taken within OAU concerning the adoption of an instrument relating to African refugee problems were but a few of the objectives achieved, in agreement with the African countries, by the High Commissioner, whose breadth of vision was commendable.

44. Another source of satisfaction was the entry into force of the 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees only nine months after its signature. The Protocol was most important in that it extended the 1951 Convention so as to make it applicable to a larger number of refugees; and the French Government intended to initiate, in the autumn of 1968, the parliamentary action necessary for accession to that instrument.

45. In his statement, the High Commissioner had quite properly stressed the importance of the adoption by the General Assembly, at its twenty-second session, of the Declaration on Territorial Asylum, which extended and amplified the provisions of article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

46. As to the financial aspect of the refugee problem, fund-raising campaigns, such as those organized in Europe in 1966, had admittedly produced results, but without government help the task of UNHCR would be an impossible one. France was therefore happy to state that its contribution to the 1968 programme had again been increased and now amounted to almost \$400,000, a sum which had already been paid.

47. The High Commissioner had stated his desire that UNHCR, beyond its immediate every-day tasks, should become an instrument for economic and social progress and, thereby, an instrument for stability and peace. Such a statement seemed to assume that UNHCR would live for ever. Although the Office should, of course, remain in existence so long as there were refugees in the world, it was to be hoped that the High Commissioner's work

and policy, which had the full approval of the French delegation, would one day—thanks to improved international and national relations and to an increasingly clear awareness of human rights—render redundant the institutional machinery that had had to be set up and developed in order to cope with the flood of refugees and alleviate their distress.

48. Mr. KARITA (Japan) said he had noted with satisfaction the High Commissioner's statement and the report on the past year. For both historical and geographical reasons, Japan was not directly concerned with the present-day refugee problem, but from the humanitarian point of view it attached great importance to the High Commissioner's work. It was in that spirit that the Japanese Government had since 1967 been contributing to the activities of the High Commissioner's programme.

49. His delegation considered that UNHCR was to be warmly congratulated on its activities, which not only gave valuable assistance to refugees but also helped to alleviate the economic and political difficulties experienced by the countries of asylum as a result of the presence of refugees.

50. It was regrettable that instead of diminishing, the refugee problem was assuming ever greater proportions and that UNHCR activities should have to be increased. Since it could not solve alone the problems with which it was faced, UNHCR was under the necessity to co-operate more closely with the specialized agencies and other international organizations concerned. In that respect, Japan was glad to note that co-operation had not only continued but had even been strengthened. His delegation hoped that UNHCR would continue to play a useful part in relieving the refugees' distress.

51. Miss JAMES (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) drew attention to the fact that the High Commissioner's annual report and the report of UNESCO to the Council (E/4503) both referred to the close co-operation which existed between them in regard to the education of African refugees. The Council had been informed at its forty-third session (1501st meeting) of the memorandum of agreement governing arrangements for collaboration between the two organizations which had then recently been signed by the High Commissioner and by the Director-General of UNESCO. Under the terms of that memorandum, one UNESCO official had been placed at the High Commissioner's disposal in January 1968 to help in carrying out a survey of the educational needs of refugees and to propose ways of meeting those needs. At the end of his mission to various African countries, the official in question had drafted a report which the two organizations concerned were now examining. The Director-General of UNESCO had already told the Council (1534th meeting) how much importance he attached to that kind of co-operation. He believed that the specific measures taken could be of real help in relieving the serious problem facing the High Commissioner in the matter of refugee education. The relevant proposals made at the UNESCO General Conference concerning activities for 1969-1970 would make it possible to do more and to give even stronger

functional support to the High Commissioner in his difficult task.

52. Mr. BENLER (Turkey) observed that the High Commissioner's statement further testified to the remarkable devotion with which he was dealing with the refugee problem. That devotion also explained the efficiency of UNHCR, an efficiency quite disproportionate to the size of its staff and to the resources available.

53. Since his delegation had already had occasion to explain Turkey's position in the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, he would speak only about the questions which his Government considered most important. The High Commissioner's report underlined the ever-increasing interest shown in the problems of African refugees. The task facing the High Commissioner and his staff in that area was a gigantic one, but the progress made and the perseverance displayed gave great hope for the future.

54. The High Commissioner was dealing with not only the legal protection but also the economic protection of refugees. As stated in paragraph 81 of his report, UNHCR policy had again been focused on helping refugees to become self-supporting as rapidly as possible. Since its resources did not enable it to achieve that goal on its own, UNHCR was acting as a catalyst—a role which required the closest co-operation with Governments and international bodies, particularly UNDP. The High Commissioner had spoken of doing more in that direction. Impressive progress had already been made, however, and his delegation was happy to note it.

55. Lastly, the High Commissioner had mentioned another important factor for strengthening the role of UNHCR, namely, the need to endow it with adequate financial resources. Since the means available at present were not nearly enough, his delegation hoped that the appeal launched by the High Commissioner would meet with success.

56. Mr. APONTE (Venezuela) congratulated the High Commissioner on his report, which reflected the effectiveness of the social and humanitarian work carried out in the period under review.

57. As a former chairman of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, he was well placed to appreciate the admirable work done by UNHCR in improving the lot of the many people reduced to refugee status. The plight of those people would have been even more tragic but for the aid given them in various forms: repatriation, migration, integration in the country of asylum and involvement, as human resources, in the development process.

58. He would draw particular attention to the important recommendations adopted by the 1967 Addis Ababa Conference concerning Africa, a continent to which UNHCR had given priority and to which more than two-thirds of the total aid allocated by the Executive Committee to the 1968 programme had gone.

59. But UNHCR had also catered for refugees in Europe, Asia, the Far East, the Middle East, North America and Latin America, where voluntary repatriation or resettlement

had been assisted. UNHCR's programme had also helped to finance counselling services, as well as social, economic and legal assistance services, e.g. in Venezuela.

60. During the current year, which had been designated International Human Rights Year, the work of UNHCR had helped to improve the lot of refugees who were the victims of famine and ignorance in the disturbed world of today.

61. Mr. SOLEIMAN (Libya) thanked the High Commissioner for the interesting statement he had made in submitting his report. The progress reflected in the report, both in international protection and in material assistance to facilitate the settlement of refugees, was a matter for satisfaction. The increased interest shown by the international community in the refugee problem was expressed, for instance, in the 1967 Protocol to the 1951 Convention, in the recommendations of the 1967 Addis Ababa Conference and, lastly, in the recommendations adopted by the International Conference on Human Rights. Another encouraging factor was that collaboration between UNHCR and other United Nations bodies had been considerably strengthened.

62. The importance of the time factor in solving the refugee problem had been fully grasped by the High Commissioner, whose constructive efforts in the field of resettlement and in the provision of an infrastructure in health and education for rural communities were clearly brought out in his report. Those efforts should be encouraged and supported by increased contributions from Governments. The Libyan Government hoped to raise in future its hitherto modest contribution to the High Commissioner's programme.

63. Mr. ÅSTRÖM (Sweden) said that his delegation had studied the High Commissioner's report with great interest, and was grateful for the further comments he had provided. The report, which was a good illustration of the competence, imagination, care and constructive spirit with which UNHCR's activities were directed, reflected the development that had taken place in recent years: at the beginning of the post-war period the refugee problem had arisen mainly in Europe; it had now shifted to Africa and Asia. Every effort must be made to control the situation in those areas.

64. The Swedish Government had always believed that the question of education was of basic importance, particularly as concerned the resettlement of refugees unable for one reason or another to return to their country of origin. As the French representative had very aptly pointed out, assistance to refugees had the same purpose as all the other questions before the Council: namely, to ensure for all men living conditions that would enable them to exercise their fundamental rights in dignity. Education, not only at the primary, but also at the secondary level, was absolutely necessary for the achievement of that purpose. It was for that reason that the refugee education account, to which the Swedish Government had subscribed some \$70,000 in 1967, had been established. Many other Governments would, he hoped, contribute to it.

65. He had noted with great interest the passages in the High Commissioner's report dealing with development and co-operation between UNHCR and other United Nations bodies. He hoped that the effort would be sustained in those fields also, for they were particularly important to the education and resettlement of refugees.

66. His delegation was impelled to repeat what it had already stated at the nineteenth session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme; i.e. that it was somewhat perturbed about the state of contributions. The situation must be improved through concerted action by Governments to secure a substantial increase in annual contributions to the programme. The Swedish parliament had recently adopted a new triennial plan of global assistance which covered all contributions to multilateral organizations such as UNDP, UNHCR, etc. For the period 1967-1970, the Swedish Government's contributions to the High Commissioner's programme would be \$300,000, \$400,000 and \$450,000 respectively. Besides those contributions, which constituted a pledge, the Swedish Government was considering the payment of an additional amount in 1968.

67. In view of the purely humanitarian and non-political nature of UNHCR work, which was proceeding mainly in Africa and Asia, the Swedish delegation felt that the time had come for many Governments not yet participating in the High Commissioner's programme to support its activities, which needed greater backing.

68. In conclusion, he stressed the aptness of the French representative's remark that the High Commissioner's work was in the final analysis self-destructive, i.e. it was aimed at making UNHCR superfluous by eliminating the refugee problem. Admittedly, the attainment of that goal was still far off, but all countries must hope for a solution of the problem in the long run and the speed with which Governments facilitated the High Commissioner's work would hasten the day when the most pressing and acute problems in terms of human suffering could be brought to an end.

69. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) thanked the High Commissioner for the explanations he had given and for the clear and encouraging summary provided in his report. His delegation was glad to note that the resettlement process had not been hindered either by a significant increase in the number of refugees in Africa or by the advent of fresh problems in Europe and in Asia. Those achievements were a tribute to the effectiveness of the High Commissioner's work and also reflected the increased co-operation between UNHCR, Governments, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations.

70. Despite that encouraging situation, much remained to be done, particularly in Africa. Three major goals had yet to be reached: in the first place, efforts must be made to prevent situations leading to a refugee problem, although that was not basically part of UNHCR's mandate; secondly, refugees should be encouraged, through joint action by UNHCR and inter-governmental consultations, to return to their countries of origin; and lastly, refugees who could not be repatriated must be resettled. As the report showed, UNHCR was able to

intervene successfully at different stages: direct material assistance initially, then joint action with the Governments of the receiving countries and specialized agencies over resettlement; and finally the introduction of plans designed to make the refugees self-supporting. UNDP could intervene effectively in the last stage, and had done so with some encouraging results in some African countries. Refugees need not be a burden on the receiving country; on the contrary they could provide a valuable contribution in terms of human resources to the development of hitherto undeveloped regions.

71. He agreed with the French representative's remark that one should look to the day when there would no longer be a refugee problem, and the UNHCR's work could be brought to an end.

72. He had noted with satisfaction the important part played by OAU in finding ways of solving the special problems arising in Africa. The valuable work being done in Europe, Asia and the countries of Latin America, and the important part played by the High Commissioner in the field of international protection of the rights of refugees must also be emphasized. The United Kingdom Government had supported the High Commissioner's programme for many years and would continue to support it unreservedly.

73. The United Kingdom Government shared the High Commissioner's concern over the financing of the programmes for 1967 and 1968; the reason why its name was not included in table 6 (annex II to the report) was that the amount it would contribute for 1968 was at present under consideration.

74. As the High Commissioner had pointed out, it was vital that States should quickly accede to the 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees in large numbers. The United Kingdom Government intended to announce its accession in the near future.

75. Mr. KRISHNAN (India) said that he, too, wished to congratulate the High Commissioner on his excellent report and on the brilliant way in which he had introduced it. His delegation was glad to note the steady progress that had been made and the continuous development of UNHCR activities throughout the world. He had listened with particular interest to what the High Commissioner had had to say about the increasingly important and effective role played by UNHCR in Africa. Thanks to the personal qualities of the High Commissioner the programme was acquiring a new dimension from the social and humanitarian points of view, and it was encouraging to note the increased support Governments and organizations were giving it.

76. In his view, the basic aim should certainly be to make the refugees self-supporting; the importance of education, and particularly vocational training, in achieving that end could not be over-emphasized. It was essential that inter-organizational co-operation should be further developed. The High Commissioner's conception of the development of activities on behalf of the refugees seemed imaginative, wise and realistic. The High Commissioner and his staff must be wished the success they deserved.

77. Mr. COX (Sierra Leone) associated himself with the congratulations to the High Commissioner and his staff on the excellent work they were doing.

78. The refugee problem was closely linked with the question of human rights. The problem had undoubtedly been aggravated by the growing number of States, but the High Commissioner's report showed that the results achieved in the areas mainly affected had not been jeopardized by new developments.

79. He particularly appreciated the work of OAU on behalf of the refugees; and he also stressed the value of the action taken by the Netherlands Government, which had established an advisory service for refugee sailors in the port of Rotterdam. It was also encouraging to note the growing collaboration between the specialized agencies and UNHCR. The very effective part played by the United Nations in the settlement of refugees through moral and financial support and a campaign for education and vocational training was undeniable. That role would, he hoped, be strengthened during International Human Rights Year.

80. Mr. KOROSSO (United Republic of Tanzania) said that, as a representative of a receiving country, he was particularly grateful to the High Commissioner for the assistance he was giving the Tanzanian Government. He wished to point out, however, in response to the

Japanese representative's remark that receiving countries directly benefited from the presence of refugees, that acting as host to refugees meant great sacrifices for his country, and the advantages it derived as a result were extremely small.

81. The United Kingdom representative was right in stressing, as an initial objective, the need to remove situations that produced the refugee problem. Unfortunately, the United Kingdom Government did not match its words with deeds.

82. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should adopt a resolution taking note with satisfaction of the report prepared by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/4555) for transmission to the General Assembly at its twenty-third session.

It was so decided.

83. Prince Sadruddin AGA KHAN (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said he had listened closely to the remarks by delegations, which reflected not only widespread interest in but unanimous support for the work of UNHCR. The statements by representatives of countries in all parts of the world were a great encouragement to himself and his colleagues, who would continue to be guided in their work by the Council's rulings.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.