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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Thirty-seventh session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 408th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 9 October 1986, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. CHARRY-SAMPER (Colombia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS IN UNHCR ASSISTANCE RELATING TO:

(a) ASSISTANCE

(b) DURABLE SOLUTIONS

(c) REFUGEE AID AND DEVELOPMENT (agenda item 6) (continued) (A/AC.96/677)

1. Mr. BONEV (United Nations Development Programme) said that it had become abundantly clear over the years that the refugee problem was not only a legal and humanitarian question but also an economic one. The volume of the UNHCR's assistance programme was witness to that fact, as was the allocation of nearly 33 per cent of its resources to Africa, the continent with the greatest needs at present. It had therefore been particularly enlightening to note the emphasis placed by the High Commissioner on long-term solutions within a development context.

2. UNDP would welcome a closer and more systematic contact, through UNHCR's Technical Support Services and especially in the field, in efforts to link durable solutions to development programmes. Indeed, it would reiterate the statement in the Secretary-General's report on the situation of refugees in Sudan (A/41/264) that durable solutions for refugees could not be divorced from general development programmes.

3. If a development dimension was to be given to refugee assistance at an early stage and ways and means considered for promoting durable solutions for refugee and returnee populations, inter alia, by facilitating their involvement in the economic development activities of host countries, or countries of origin, UNDP's flexible development and co-ordinating role was highly relevant.

4. In Africa, where refugee and economic problems were intermingled, UNHCR and UNDP had co-operated even more closely since ICARA II, and particularly in the past year. The resources at UNDP's disposal under the Trust Fund for assistance for refugee-related development projects in Africa had enabled it to finance programmes closely linked to UNHCR's settlement assistance. For example, in the Central African Republic, in consultation with UNHCR, activities in an integrated rural development project were being adapted to changing needs as larger numbers of refugees were repatriated voluntarily.

5. In Uganda, in response to the needs of returnees and to rehabilitation and development requirements of their regions of origin, the Government, UNDP, UNHCR, and the Lutheran World Federation had identified or co-ordinated programmes of activities dovetailing emergency to longer-term development. Since the creation of the Trust Fund, in the wake of ICARA II, nine refugee-related development projects had been prepared and were being financed: in Angola, assistance to farmers' organizations, in the Central African Republic, integrated rural development, in Chad, integrated rural development, in Djibouti, diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis, in Guinea-Lesotho, integrated rural development, peri-urban health clinics, in Rwanda, reintegration of returnees, in Somalia, rural rehabilitation, and in Uganda, reintegration of returnees.

6. The amount of \$2.7 million had been committed out of a total of \$7.6 million and an additional \$2.5 million earmarked for projects in various stages of preparation. Five of the above listed projects, were being implemented by NGOs and two involved the co-operation of NGOs.

7. UNDP had continued to promote the implementation of the recommendations of the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at ICARA II with regard to the integration of refugee aid and projects into development plans and programmes. It had also sought to encourage the funding of refugee-related development projects. As reported earlier, the priority given to emergency relief requirements overshadowed long-term rehabilitation action in 1985 and the beginning of 1986. UNDP therefore welcomed and strongly supported the High Commissioner's appeal for renewed attention to be given to refugee-returnee-related development projects. Indeed, UNDP would co-ordinate with the High Commissioner, the Organization of African Unity and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to that end. He recalled that the United Nations Programme of Action for 1986/1990 to overcome Africa's economic crisis had drawn attention to the refugee problem of the continent. UNDP's activities, co-ordinated with UNHCR's relief and settlement assistance, would be pursued within the framework of the Programme and following the priorities outlined therein.

8. In addition to improving co-operation with UNHCR in the planning of assistance, UNDP would seek to continue participating in the High Commissioner's Emergency Preparedness/Seminars and to organize joint workshops in programme management. Such training opportunities bringing together staff of both organizations would greatly benefit them and those they were seeking to assist.

9. From 18 to 21 November 1986, a UNDP/UNDRO workshop of that kind would be held at Geneva, which UNHCR was also invited to participate. As development and humanitarian assistance were closely related and several other humanitarian organizations such as ICM and IRC might be interested in holding similar workshops or seminars, UNDP might consider the possibility of organizing more such events in the future, including those specifically for the needs of UNHCR.

10. The Netherlands representative had asked whether funding agencies could provide funds for refugee-related projects. UNDP had two ways of financing such projects. First, it could use trust funds specifically established for financing such projects. Second, it could use its central resources. With regard to the trust funds, delegates were well aware of the activities carried out by UNDP and UNHCR in ICARA II.

11. As to UNDP's central resources, each recipient country had an allocation, the IPF, established on the basis of criteria laid down by the UNDP Governing Council and covering a five-year planning period. Within the limits of the IPF, the recipient Government, with the assistance of the UNDP Resident Representative's Office and executing agencies, prepared a programme for the five-year period, which was submitted to the UNDP Governing Council for approval. The approved programme served as a basis for the formulation of projects. While the United Nations partners assisted the Government in formulating their country programmes and kept them aware of sectoral requirements including the needs of refugees, if such was the case, in the final analysis, it was the sovereign right and prerogative of the recipient

Government to decide on the priorities and objectives to be pursued by its country programme. Therefore, UNDP had no problem in funding refugee-related projects. Indeed, it drew the attention of Governments to that particular area. However, the final decision rested with the recipient Government.

12. In conclusion, he pledged UNDP's readiness, within the framework of its mandate, to strengthen further its efforts with UNHCR in activities related to durable solutions, refugee aid and development.

13. Mr. DOYLE (Commission of the European Communities) said that the three-pronged approach advocated by the High Commissioner, combining an effective emergency response with the establishment of basic services and early action to create income-generating activities and growing self-reliance coincided with the approach which the Community was trying to develop together with its African, Caribbean and Pacific partners to the new five-year Convention of Lomé.

14. In particular, the Convention, which had become operative in May 1986, sought to help to meet acute needs not already covered by emergency aid and to implement in the longer term projects and programmes aimed at self-sufficiency and integration or reintegration. The initiative specifically reflected the European Community's support for the principles enunciated at ICARA II and it completed the range of Community instruments in the field of development aid, notably those concerning emergency and food aid. He recalled that the Community's support to UNHCR inclusive of that of its member States had exceeded \$140 million in 1985. Of that amount, some 65 per cent had been assigned to Africa, 30 per cent to Asia and 5 per cent to Latin America and Oceania. In May 1986, the figure had already passed the \$100 million mark. The assistance took many forms, including food and emergency aid, as well as aid to promote refugee self-sufficiency throughout the world.

15. In implementing the new provisions of the Lomé Convention, which disposed of a total of 80 million European currency units or approximately \$US 80 million, the Community wished, whenever possible, to help Governments of African, Caribbean and Pacific States to work towards durable solutions to the plight of refugees and returnees. Extensive contacts had been made with the Governments concerned and specialized agencies, including, first, UNHCR and then UNDP, other international agencies and many non-governmental organizations. The first projects were now being approved and several more were in the pipeline.

16. Every effort would be made to integrate aid to refugees, where possible, within the five-year development programmes agreed by the Community and each State signatory to the Lomé Convention.

17. Given the new approach outlined by the High Commissioner, it was entirely reasonable for the European Community to anticipate using to the fullest extent possible the opportunities to assist refugees in finding durable solutions in close co-operation with UNHCR. In recent months UNHCR had already played a major role in assisting it to begin to use that new instrument and the European community looked forward more confidently than ever to the further expansion of that most fruitful collaboration.

18. Mr. BRANDRUP (International Council of Voluntary Agencies) said that his organization believed that the full participation of operational partners in the assessment of needs and in project formulation would no doubt contribute

to better results in implementation. Voluntary agencies concerned would thus feel part of the project and would share with UNHCR responsibility towards the refugees and donors. Otherwise, the voluntary agencies might feel that they were merely entrusted with implementing a project with which they had had little or no involvement during the initial and crucial phases.

19. The voluntary agencies recognized the monitoring role of UNHCR during the implementation phase. They believed that the role should be viewed as a dialogue between two partners, one entrusted with the execution of a project and the other accountable to the donors. The aim of monitoring was to improve the quality of refugee projects. The voluntary agencies looked forward to discussing in the very near future with UNHCR ways and means of simplifying and improving the present project management system, particularly the agreements, description and budgets of the projects, so as to concentrate their efforts on implementation of quality projects.

20. Evaluation should not be a phase of the programming cycle but a built-in and continuing process throughout the cycle. It should be a joint enterprise carried out with the participation of all the actors involved.

21. The last phase of the UNHCR programming cycle was the most difficult one: how to phase out UNHCR financial support of a project when refugees had reached a level at least equal to that of the surrounding population and not below the minimum welfare standards of the asylum country. To avoid the risk of the living conditions of refugees falling below those standards, it was necessary for UNHCR assistance to continue until a refugee group became a fully sustained community, integrated into the national context, and until another body assumed responsibility for its material well-being. That required a development approach, which should begin with the emergency phase, possibly by a completely different team familiar with developmental and income-generating procedures.

22. The voluntary agencies felt strongly that the High Commissioner had a very important role to play, even after the completion of UNHCR's direct assistance, in ensuring that the social and economic conditions of the refugees were further consolidated and integrated within the development process of the country of asylum. Several scenarios had been tried by UNHCR over the past 20 years with mixed results. The United Nations development system, for example UNDP, the World Bank and the specialized agencies, had the necessary know-how, but additional resources had to be mobilized for development projects involving refugees. Another approach would be for the High Commissioner to constitute a consortium in each country where refugees or returnees could be settled or rehabilitated.

23. The Crêt-Bérard workshop had been held, under joint UNHCR/ICVA auspices, its informal report contained a number of recommendations and suggestions which, when applied, would translate into action the principles reviewed by the Committee a year ago when it discussed principles for action in developing countries. A follow-up meeting was scheduled for the end of October 1986 between UNHCR and a number of voluntary agencies.

24. The voluntary agencies hoped that by the next session of the Executive Committee positive steps would have been taken to translate into action the broadly accepted concept that a development approach to refugee situations could, in certain circumstances, put an end to an indefinite care and maintenance programme and provide a durable solution.

25. His organization congratulated the High Commissioner on the very successful development of the Emergency Training Programme. It was particularly grateful that a significant number of places had been allocated to NGOs. The various seminars had been extremely beneficial in developing relations between UNHCR and its partners. It hoped that the programme would be continued during the coming year; the ICVA secretariat would continue to work closely with UNHCR in arranging the participation of NGOs.

26. It considered that, in most situations, UNHCR projects in third-world countries would be best implemented by local voluntary agencies which could have a better knowledge of the situation than foreign NGOs. However, many such voluntary agencies were not yet technically equipped to act as UNHCR's operational partners and institution-building was required. Members of his organization were prepared to co-operate with UNHCR in a training programme to promote fostering local voluntary agencies or reinforce existing ones.

27. Mr. DEWEY (Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees) said that the general support for the arrangements for dealing with refugee assistance and for a more activist role for UNHCR in pursuing solutions, particularly that of voluntary repatriation had been noted. UNHCR was also gratified at the appreciation expressed with regard to the form and content of the documentation submitted for the current session.

28. Several speakers had pointed to the need for UNHCR to act as a focal point for multilateral activities on behalf of refugees involving other parts of the United Nations system so as to share the burden and provide for mutual reinforcement. Given the constructive statement by the representative of the United Nations Development Programme, UNHCR's future work with that organization in particular should be very fruitful.

29. UNHCR was grateful that some delegations had accepted the general definition of its operationality. However, as long ago as 1955, when UNHCR's task had been much less complex than at present, a United Nations publication had classified UNHCR and other United Nations organizations such as UNICEF, the WFP and UNDP as purely operational agencies whose purpose was to administer assistance and execute programmes through implementing partners. The definition most delegations had accepted was that of the complete responsibility and accountability of UNHCR for the integrated assistance and protection programmes it carried out on behalf of refugees.

30. UNHCR was concerned about the impediments to voluntary repatriation in Honduras and was doing everything necessary to remove them both from the eastern and western parts of the country.

31. The concept underlying Special Programmes for the Sudan was that after the particular emergency ceased to exist, they should be transferred to General Programmes. The emergency in that country was virtually over and the refugees from both eastern and western Sudan, Ethiopia and Chad were returning home. The refugees who remained were clearly eligible for UNHCR support.

32. With respect to the focal point in UNHCR for voluntary repatriation under the new organization, he said that everyone in every region had a responsibility to carry out that important function.

33. In conclusion, he took note of the tremendous contribution of first-asylum countries, which hosted large numbers of refugees at considerable cost to themselves and expressed the hope that such hospitality, could be extended to all parts of the world.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 6.

REVIEW OF UNHCR PROGRAMMES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS IN 1985-1986 AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1987 (agenda item 7) (A/AC.96/677)

Document A/AC.96/677. Part II. Africa

35. Mr. KPENOU (Head, Regional Bureau for Africa) said that the High Commissioner's action in Africa was designed to promote the voluntary repatriation of refugees as soon as changes in the circumstances that had led them to seek asylum allowed. Pending those changes, UNHCR sought to provide the necessary assistance and protection in an appropriate and efficient manner that also preserved the dignity and self-respect of the refugees and never extinguished their hope to return home. In the emergency assistance phase, UNHCR must be ready to respond effectively to whatever needs were identified. Thereafter, assistance must be increasingly integrated into national plans in a context which would benefit both refugees and nationals. In such circumstances, UNHCR's role was limited by its non-development character, and national and international institutions must take the lead in their area of competence. There were, happily, a number of situations in which voluntary repatriation appeared to be possible. Meanwhile, substantial progress had continued to be made in stabilizing the critical emergency situations of the previous year. Relief assistance was still required, but moves towards self-sufficiency were now possible.

36. However, the severe and even increasing economic difficulties of some of the African countries hosting the largest numbers of refugees meant that progress towards self-sufficiency had fallen short of hopes. Much greater emphasis was clearly needed on measures that could address the needs of such areas in an integrated manner. It was there that the multilateral and bilateral development agencies and donors had the key role. Obviously if those measures were to be successful they must not only be additional to the limited input of UNHCR but also additional to the development effort that would be required even without the presence of refugees. Indeed, that had been the basic aim of ICARA II and it must be energetically pursued.

37. It was important that individual refugees and their families should be allowed and encouraged to participate fully in the planning and implementation of what had to be done for them. Programmes that did not properly involve the refugees themselves in the promotion of their self-sufficiency and their future were not only likely to fail but in the long term risked adding to rather than relieving the burden on the host Government. With regard to specific programmes, in Djibouti, the Government, in co-operation with UNHCR, was restarting the voluntary repatriation programme begun in 1983 and interrupted the following year largely because of the drought in the Hararghe region of Ethiopia. During September, some 500 persons had registered for return. UNHCR was aware of the concerns raised and in order to allay them, he

wished to stress two basic points, in the light of his recent mission to Djibouti. First, many refugees in Djibouti had fled their homes in the Hararghe region because of the war. That war had long since ended and their home areas, where UNHCR was present or had regular access, were at peace. UNHCR fully shared the view of the Djibouti Government that repatriation provided an immediately available and appropriate solution for that group. Indeed, many of them had returned temporarily.

38. For the majority, the reluctance to repatriate reflected uncertainty as to their economic prospects, on return rather than fears for their safety. UNHCR was working with the Government of Ethiopia to ensure that sufficient assistance was provided on return to offset the economic attractions of Djibouti. Those were largely the result of international relief assistance, not the prospects for other viable solutions. Rural settlement in Djibouti was impossible on any scale because of the unsuitability of the soil and climate for agriculture. Local integration through income-generation was unlikely in a largely service economy where some nationals already had difficulty in finding employment. Resettlement in third countries was not a solution except for a few individuals, as in the case of family reunion.

39. Nevertheless, there were refugees in Djibouti for whom repatriation at the present time was not the solution. UNHCR would continue to pursue other solutions while discharging its protection responsibility. He noted that the Government of Djibouti had assured the High Commissioner that it would continue to give asylum to new arrivals who met internationally recognized criteria.

40. In Ethiopia, the programme of assistance to southern Sudanese refugees near Gambella was continuing. Problems of drainage and road transport were slowly being overcome. The influx of refugees had reached a peak of 3,500 in July and had since declined. Assistance was also being extended at Dimma to some 3,700 southern Sudanese refugees who had recently entered the Keffa Region.

41. In the Hararghe region, relief assistance to returnees would continue up to the end of the year. A Government-organized workshop on rehabilitation in the region was shortly to take place in Addis Ababa. The workshop would outline the Government's priorities and would permit UNHCR to plan its future role in the region.

42. Preparations were well advanced for the repatriation of several thousands of Ethiopian refugees in the Gebo region of Somalia. Preparations were also under way to receive and assist returnees from Djibouti to the Hararghe Region.

43. In Somalia, UNHCR had devoted considerable effort during the first half of the year towards meeting the emergency needs of new arrivals from Ethiopia in the north-west region. A reception centre had been established at Tug Wajale, where there were some 32,000 new arrivals. Arrangements were being made to relocate the new arrivals at a new site further from the border in order to assure greater protection and facilitate the delivery of services. For 1987, new arrivals and the older caseload would be assisted under the Annual Programme.



44. The Sudan continued to be the largest single country programme in Africa. UNHCR was planning a phased integration into the ongoing local settlement programme for some 130,000 Ehtiopian refugees who had already been in settlements prior to the 1984-1985 influx. During 1987 a proportion of the recent arrivals should be able to have access to land or to wage-earning or income-generating opportunities.

45. The situation in eastern Sudan was a good illustration of the problem described by the High Commissioner as offering hospitality from a bare table. The resources of the region were already too stretched to provide adequate services to nationals, and had been severely affected by the drought of 1984-1985. The refugees, particularly the spontaneously settled, clearly added to that pressure. The Sudan had taken steps to mobilize assistance to redress that situation through the United Nations Inter-Agency Mission, whose recommendations the Government had accepted. At the same time possibilities under the Lomé III Convention must be used to the maximum extent to meet needs of areas affected by the presence of refugees. Bilateral and multilateral donors should also make an effort to provide additional resources.

46. It was hoped that many Chadians in western Sudan would elect to repatriate after the harvest. A mission to Chad was planned to assess the measures necessary to encourage repatriation through assistance upon return. The repatriation of Chadians from the Central African Republic continued, as did spontaneous return from neighbouring countries. Some 80,000 Ugandan refugees remained in settlements on the West Bank of the Nile in the Equatoria region of southern Sudan. A further 50,000 were thought to have settled spontaneously in the same area. Indications were that the majority would wish to return home by early 1987, after the harvest. In close co-operation with the Government of Uganda and the operational partners already present, including two Government Disaster Units, UNHCR was making contingency plans for that return. The return operation was planned to encompass that begun in June for those who had returned from the East Bank, as well as repatriation from Haut-Zaire where there were some 15,000 Ugandan refugees.

47. It was difficult to forecast how and when those contingency plans would be implemented. Although the border between the Sudan and Uganda had now reopened, security problems in northern Uganda had for several weeks prevented the movement of humanitarian relief supplies north by road from Kampala. Local distribution in the West Nile had been badly affected by the continued requisitioning of five UNHCR trucks by the Ugandan Army. Until the problems were overcome, UNHCR would not be in a position to issue the consolidated appeal to donors.

48. Zaire had had a steady although relatively small-scale influx of Angolan refugees, most recently in Bandundu province. Half of the 13,000 Zairian refugees in the northern and eastern provinces of Angola had expressed a wish to repatriate, and discussions were underway on the modalities.

49. The situation in southern Africa was a major cause for concern. There were a large number of asylum-seekers from Mozambique as a result of the security situation in that country and lesser but significant numbers of Angolans seeking asylum for similar reasons in Zaire and in Zambia. Well over 50,000 Mozambicans had sought asylum in Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. UNHCR

was assisting the Governments to care for them. Many thousands had also entered Malawi as well as South Africa. The Government of Malawi had decided to make its own investigations before seeking international assistance. The number of South Africans leaving in search of asylum in neighbouring countries remained relatively small, perhaps had surprisingly given the civil strife in that country and the draconian measures introduced in an unsuccessful attempt to contain the violence. UNHCR assistance to those refugees had concentrated on providing reception facilities in the first country of asylum, followed, where necessary, by their evacuation to countries where their safety could be better assured.

50. UNHCR was co-operating closely with others concerned by the present situation and the potential for a major exodus from South Africa. The Secretary-General had appointed a senior official to monitor political developments, while UNDP had been given the responsibility of planning for a possible forced exodus of migrant workers.

51. Mr. GURMU (Observer for Ethiopia) pointed out that a successful repatriation programme should be well designed, fully financed and effectively implemented. Without proper financing, returnees could only be classified as potential refugees. His delegation believed that voluntary repatriation to the country of origin was the most desirable approach to the refugee problem.

52. In addition to those registered by various organizations, over 120,000 Ethiopian nationals had returned through border posts in the western portion of the country, and 37,000 more were expected from Djibouti and Somalia in the near future.

53. His country was hosting over 110,000 registered refugees mainly from a single neighbouring country, and according to the preliminary agreement between his Government and UNHCR, a programme of food distribution and health care was being implemented for those refugees at the new site at Dimma. His Government had devoted much money and other resources to develop the site to the required standard, but there was an urgent need to improve the road linking the campsite with the nearest Government post. It was also necessary to improve present storage facilities in both size and quality. The population of the Itang camp near Gambella was increasing at an average rate of 3,500 refugees per month. A voluntary resettlement programme had been launched for 400 families to enable them to become productive and self-supporting. Difficulties persisted, however, the major problem being transportation. An acute shortage of trucks resulted in long delays in the delivery of urgently needed goods. His delegation therefore strongly appealed for the logistics and transportation component of the programme to be strengthened in the view of the ever-increasing refugee population in the area.

54. Mr. DE MAIO (Italy) said that his delegation had been satisfied to learn of the repatriation of more than 8,000 refugees from Somalia to Ethiopia and wished to announce that his country was prepared to contribute 40 trucks for that operation. He expressed satisfaction at the fair agreement reached over the long-debated problem of the exchange rate and at the transfer of the Tug Wajale reception centre to a more suitable location. His Government was shortly to begin drilling six wells in an arid area, which would benefit both refugees and the local population. Finally, since the number of refugees in Somalia was still quite high, the rate of contribution of donor countries and of UNHCR use of available funds should be equivalently high.

55. Mr. OSMAN (Sudan) expressed the hope that UNHCR's new management policy would remove administrative constraints that had in the past led to delays in the release of funds and negative effects on some programmes. The delegation of responsibility and considerable decision-making flexibility to UNHCR field staff was a welcome development.

56. Another issue of concern to his delegation related to the status of the spontaneous refugees, who were estimated at 529,000 in document A/AC.96/677 (Part II). That meant that 50 per cent of the refugees in the Sudan, one of the most underdeveloped countries hosting the largest number of refugees in the continent, had never received assistance through UNHCR. Furthermore, his delegation was highly sensitive to the use of terms that could be misleading, such as "self-supported", "integrated", "spontaneously-settled" and even "indirectly-assisted" refugees. His Government hoped that the UNHCR programme would be more realistic and to that end had given full access to all United Nations personnel for the purpose of reporting the situation in the country. His delegation hoped that other Governments would do the same.

57. Mr. DE MAIO (Italy) said that his Government would shortly be starting an integrated project in eastern Sudan, involving drinking water for 40,000 people, a fruit and vegetable programme especially meant for women refugees, and a veterinary programme for cattle. The project would benefit both refugees and the local population. Eastern Sudan had been assigned the highest number of projects at the ICARA II Conference, and he hoped that delegations would not forget the many worthy projects arising out of that Conference that had not yet been implemented.

58. Chief Siphon SHONGWE (Observer for Swaziland) said that, unfortunately, facilities provided in his country for refugees from South Africa had also to be used to accommodate the increasing number of refugees from Mozambique. Further assistance was needed in order to provide a new settlement site for Mozambican refugees, especially in view of South Africa's recent decision to expel Mozambican workers. In addition, in view of his country's declining economy, there was an urgent need for increasing income-generating projects. He appealed to other countries for help in alleviating that problem.

59. Mr. OFUMBI (Uganda) said that he wished to correct a statement in paragraph 2.14.1 of document A/AC.96/677 (Part II) to the effect that the 31,350 Zairian refugees who had arrived in Uganda during the 1960s no longer required UNHCR assistance. In fact, although most of those refugees had been absorbed, approximately 1,500 of them still lived as a distinct ethnic group in Kyata I settlement and were in need of care assistance like other refugees. With regard to the establishment of Kyata II settlement, the security situation of past years had unfortunately caused a delay. However, there had also been a problem in deciding who should implement the project, and his delegation appealed to UNHCR to expedite that decision, as refugees were facing hardships and many were secretly returning to the old settlements.

60. He understood that a planning mission was to be sent to Uganda in the near future to assess refugee needs and prepare plans for the rehabilitation of the infrastructure and long-term development. He urged the mission to pay particular attention to the following proposals: (a) eradication of tsetse fly in all nine settlements, and especially in Kyangwali settlement;

(b) repair of roads, particularly the road to Kyangwali settlement,  
(c) environmental protection of settlements, particularly Oruchinga and Nakivale.

61. His delegation had objected to paragraph 2.14.5 and it proposed its replacement by the following text: "The future of refugees who are living in Uganda is of serious concern to the Ugandan authorities. With the return of a peaceful situation, the Government has proposed a regional meeting to find a durable solution to this problem in East Africa."

62. Regarding the proposed financial provision for 1987, the very drastic devaluation of the Uganda shilling should be taken into account. Similarly, he hoped that the financial provision would be revised in the light of the report of the planning mission.

63. The security situation in northern Uganda was under control, and according to a reliable source of information, the UNHCR vehicles were now on their way back to the UNHCR.

64. Finally, his delegation wished to stress the importance of working out contingency plans, not only for people returning from the East and West Banks of the Nile, but also for those returning from Kenya and other countries. Every effort should be made to encourage them to return home.

65. Mr. MTANGO (United Republic of Tanzania) said that between July 1986 and June 1987 his Government had allocated ShT 54.25 million to various refugee projects in the country. That amount did not include the cost of services provided by ministries other than the one directly responsible for refugees, costs incurred in respect of spontaneously-settled refugees, or the costs of thousands of kilometres of land allocated to refugee settlements. During the current year's programming cycle, his delegation would like UNHCR to give attention to the following priority areas: (1) accommodation for instructors at the Rural Training Centre, (2) the expansion of the primary school and dispensary project and of workers' facilities at Burigi, in respect of which the previously-allocated sum of \$US 1,197,567 should be restored; (3) the resources needed to make an additional 2,000 square kilometres of land allocated for settlement suitable for habitation; (4) costs for registration, preparation of documents and the movement of Burundi and Zairian refugees away from the border with those countries; (5) a general refugee census in all refugee areas and in the cities, particular Dar-es-Salaam to help to determine the exact number of refugees in the country and to assess their essential needs; (6) aiding the resettlement of some 60 South African refugees.

66. Mr. SIMUMBA (Observer for Zambia) said that the unabated flow of refugees into Zambia as a result of the deteriorating political and security situation in southern Africa was placing a severe strain on the country's resources at a time of unprecedented economic crisis. The refugee population had risen from 106,000 in 1985 to over 130,000 due to increased activities by UNITA in Angola and the National Resistance Movement in Mozambique. During the past 12 months, some 16,500 Mozambicans and 10,000 Angolans had entered Zambia. His delegation urged strong condemnation of the South African Government's involvement in the activities of the forces of destabilization and the attacks on a refugee transit centre in Zambia and refugee homes in Zimbabwe and Botswana on 19 May 1986.

67. His country was grateful for the assistance provided by UNHCR through regular programmes. It also thanked the NGOs for their outstanding performance during the past year. It was pleased to report that a third refugee centre to be known as the Ukwimi refugee settlement, would soon be established at Petauke to accommodate Mozambiquan refugees. Where voluntary repatriation was not possible, the Government sought to provide durable solutions by organizing rural settlement and intensive self-sufficiency schemes. Its policy on spontaneous settlers was to allow them to remain where they were until permanent solutions to their problems could be found. Five project proposals had been made by Zambia to ICARA I and ICARA II aimed at improving the living conditions of such settlers. One project, involving the construction of fish ponds, and funded by the United States of America and executed by the ICMC was being successfully implemented, and a second, funded by the Japanese Government, a junior secondary school in Meheba refugee settlement, had already been started. Existing health facilities in that same settlement were being provided by a Japanese NGO, the Association to Aid Refugees with medical equipment, drugs and other supplies.

68. His delegation asked for serious consideration to be given by donors to the financing of projects in areas densely populated by spontaneous settlers. Assistance was needed to build three primary schools, improve medical facilities at existing rural health centres and construct feeder roads in those areas.

69. In conclusion, he assured the Executive Committee that the Zambian Government regarded voluntary repatriation as the best permanent solution and respected the wishes of refugees who expressed a desire to return to their countries of origin.

70. Mr. Robertson (Australia) took the chair.

71. Mr. RENZAHO (Observer for Rwanda) said that there were currently some 20,000 refugees in Rwanda, mostly of rural origin. His delegation welcomed the report for 1985-1986 and proposed programmes and budget for 1987 submitted by the High Commissioner and supported the new emphasis on local settlement and self-sufficiency projects. In that context, particular attention should be given to the development of basic infrastructures, including schools, health facilities and literacy and nutrition centres. His delegation would submit more specific proposals shortly to UNHCR on ways of achieving greater self-sufficiency among the refugee population.

72. Mr. ABDULLAH (Observer for Ghana) said that the information contained in document A/AC.96/677 (Part II) did not accurately reflect the real situation in Ghana and understated the number of refugee arrivals from Chad and other countries. His Government had already stressed the need for a new census of the refugee population in Ghana and perhaps in the region as a whole. Attempts to resettle refugees from Chad had often met with resistance from the refugees themselves. Voluntary repatriation had been successful in many cases, while some refugees had been integrated into national society. Some long stayers tended to develop what could be called a refugee dependence syndrome.

73. To all Ghanaian nationals who had fled the country for economic or other reasons, he wished to reiterate his Government's call for them to return voluntarily and without fear for their safety. If necessary, letters of safe conduct could be provided by the Government at its missions abroad or through UNHCR Bureaux. Nationals wishing to avail themselves of that opportunity could be assured the same sympathetic reception and assistance in reintegration as the returnees from Nigeria in 1983 and 1984.

74. Mr. AKWENYE (Observer, South West Africa People's Organization) looked forward to the continuation and strengthening of co-operation between SWAPO and UNHCR in helping to alleviate the plight of displaced persons from Namibia. The meeting of the Executive Board was taking place at a time when the deadlock on Namibia's independence, as a result of the extraneous issue of the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola, continued to preclude a durable solution to the refugee problem. The massive militarization in Namibia, the climate of increasing repression and the imposition of a state of emergency were forcing thousands of Namibians to seek refuge in neighbouring and front-line States, whose own security was under threat by the Pretoria régime. That situation was bound to continue as long as South Africa occupied Namibia illegally and refused to implement Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

75. Nevertheless, tremendous strides had been made with UNHCR assistance in improving the conditions of the refugees at Namibia Health and Education Centres in Angola and Zambia. Projects included basic relief assistance, social and health facilities, education, technical support, transport and construction. The construction of physical facilities had been the major component in the improvement of the living conditions of Namibian refugees. Under self-sufficiency projects, furniture, equipment and tools had been provided for a vocational training complex. A textile workshop was teaching basic technical skills to over 100 Namibians and also increasing SWAPO's capacity to meet some of the basic needs of the refugee community. Similarly, a new vehicle workshop would assist in producing skilled mechanics to repair and maintain vehicles and machines.

76. The provision of basic education coupled with skills development was of prime importance to SWAPO, and UNHCR played a major role in that area. Some of the students who had completed secondary education in independent African countries under UNHCR sponsorship were now teaching at SWAPO centres. He appealed to the international community for financial assistance for such students to further their education.

77. As part of the policy of setting up its own educational institutions, SWAPO had recently established a technical secondary school at Loudima in the Congo to provide all-round education and serve as a blue print for the secondary school system in an independent Namibia. He wished to renew SWAPO's request to UNHCR to support that crucial project, and also to support the extension of the existing textile workshop, the provision of necessary materials and equipment for a shoe-making factory, and agricultural activities in SWAPO settlements in both Angola and Zambia. Those programmes were vital in achieving self-sufficiency and lessening reliance on external inputs.

78. Mr. MSIMANG (Observer, African National Congress) said that refugee outflows from South Africa as a result of the mounting campaign of terror by the apartheid régime were adding to the immense and difficult task faced by the African National Congress and created new responsibilities for the international community in general. The response of UNHCR to that situation was deeply appreciated and he was pleased to report the steady progress of South African refugees towards self-reliance in most ANC settlements. In Angola, Zambia and Tanzania, efforts were being continued to expand crop production and animal husbandry and to develop silviculture. Vegetable farming remained difficult because of irrigation problems. The construction programme to provide shelter and other crucial social services was in various stages of implementation.

79. His delegation was greatly disturbed to note from the High Commissioner's report for 1985-1986 and proposed programmes and budget for 1987 that assistance to ANC would be phased out at the end of 1986 with the completion of the Dakawa Centre in Tanzania. Only the first part of the vocational training centre was in fact nearing completion, and a great deal of work remained to be done. Moreover, the ANC construction programme was currently running one and a half years behind schedule because of financial and other constraints. Difficulties were being faced in the agricultural sector, too, with long delays in the supply of farm machinery under the 1985 allocation. Self-sufficiency was still not within grasp and ANC reiterated its appeal for financial and technical support such as training in project planning, implementation, monitoring, financial control and reporting in accordance with UNHCR procedures. His people would continue to oppose the apartheid system until it was destroyed. Paliative measures could not bring about durable solutions and he trusted that UNHCR and the international community as a whole would act positively and affirmatively in support of efforts towards all-round development.

80. Mr. MTANGO (United Republic of Tanzania) said that his delegation also wished to raise the question of continued assistance to the Dakawa Centre and urged UNHCR to give serious consideration to what had been said by the Observer for the African National Congress.

81. Mr. KPENOU (Head, Regional Bureau for Africa) thanked members of the Executive Committee for their comments, suggestions and information which would be considered within the framework of UNHCR's mandate and possibilities. He also wished to thank the delegation which had offered assistance in respect of two problems where UNHCR needed funds - in eastern Sudan and in repatriation from Somalia to Ethiopia.

82. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Executive Committee approved the proposed programmes and budget for 1987 for Africa, as outlined in document A/AC.96/677, Part II.

83. It was so decided.

Document A/AC.96/677. Part III. Asia and Oceania

84. Mr. HOMANN-HERIMBERG (Head, Regional Bureau for Asia and Oceania) said that although any introduction of UNHCR activities in Asia and Oceania was somewhat of an anti-climax, the problem of Indo-Chinese asylum-seekers was still highly acute. The international community could be proud of its

colossal achievement with respect to those people. Over one million had found places of resettlement in third countries, while some 113,000 had left Viet Nam through the Orderly Departure Programme, in addition, close on 300,000 had been locally integrated in the region. For some 150,000, solutions still had to be found. The High Commissioner believed that the situation demanded a vigorous pursuit of all the classic solutions to refugee problems coupled with action on the question of root causes.

85. On the subject of voluntary repatriation to Laos, on instructions from the High Commissioner, the Bureau had recently had discussions in Vientiane to explore possibilities for a revitalization of that option. An agreement had just been reached for the orderly return of persons screened out under the procedure instituted by the Royal Thai Government. The successful implementation of the memorandum of understanding would contribute to the resolution of an existing impasse and might even have more far-reaching consequences. UNHCR was convinced that, as in the case of voluntary returnees, assistance for the reintegration of that group was justified.

86. As the Executive Committee was aware, the Royal Thai Government had indicated its intention of closing the Khao-I-Dang camp and transferring its population of 25,000 Khmers to the border area. During his recent visit to Thailand, the High Commissioner had expressed concern and the hope that an understanding could be worked out, it had been agreed that further talks on that issue would be held in November.

87. Over 32,000 Vietnamese boat people were currently housed in camps in South-East Asia awaiting durable solutions. Among these, an increasing number were the so-called "long-stayers" who had been repeatedly rejected for resettlement in third countries. First asylum countries were understandably anxious that a solution should be found for long stayers in the near future. At the same time, the arrival of boat people in ASEAN countries and in Hong Kong was likely to continue for some time. Pending the emergence of positive results from new initiatives currently being examined by the High Commissioner, the tempo of resettlement needed to be maintained. The anti-piracy arrangement implemented by the Royal Thai Government had been renewed for another year, and there had been a clear reduction in the number and intensity of attacks on boats carrying Vietnamese refugees in the first part of 1986.

88. Another subject of concern was the implementation of the integration programme for some 280,000 Indo-Chinese refugees in the People's Republic of China. While the programme itself was progressing with remarkable efficiency, some of the farms had suffered severe setbacks during the summer due to natural disasters. The extent of the damage and the urgent rehabilitation measures that might be required were currently being assessed with the authorities.

89. Other main groups of refugees in the region were the Irian Jayans in Papua New Guinea and the Philippine refugees in Sabah, East Malaysia. UNHCR had been assisting several groups of the 90,000 Philippine refugees in Sabah since 1976 in order to make them self supporting and to reintegrate them into their local environment. Those projects would be completed by mid 1987, UNHCR would be ready to assist in voluntary repatriation arrangements if warranted.



90. In Papua New Guinea, UNHCR was currently assisting over 10,000 refugees and displaced persons from the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya. The situation was complicated by the fact that the caseload, although relatively small in number, was composed of persons who had crossed the border for a variety of reasons, including those of traditional border crossing. It had been brought to UNHCR's attention that several thousand persons might have returned spontaneously to Irian Jaya. In co-operation with the Governments of Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, UNHCR would further intensify its pursuit in a discreet way of the most appropriate solutions.

91. Mr. FABJAN (Austria) said that for many years Austria had contributed to international efforts to help refugees from Indo-China by contributing financially to the various operations of UNHCR, ICRC and UNBRO and by accepting refugees from Viet Nam and Kampuchea for resettlement in Austria. More than 2,000 Indo-Chinese refugees had found a new home in Austria.

92. In an effort to contribute further to international burden-sharing, the Austrian authorities had recently decided to participate in the RASRO scheme with a view to joining other States in alleviating the plight of that particularly vulnerable group of refugees.

93. Mr. RICHARDSON (Australia) said that he wished to thank the Head of the Regional Bureau for Asia and Oceania for a useful and encouraging summary of the efforts of UNHCR in a part of the world in which Australia took an active interest. His country benefited from the opportunity to work closely with UNHCR.

94. Mr. NGO Hac Team (Observer for Democratic Kampuchea) said that he wished to state his delegation's reservation on paragraph 3.9.28. The Kampuchean Red Cross was a puppet organization set up by the Vietnamese and the reference to it could only be deleterious to the achievement of a peaceful solution to the refugee situation in that part of the world.

95. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Executive Committee approved the proposed programmes and budget for 1987 for Asia and Oceania.

96. It was so decided.

Document A/AC.96/677. Part IV. Europe and North America

97. Ms. CAPPELLI (Head, Regional Bureau for Europe and North America) said that it was the first time that UNHCR structure has included a Bureau for Europe and North America with full responsibility for UNHCR's protection and other activities in 20 countries. Regrettably, there was another first: never since the 1951 Convention had come into force had traditionally liberal asylum policies in the Europe and North American region been so seriously at risk.

98. While the countries of the region remained among the foremost contributors to UNHCR programmes, both through major financial support and through the general provision of resettlement places, in the face of increasing numbers of asylum seekers and refugees arriving in those countries,

Governments had progressively announced restrictive measures, including visa requirements, detention, reduction of socio-economic benefits, summary return to intermediate countries, and even instances of refoulement. Those measures represented reaction to a changing world rather than positive action required to address new problems.

99. During the past four decades, the world had changed at an unprecedented pace. Dozens of countries had gained their independence under difficult conditions; rapid population growth had occurred in major regions, poverty and famine had become acute world issues, and persecution, wars and internal strife had continued to compel many thousands of persons to flee from their countries. World communications and transport had been revolutionized and international interdependence had become an inescapable reality.

100. Those developments had contributed to the arrival of increasing numbers of asylum seekers and refugees in Europe and North America from other continents. In 1985, 125,000 persons from non-European countries had sought asylum in Europe, out of a total of 175,000 asylum-seekers, compared with 68,000 out of a total of 104,000 asylum seekers the year before. Many had arrived from intermediate countries where local settlement or resettlement programmes existed. Canada and the United States had also increasingly become countries of first asylum. Another consequence of the above-mentioned developments was that a growing number of persons fled from violence in their home countries, while many of them might not qualify for refugee status under the Convention, their safe return could often not be responsibly envisaged.

101. Clearly, fundamental solutions could only be achieved through concerted action. The international community had a shared responsibility for extending protection and aid to those fleeing from persecution and violence but that shared responsibility could only have meaning if it was translated into joint action that addressed the problems faced by specific countries or regions. Experience had shown that an uneven distribution of asylum seekers among countries within the same region created tensions and encouraged the adoption of unilateral restrictive measures.

102. The consultations between the High Commissioner and concerned Governments in The Hague in April 1986 had represented a significant move towards concerted action and a positive global approach to solutions. UNHCR had subsequently convened working groups of interested Governments to address the specific problems posed by certain groups of asylum seekers and refugees. Their aim was, through joint analysis and exchange of ideas, to explore possibilities for constructive action which must be built upon the humanitarian instruments designed to protect and assist refugees. Although that process could not bring about miraculous solutions overnight, but it demanded the full commitment and political will of the international community.

103. Turning to other ongoing activities, she said that UNHCR's total expenditures in Europe showed a downward trend, despite the effect of the dollar rate of exchange. In general terms, an effort had been made not to increase local currency expenditures. Nevertheless, continuing expenditures for the region remained necessary in 1987, particularly for legal and social counselling, assistance to the handicapped and the promotion of self-help activities.

104. In order to establish its orientations for the future, the Bureau was undertaking a review of UNHCR activities in each country of the region which would serve as a basis for policy formulation. Naturally, whenever changes were envisaged, UNHCR would consult closely with the Governments and agencies concerned.

105. One area which required particular attention was public opinion with regard to asylum seekers and refugees. It had always been a temptation in the face of new and complex international problems to allow anxiety to lead to withdrawal. But one should not forget that to speak of asylum seekers and refugees was to speak of people who had been compelled to leave their homes out of fear. It was more important than ever that humanitarian traditions and their expression in law and action should be maintained and strengthened.

106. Mr. TICHY (Austria) said that much attention would need to be given to the increasing numbers of asylum seekers from non-European countries. Traditional refugee patterns continued to exist and required undiminished attention from UNHCR.

107. Mr. SEIWERT (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his Government's estimate of the overall number of refugees and asylum seekers in the Federal Republic of Germany as from June 1986 was, however, 673,000, and not 134,000. Of those persons, 130,000 asylum seekers had cases pending in the courts, while there were 64,800 recognized refugees corresponding to the definition of refugees under the 1951 Convention with 129,000 family members. Where asylum seekers were concerned, there had been 73,800 in 1985, in 1986, up to 20 September, their number had risen to 76,700. The figures for 1986 were 45 per cent above those for the same time in 1985. Chapter 4.4.2 conveyed the impression that the majority of asylum seekers were living in unacceptable community housing whereas, in fact, most lived in private homes. Furthermore, asylum seekers generally did not have permission to work for the first two years in the Federal Republic of Germany. His delegation wished to reiterate the request it had made at the previous session that data concerning the Federal Republic of Germany should be more accurate.

108. He also wished to inform the Executive Committee that in addition to the sum of \$US 31 million spent in 1985 on UNHCR programmes, German townships and federal States had spent about \$US 900 million, mainly in social aid to refugees. In 1986, some \$US 1.3 billion would be spent on refugees and asylum seekers. That amount was more than twice the total budget of UNHCR worldwide.

109. Mr. NALLE (United State of America) said, with reference to the statement in paragraph 4.13.4 to the effect that the quota for new admissions for 1987 had been fixed at 63,000 persons, that the United States Government had decided to set the ceiling for those admissions at 70,000 places, of which 4,000 would constitute a contingency reserve.

110. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Executive Committee approved the proposed programmes and budget for 1987 for Europe and North America.

111. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.