

entrusted with the consideration of the reports of States parties on the implementation of the conventions;

(c) A list of articles dealing with related rights under the various conventions and a compilation of the current guidelines;

2. *Expresses its deep concern* about the alarming number of reports overdue from many States parties to the international conventions on human rights,¹²⁰ which negatively affects the reporting systems of those conventions, in particular the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

3. *Expresses particular concern* that some States that are parties to four or to five conventions seem to have serious difficulties in submitting their reports, as indicated by the repeated reminders addressed to them by the Secretary-General at the request of the competent supervisory bodies;¹²⁰

4. *Takes note with interest* of Economic and Social Council decision 1985/132 of 28 May 1985, by which, while maintaining the first six-year cycle of the reporting procedures on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Council decided to establish a nine-year period for the subsequent cycles, and considers this decision a first step towards the necessary lightening of the heavy burden of reporting obligations placed upon the States parties to that Covenant;

5. *Supports* the request addressed to the Secretary-General by the Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 1985/45, concerning the provision of practical assistance to States, under the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights, in the preparation of their reports under United Nations conventions;

6. *Commends* the United Nations Institute for Training and Research for having organized in the Caribbean region, at the suggestion of the Centre for Human Rights and with its close co-operation, a training course on the preparation and submission of reports under international conventions on human rights, and expresses the hope that other courses of that type may be organized in Africa and Asia;

7. *Believes* that new timely steps are needed in order to ascertain better the most relevant causes of the present situation regarding the non-submission of reports and to devise feasible types of action intended to remove the difficulties being encountered;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General, to this end, to send a note verbale to all States parties to the five United Nations conventions on human rights having at 1 February 1986 more than two reports overdue, inviting them to indicate, if they so wish, the reasons for their difficulties in complying with the reporting obligations with regard to the conventions under which their reports are overdue and their interest, if any, in technical advice and assistance with a view to better fulfilling their reporting obligations;

9. *Invites* the supervisory bodies entrusted with the consideration of reports submitted under all conventions currently in force to give particular attention, during the usual consideration of the action taken by the General Assembly on their annual reports, to the report of the Secretary-General¹²³ and to the present resolution;

10. *Recommends* to the States parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination that, at their next meeting, they

consider suggesting to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination the adoption, as a general rule, of the practice already being followed by the Committee of considering two successive reports in one single text;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-first session a report containing updated information on the general situation with regard to overdue reports, an assessment of the operational and financial implications of increasing training activities in this field and the results of the request addressed to him in paragraph 8 above;

12. *Decides* to consider at its forty-first session the convening, in 1987, of another meeting of the Chairmen of the supervisory bodies, including the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and, if already established, the committee against torture, in order to consider jointly the report of the Secretary-General requested in paragraph 11 above;

13. *Fully concurs* with the considerations and suggestions of the Secretary-General on the question of consolidating the guidelines of the supervisory bodies entrusted with the consideration of reports of the States parties on the implementation of the conventions on human rights;

14. *Takes note with appreciation* of the compilation of the general guidelines elaborated by the various supervisory bodies and of the list of articles dealing with related rights under the five conventions,¹²³ both of which are very helpful for States parties in the preparation of their reports;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-first session a separate item entitled "Reporting obligations of States parties to the United Nations conventions on human rights".

116th plenary meeting
13 December 1985

40/117. Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa

The General Assembly.

Recalling its resolutions 37/197 of 18 December 1982, 38/120 of 16 December 1983 and 39/139 of 14 December 1984 relating to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to refugees in Africa,¹²⁴

Mindful that the fundamental purpose of the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, held at Geneva from 9 to 11 July 1984,¹²⁵ was to launch collective action by the international community aimed at achieving lasting solutions,

Gravely concerned at the persistent and serious problem of large numbers of refugees on the African continent,

Aware of the heavy burden borne by African countries of asylum on account of the presence of these refugees and its consequences for their economic and social development, and of the heavy sacrifices made by them, despite their limited resources,

Deeply concerned that the refugee situation has been severely affected by the critical economic situation in Africa, as well as by drought and other natural disasters,

Recognizing that the efforts of the countries of asylum require the concerted support of the international commu-

¹²³ A/40/600 and Add.1.

¹²⁴ A/40/425.

¹²⁵ A/39/402, annex

nity to meet the needs for emergency relief and for medium- and long-term development aid,

Taking note of the declarations and resolutions adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its twenty-first ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa from 18 to 20 July 1985,¹²⁶ and of the resolutions adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its forty-second ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa from 10 to 17 July 1985, in particular resolution CM/Res.989 (XLII) on the situation of refugees in Africa,³⁵

Emphasizing the collective responsibility of sharing the urgent and overwhelming burden of the problem of African refugees through effective mobilization of additional resources to meet the urgent and long-term needs of the refugees and to strengthen the capacity of countries of asylum to provide adequately for the refugees while they remain in those countries, as well as to assist the countries of origin in rehabilitating voluntary returnees,

Reiterating the vital importance of the complementarity between refugee aid and development assistance,

Desirous of ensuring the speedy implementation of the recommendations and pledges made at the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa,

1. Expresses its deep appreciation to African host countries, which are the biggest donors, for their generous contribution and continuous efforts to alleviate the plight of refugees in spite of their critical economic situation;

2. Reiterates its appreciation to all donor countries, the organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, regional organizations and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their initial support and response to the projects submitted to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa;¹²⁷

3. Urges the international community to maintain the momentum created by the Conference and to translate into reality the projects submitted as well as the principles of the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Conference;

4. Emphasizes the vital importance of the complementarity of refugee aid and development assistance and of achieving durable solutions to the problems of refugees in Africa and the necessity of providing assistance for the strengthening of the social and economic infrastructures of African countries receiving refugees and returnees;

5. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to continue to keep the situation of refugees in Africa under constant review so as to ensure that adequate assistance is available for care and maintenance and for bringing about durable solutions;

6. Requests the United Nations Development Programme to increase its efforts to mobilize additional resources for refugee-related development projects and, in general, to promote and co-ordinate with the host countries and the donor community the integration of refugee-related activities into national development planning;

7. Calls upon all Member States and organizations of the United Nations system concerned, as well as relevant regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to lend their support to the speedy implementation of the recommendations and pledges made at the Conference;

8. Requests the Secretary-General, in accordance with the Declaration and Programme of Action, to monitor, in consultation and close co-operation with the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Development Programme, the follow-up to the Conference;

9. Also requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution.

*116th plenary meeting
13 December 1985*

40/118. Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the activities of his Office,¹²⁸ as well as the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner on the work of its thirty-sixth session,¹²⁹ and having heard the statement made by the High Commissioner on 11 November 1985,¹³⁰

Recalling its resolution 39/140 of 14 December 1984,

Reaffirming the purely humanitarian and non-political character of the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner,

Deeply concerned that refugees and displaced persons of concern to the High Commissioner continue to face distressingly serious problems in all parts of the world,

Particularly concerned that in various regions the safety and welfare of refugees and asylum-seekers continue to be seriously jeopardized on account of military or armed attacks, acts of piracy and other forms of brutality,

Stressing the fundamental importance of the High Commissioner's function to provide international protection and the need for States to co-operate with the High Commissioner in the exercise of this essential function, particularly in view of the continued and persistent violations of the basic rights of refugees and asylum-seekers,

Emphasizing that voluntary repatriation or return remains the most desirable solution to the problems of refugees and displaced persons of concern to the High Commissioner,

Emphasizing also the importance for the international community to continue to provide assistance and resettlement opportunities for those refugees for whom no other durable solution may be in sight, particularly in regions where countries of first refuge continue generously to receive refugees arriving by land or by sea,

Commending States that, despite severe economic and developmental problems of their own, continue to admit large numbers of refugees and displaced persons into their territories,

Noting with deep appreciation the valuable support extended by many Governments to the High Commissioner in the performance of his humanitarian tasks,

Deeply concerned about the shortage of funds faced by the High Commissioner and its consequences for his ability to fulfil his mandate,

Noting with satisfaction the efforts of the High Commissioner, in the field of international protection, to address

¹²⁶ See A/40/666, annex 1.

¹²⁷ See A/40/425, annexes I-III.

¹²⁸ *Official Records of the General Assembly. Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 12 (A/40/12).*

¹²⁹ *Ibid., Supplement No. 124 (A/40/12/Add.1).*

¹³⁰ *Ibid., Fortieth Session, Third Committee, 37th meeting, paras. 2-17.*