



UN/DA COLLECTION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KOUASSI (Togo)

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AGENDA ITEM 76: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION TO AVERT NEW FLOWS OF REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 76: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION TO AVERT NEW FLOWS OF REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/41/324; A/SPC/41/L.5)

1. Mr. MAHMUD (Pakistan), after extending his delegation's sympathy to the people and Government of El Salvador following the earthquake in that country, said that his country was especially aware of the tragedy and dimensions of the refugee problem because it had, over the past seven years, received 3 million refugees - nearly a third of the total refugee population in the world. That situation would continue until refugees were able to return home in safety, honour and dignity.
2. As the High Commissioner for Refugees had noted in his report for 1986 (A/39/12), many refugee situations involved persons displaced from their countries owing to situations of armed conflict, foreign aggression or occupation, or internal upheavals accompanied by serious human rights violations. It was such situations which gave rise to refugee flows and bred so much suffering throughout the world, whether in Asia or southern Africa.
3. In addition to its tragic human dimensions, the refugee problem exacerbated regional and international instability and generated tensions which extended far beyond the point of origin. The problem was thus essentially political in nature and required a political response.
4. In order to prevent future refugee flows, Member States must adhere to the norms of inter-State conduct laid down in the United Nations Charter and refrain from the threat or use of force in their international relations. Countries whose policies had forced large sections of their population to flee must accept their responsibilities. Countries of asylum, which were often developing countries, lacked the resources to meet refugees' needs and were justified in expecting the international community, particularly its more affluent members, to share that burden. The report of the Group of Governmental Experts (A/41/324), of which Pakistan was a member, contained constructive recommendations, particularly in subparagraphs (a) and (d) of paragraph 66, which should make it possible to arrive at agreement on averting new refugee flows and creating conditions enabling the present refugee population to return to their homes in safety and honour.
5. His delegation hoped that Member States would implement the recommendations fully and adopt the draft resolution, of which it was a sponsor, unanimously.
6. Mr. XUAN NHAT (Viet Nam) said that the phenomenon of massive flows of refugees was not a new one. In Europe, for instance, the two world wars had resulted in mass population exoduses. The source of many current refugee movements was different, however. All too often, the major causes were denial of the right of self-determination, colonialism, racist practices such as apartheid, economic blockade, underdevelopment, etc. In certain regions, natural disasters (floods, drought, desertification) were also contributing factors.

(Mr. Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

7. The number of refugees had increased considerably in recent years, especially in the turbulent regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Since most countries of origin and those of asylum were developing countries, including some of the least developed countries, the exodus or influx of large numbers of people had serious consequences. Countries of origin lost a labour force which was often highly qualified, and host countries were faced with a heavy burden on various levels and were exposed to the destabilizing effects of refugee flows.

8. It was becoming increasingly clear that concerted international efforts must be made to remove the root causes of refugee flows in order to avert further such flows. Since that was a humanitarian issue, it must be tackled as such and all political motivations must be excluded. As the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees had said in 1984, the refugee problem must not be politicized if effective action was to be taken.

9. His country, which was a member of the Group of Governmental Experts, had sought to make the Group's report more objective so that it reflected the reality of the refugee situation, especially that in Asia, fully.

10. His delegation was happy to note that the experts had taken a forward-looking approach to the question and had been able to reach general agreement on the main issues. It was particularly gratified that the cardinal principles of the United Nations Charter, in particular the principle that States should refrain from intervening in the internal affairs of other States and respect their independence and sovereignty, were upheld as the basis for international co-operation to avert new flows of refugees. It agreed fully with the opinion that the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Secretariat and other organs and agencies of the United Nations system, especially the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, had competence to deal with problems giving rise to refugee flows. In exercise of his mandate, the Secretary-General could help to improve international co-operation to that end. Lastly, the effects of refugee exoduses on countries of origin, which were all too often ignored, were dealt with in the conclusions of the report.

11. South-East Asia had long been a region with a large refugee population. Over the past 40 years, the Indo-Chinese people had been the victims of successive wars of aggression waged by colonialist and imperialist forces, and they were now facing a war of sabotage and a policy of economic blockade and embargo pursued by expansionist forces in collusion with imperialist and hostile forces. Moreover, outside incitement to people to leave their countries also gave rise to mass flows of refugees in Indo-China.

12. His Government had affirmed on many occasions that the refugee problem was a human one and must therefore be solved by humanitarian means. To that end, it had taken numerous steps to prevent illegal departures from Viet Nam and was co-operating with United Nations agencies and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in facilitating legal departures. It called on all interested countries, especially those directly concerned, to display good will and increase their co-operation with Viet Nam in solving the refugee problem.

13. Mr. HASSAN (Somalia), after extending his delegation's condolences to the people and Government of El Salvador following the earthquake in that country, said that his Government was ready to co-operate with any international effort to devise new mechanisms for averting refugee flows. As everyone knew, refugee flows, with all the human suffering and deprivation they entailed, were increasing steadily. The humanitarian activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the programmes of other agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as the generosity of receiving States some of which were very hard pressed themselves, helped considerably to lessen the plight of refugees.

14. His delegation commended the report of the Group of Governmental Experts (A/41/324), the conclusions and recommendations of which were a step in the right direction. The task of finding lasting and peaceful solutions to the problem was complicated and impeded by a lack of political will without which it was impossible to eliminate the root causes of that problem. The United Nations must therefore urge all Member States to do everything within their power, in view of their responsibilities under the United Nations Charter and international human rights instruments and in exercise of their sovereignty, to avert new refugee flows and refrain from creating such flows or contributing to them by their policies.

15. His delegation had sponsored draft resolution A/SPC/41/L.5 and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

16. Mr. AHMED (Bangladesh), after conveying his delegation's condolences to the people and Government of El Salvador in connection with the earthquake in that country, said that Bangladesh had expressed its concern about the refugee problem on many occasions, both in the Committee and in other forums, and had voted in favour of the draft resolutions on the matter at previous sessions.

17. Bangladesh believed that the refugee problem constituted only one aspect of the much wider problems that resulted from an inequitable world order. To tackle all the aspects of the refugee problem on a permanent and satisfactory basis, the United Nations system should take effective action to ensure respect for self-determination and independence, co-operation and development based on equity and justice, and the full realization of human rights, both political and economic.

18. His delegation firmly believed that co-operation between the States concerned could always defuse any potential problems involving the flow of refugees. Bangladesh itself had experienced a refugee problem in 1979, when, for a multiplicity of reasons, more than 200,000 refugees from Burma had entered Bangladesh. The matter had been settled after very cordial discussions between the two parties, and all the refugees had returned to their homes.

19. The report of the Group of Governmental Experts (A/41/324) was a very useful document, not only because its authors had sought to discern the root causes of that vital problem, but because it contained recommendations to Member States to respect their obligations and to strengthen international co-operation to avoid massive flows of refugees in the future. His delegation supported, in particular, the recommendation concerning the important role that the Secretary-General could

(Mr. Ahmed, Bangladesh)

- play in carrying out his mandate in that area. Those recommendations should form the basis for concerted efforts to find a solution to that vital problem.
20. Bangladesh would continue to support all the efforts at the United Nations to strengthen international co-operation to avert new flows of refugees.
21. Mr. FAIZ ZAIN (Malaysia) congratulated the Group of Governmental Experts on their report, the recommendations of which his delegation would support.
22. As rightly stated in the report, in addition to natural calamities, one of the main causes of refugee flows was foreign aggression and occupation, engaged in violation of the Charter, with the small and weak nations often being the victims. The greatest tragedy in that connection was that of the Palestinian people, who has been driven from their homeland and had already seen two generations born in refugee camps. Millions of Afghans had also been forced to flee their homeland, after falling prey to the brutalities of foreign occupation. In South-East Asia, several hundred thousand Kampuchean were living as refugees as a result of the occupation of their country.
23. The report of the Group of Governmental Experts demonstrated that the countries that provided humanitarian assistance to those unfortunate people often did so at the expense of their own economic development, and sometimes at the expense of their domestic stability and security. Since 1975, Malaysia had taken in thousands of Indo-Chinese refugees. Although it had often been able to resettle them, with the assistance of the international community, in third countries, it was still sheltering 10,000 who had been unable to find refuge elsewhere. In addition to countries engaging in armed intervention, the countries of origin, frequently because of the policies they followed, bore a heavy responsibility. It was incumbent upon all States to observe the fundamental principles that governed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. Malaysia agreed with the Group that existing international legal instruments, especially the Charter of the United Nations, were sufficient to promote international co-operation to avert new flows of refugees, provided that Member States were willing to respect them. A new instrument would receive no greater respect from those States which violated those that already existed. Furthermore, all States had at least a moral obligation, if not a legal obligation, to observe the Group's recommendations.
24. His delegation would like to know whether the fact that the Secretary-General had not been requested to report to the General Assembly at its forty-second session on the implementation of the Group's recommendations implied that the General Assembly would no longer be seized with that agenda item and that the work of the Group was completed.
25. In conclusion, he announced that his delegation would join in sponsoring draft resolution A/SPC/41/L.5 in the earnest hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

26. Mr. MIRPURI (Singapore) expressed his delegation's deep sympathy with the Government and people of El Salvador following the recent disaster in that country.

27. The massive flows of refugees, with all the incalculable misery and suffering that accompanied them, and the great political, economic and social burdens that they imposed on the receiving countries, in particular the countries of first refuge, had reached such a scale in the past 10 years that it had become imperative for the international community to co-operate to prevent further flows.

28. The political compromise which had led to the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts in 1981 had required it to use a future-oriented approach and to avoid considering present refugee problems, although, given their potential for international and regional instability, they demanded urgent solutions. He stressed the vital role played in that connection by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. He urged those Governments with "defensive" policies towards refugees not to leave it to the developing countries to give asylum to the overwhelming majority, as was currently the case.

29. The countries of South-East Asia assailed by the thousands of Indo-Chinese refugees fleeing racism, foreign occupation and the new form of colonialism practised by a certain country in the region, had been the direct witnesses both of the tragic problems faced by the refugees in the countries of first asylum and of the problems that ensued for those countries themselves. The practices of aggression and intervention which were the root cause of the problem had, moreover, thwarted their efforts to establish a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in the region.

30. After having taken in the "boat people", at the cost of severe political, social and economic dislocation, which some quarters had sought to use as a weapon to destabilize the region, the countries of South-East Asia were currently experiencing a massive flow of Kampuchean refugees fleeing the foreign occupation of their country. Unless the international community wished to see the annihilation of a peaceful people with a long and rich cultural tradition, it must call on those responsible for the tragedy to comply with the principles outlined in the United Nations Charter and respect the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. It must summon up the necessary will to increase the political and economic costs for the countries directly responsible for massive refugee outflows.

31. The recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts fell into two categories. The recommendations calling on Member States to scrupulously respect the Charter had frequently proved to be mere wishful thinking and were unlikely to be able to prevent new flows of refugees, unless there was increased international pressure to persuade States to comply with them. The recommendations calling on Member States to make greater use of the relevant organs of the United Nations could certainly help to alleviate the suffering of the refugees, but did not in themselves attack the root cause of the problem, namely, the practices of Member States which, through massive violations of fundamental rights and freedoms, contributed to the flow of refugees around the world.

32. Mr. HLOPHE (Swaziland) expressed his sincere condolences to the people and Government of El Salvador following the recent earthquake. His delegation had studied with care the excellent report of the Group of Governmental Experts (A/41/324), which gave an in-depth analysis of the crucial refugee problem and proposed some practical solutions.
33. Small and land-locked as Swaziland was, it too was affected by the problem and concerned about its scale. As a country of asylum, it was familiar with the agony and misery of the millions of men, women and also innocent children all over the world who had been uprooted from their homelands and who called urgently for the attention of the international community and for collective and responsible action.
34. The root of the problem undoubtedly lay in policies of colonialism and neo-colonialism, foreign intervention and domination, armed conflict and aggression, all of which were incompatible with the norms and principles of international law and resulted only in the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
35. Furthermore, the refugees imposed a heavy economic and social burden on the receiving States, particularly the developing countries and especially those in Africa. Swaziland, which was particularly affected by those multiple problems, had not, however, been prevented from honouring its obligations under the Charter and the Geneva Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. It stood ready to offer humanitarian assistance to all genuine refugees, and was grateful to all who continued to assist in its economic development.
36. His delegation wish to join the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/41/L.5.
37. Mr. KOR BUN HENG (Democratic Kampuchea) expressed deep sympathy to the Salvadorian delegation and requested that it convey his sincere condolences to the population and Government of El Salvador, as well as to the families of the victims of the recent earthquake.
38. While congratulating the Group of Governmental Experts on the competent manner in which it had conducted its work and for the useful conclusions and recommendations presented in its report, his delegation wished to make some comments.
39. It was his delegation's view that the figure of 10 million refugees given in the report probably fell short of the true figure since it included neither the Palestine refugees nor "internal refugees", i.e. displaced persons. The latter were refugees in their own countries who as a result of acts of repression and extortion by a foreign occupying army, had been forced to leave their land and were living under conditions made all the more precarious by the fact that they did not benefit from the humanitarian aid of the international community.
40. Far more than natural disasters, policies of repression and aggression were responsible for massive flows of refugees, as was demonstrated by the thousands of people who were leaving occupied Kampuchea, Afghanistan, Namibia or Palestine, and those fleeing the apartheid system and all other hotbeds of tension.

(Mr. Kor Bun Heng, Democratic Kampuchea)

41. The recommendations of the Group of Experts could contribute both to averting new flows of refugees and to sowing existing refugee problems. For that purpose, the existing international legal instruments were in fact adequate provided, however, that they were respected.

42. Fleeing from the repression and massacres perpetrated by the Vietnamese occupying troops and seeking to avoid forced conscription into the army and labour camps, thousands of Kampuchean, when they did not die in the mine fields or from disease, covered the length and breadth of the country in search of security or manage to reach the territory of Thailand or other countries. Viet Nam, which was occupying their country and which the General Assembly had requested every year since 1979 to withdraw all its forces from Kampuchea and to respect the inalienable right of the Kampuchean people to self-determination, was responsible for their sufferings. The coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea for its part, had, in a spirit of reconciliation, put forward an eight-point peace proposal based on the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Declaration adopted in 1981 by the International Conference on Kampuchea. If it were to adopt that proposal, which gave it an honourable way out, Viet Nam would make it possible to achieve a peaceful political solution of the Kampuchean question and to solve the problem of both Kampuchean and Vietnamese refugees. Otherwise, it would be showing that it was not qualified to participate in the work of the Group of Experts, since it was an expert only in the art of creating new flows of refugees, and it would continue to be the subject of international condemnation.

43. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that his delegation had followed the work of the Group of Governmental Experts closely and welcomed its report (A/41/324). The fact that that report had been adopted unanimously by experts representing a number of different regions gave hope that its recommendations, which constituted a code of conduct for Member States, would provide a basis for collective action and multilateral co-operation.

44. When flows of refugees were caused by political developments, solution of the problem depended on the ability of the countries concerned to address its root causes. Denial of fundamental human rights and racial discrimination were, indeed, one of the major causes of massive flows of refugees. Nowhere was that better exemplified than in the repugnant system of apartheid, which oppressed the black population of South Africa and imprisoned, killed or forced into exile all those who dared to speak out. Since South Africa had spurned all appeals to dismantle apartheid, the international community must take concerted action and impose mandatory sanctions in order to bring pressure to bear on that country and forestall still further massive flows of refugees.

45. Uganda was only too well aware of the agonies suffered by refugees and of the disastrous consequences of their flight both for countries of origin and countries of asylum. His country had experienced a tragedy of its own as a result of the massive violation of fundamental rights by previous Governments, when many Ugandans had been forced to flee to other countries. The present Government had put an end to that situation and had made respect for human rights the cornerstone of its

(Mr. Irumba, Uganda)

domestic and foreign policy. In its endeavours to bring about reconciliation and forge national unity, the Government had persuaded many Ugandan refugees to return home. Resettlement of the refugees required external assistance and a United Nations mission to Uganda had compiled a detailed report on the country's needs. Uganda hoped that Member States would provide the assistance which would enable it to address its problems.

46. Ethnic differences originally fostered by colonialism and subsequently exploited by unscrupulous leaders and foreign interests could lead to significant flows of refugees. In order to prevent such situations, it was important to recognize the role that education and information could play in that connection. Education created a national consciousness and made it possible to demonstrate to younger generations the advantages of ethnic and cultural diversity and the shared interests of the various races making up a nation. It was the belief of the Ugandan Government that education must foster such a spirit.

47. As emphasized in the report, measures aimed at the strengthening of international security, the development of good-neighbourly relations and the creation of an atmosphere of confidence would contribute greatly to the improvement of international co-operation. Uganda, for its part, was pursuing a policy of good-neighbourliness and had, together with neighbouring countries, taken measures to strengthen regional co-operation which should help to avert further massive flows of refugees.

48. Mr. MITAU (Kenya) endorsed fully the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on International Co-operation to Avert New Flows of Refugees (A/41/324). His country was deeply concerned at the suffering undergone by millions of refugees throughout the world and would continue to support all measures to prevent refugee situations. The causes of refugee flows were numerous and varied. Natural causes might prove difficult to eliminate, since certain countries lacked the necessary skills to predict bad weather, geological changes and other natural disasters.

49. On the other hand, the man-made causes and factors contributing to massive flows of refugees, such as political differences, wars, religious and other limited conflicts, would vanish if the international community were to abide by the provisions of the Charter and to heed the call for respect of human rights. The Secretary-General and the General Assembly had emphasized the importance of preventing such conflicts by respecting human rights, accepting political accommodation and showing tolerance to civilians in general.

50. Régimes practising oppressive and racial policies based on ethnic or cultural discrimination were the main contributors to the refugee problem. For example, the racist Pretoria régime had condemned thousands of Africans to a life of misery by forcing them to flee their own country. There was no need to repeat that apartheid was a crime against humanity based on obnoxious institutionalized discrimination and inexorable suppression. Unless apartheid was destroyed, the refugee problem in southern Africa could only become worse.

(Mr. Mitau, Kenya)

51. With regard to the socio-economic factors which gave rise to other flows of refugees, particularly in developing countries which could not support their populations properly, the developed countries which possessed the necessary resources should provide appropriate assistance.

52. His delegation deplored the worsening living conditions among refugees in the Middle East and urged all parties concerned to settle the political problems there so that the refugees could return to their respective countries and further flows of displaced persons could be averted.

53. Mrs. LEGWAILA (Botswana) said that the refugee problem, which had been on the agenda of the General Assembly for five years, had increased steadily, as illustrated by the report of the Group of Governmental Experts (A/41/324) according to which there were approximately 10 million refugees world-wide. Flows of refugees had assumed such proportions that no continent or region was spared.

54. As the report showed, massive flows of refugees resulted from complex and often interrelated problems. Their persistence threatened not only the peace and stability of host countries but also that of the world at large. Therefore, the problem could be solved only on the basis of international co-operation in the search for durable solutions.

55. Botswana had always been a haven for people fleeing from racist tyranny in South Africa, Namibia and other countries ruled by white minorities. Many refugees had settled permanently in Botswana, while others had returned to their countries following independence. Botswana would continue to offer asylum to refugees as a matter of moral duty and out of respect for its obligations under international agreements such as the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol on the status of refugees. It would do so in spite of South Africa's attacks against the refugees and against Botswana's own nationals. Botswana's security was in jeopardy, as the raids by South African commandos on its capital in June 1985 and on the capitals of Zimbabwe and Zambia in May 1986 demonstrated, and the security of the refugees could not be the responsibility of the host State alone. The front-line States alone could not effectively protect the refugees against South Africa's raids and the international community must therefore provide them with every possible assistance in that respect.

56. Her delegation hoped sincerely that the recommendations contained in the report under consideration would be implemented fully. In the final analysis, the only lasting solution to the refugee problem seemed to lie in respect by all States for the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. All States should renew their commitment to the promotion of the rights provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

57. Mr. LESSIR (Tunisia), after extending his delegation's sympathy to the victims of the recent earthquake in El Salvador, said that the refugee problem had assumed dangerous proportions over the years because it was being exacerbated by international tensions which often degenerated into bloody regional conflicts.

(Mr. Lessir, Tunisia)

Although the United Nations had always endeavoured to provide emergency relief in the event of natural disasters, no concerted preventive action had been envisaged to avert situations likely to result in flows of refugees.

58. The recent special session of the General Assembly on the critical situation in Africa, which had been devoted to an overall and comprehensive examination of the recovery and development problems and tasks confronting the African countries, showed that ad hoc relief action was not enough. Efforts must focus on preventive measures and lasting solutions. The international situation was still highly conducive to tension, conflicts and inequitable relations. That was why part of the world's population was threatened by violence, famine and malnutrition in spite of the tremendous efforts made by relief agencies.

59. The refugee problem was assuming unprecedented proportions not only in southern Africa, where the policies of apartheid of the South African régime imposed on millions of human beings a fate even more appalling than that of refugees elsewhere, but also in the Middle East where the Palestinian people, deprived of its right of self-determination, had been forced to live in refugee camps for almost 40 years, and in Afghanistan and Kampuchea where millions of people had been uprooted from their towns and villages. Those tragic situations reflected the international tension caused by distrust, ideological differences and conflicts of interest. For the first time, the United Nations was considering the adoption of measures to avert refugee flows. His delegation commended the Group of Governmental Experts on its report (A/41/324). It was indeed those political factors that were exacerbating the refugee problem.

60. The recommendations made in the report were realistic. His delegation especially supported the recommendation contained in paragraph 71. It would hardly have been appropriate at that juncture to recommend the adoption of measures entailing financial outlays and the establishment of additional structures within the Secretariat. The causes and factors underlying flows of refugees could generally be attributed to States themselves and were in fact addressed in several of the items on the agenda of the General Assembly.

61. The application of international legal instruments, and especially the provisions of the United Nations Charter, would be sufficient to promote international co-operation in averting new flows of refugees. The Organization should play a more dynamic role in that respect. The Security Council could secure the means to enable it to carry out its task and step up its diplomatic action, information missions and other initiatives with a view to eliminating hotbeds of tension. The Secretary-General himself was required by the Charter to promote efforts to restore peace between warring States. Tunisia considered preventive action to be one of the Organization's most important tasks.

62. The international community should make greater efforts to overcome the social and economic factors that compelled certain population groups to flee their countries. In the context of international economic relations and development, only a genuine effort of universal and global consultation would ultimately be

(Mr. Lessir, Tunisia)

capable of dealing thoroughly with fundamental changes in the system. Interdependence was such that no State stood to gain anything from the persistence of imbalances, the advocacy of a selective approach by the wealthiest States, or increasingly widespread protectionism. The economic and financial situation of most developing countries had gone beyond the danger point. His delegation had therefore hoped that the experts would devote more attention to the socio-economic factors that lent themselves best to international co-operation. The basic economic balance of the world had been upset long since, especially in the most disadvantaged African countries. Tunisia was convinced, however, that the report would help to strengthen international co-operation in working out a lasting solution to the refugee problem.

63. Mr. ZIMBA (Mozambique) said that the refugee problem, which had been on the General Assembly's agenda for five years, had assumed such proportions that it had become a priority issue. It now required the adoption of radical measures commensurate with the threat which that problem posed to international peace and security.

64. Africa was particularly affected because it alone accounted for almost half the total number of refugees. That dramatic situation was a reflection of the upheavals and vicissitudes experienced by Africa for a number of years. The situation, which verged on the catastrophic must be given special attention by the international community.

65. Mozambique was one of the countries receiving flows of refugees and it had therefore attached special significance to the observance of African Refugee Day in 1986. It was a well-known fact that the refugee flows in southern Africa were caused by the odious policies of apartheid. The South African régime was imposing a rule of terror and subjecting 24 million blacks to discrimination, brutal aggression and various repressive measures. It continued to occupy Namibia illegally, perpetrated acts of aggression against the countries of the region and pursued a policy of destabilization based on infiltration by South African trained armed bandits who committed acts of terrorism, killing people and destroying infrastructure vital to the development of those countries. The People's Republic of Mozambique, for its part, had been the target of a campaign of accusations in the past few days. South African forces were concentrated along its frontier and commandos had infiltrated its territory to commit acts of terrorism. South Africa was taking revenge for its unanimous condemnation by the international community by intensifying its sanctions and retaliation against neighbouring States.

66. The genocidal policy pursued by the odious apartheid régime had forced the oppressed people to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. As a result, almost all the countries of southern Africa had become countries of asylum for South African and Namibian refugees whose presence there provided South Africa with a pretext for attacking those States, sabotaging their economies and blackmailing them. By way of justification, the apartheid régime was claiming that the refugees were a threat to its security. The South African citizens in Mozambique were refugees who had fled persecution and posed no threat to South Africa's security.

(Mr. Zimba, Mozambique)

67. At its forty-fourth session, the Council of Ministers of OAU had adopted a resolution calling for the convening of an international conference on refugees and displaced persons. Action to bring about such a conference was being taken by the secretariats of the United Nations, OAU and the Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference. His delegation supported that resolution and the appeal by OAU to the international community for measures to be taken in support of refugees and displaced persons in southern Africa.

68. In order to avert new flows of refugees in southern Africa, the international community, particularly those countries that had considerable influence over South Africa, must adopt decisive and concerted measures, such as the imposition of economic sanctions, that would force the apartheid régime to abandon its abominable system and cease its acts of aggression and destabilization against the countries of the region.

69. It was of fundamental importance that the international community should render all possible assistance to the countries that gave shelter to refugees. International co-operation should not be limited to sporadic intervention, but should include the financing of projects for the rehabilitation of economic infrastructures so that refugees could be resettled and become self-sufficient, rather than remain permanently dependent on external assistance.

70. It was imperative that the international community should strive to bring about economic development in order to minimize the effects of refugee flows in the developing countries that offered them asylum. Those countries' vulnerability, especially to natural disasters, which were more likely to result in massive flows of refugees in developing countries than in developed countries, was highlighted in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts (A/41/324). His delegation wished to thank the many Member States that had provided emergency assistance in times of natural disaster.

71. Mr. FARTAS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) reaffirmed his delegation's support for the mandate given to the Group of Governmental Experts on International Co-operation to Avert New Flows of Refugees; it was to be hoped that the Group would continue its work on a comprehensive set of guiding principles in that domain. If a just and lasting solution to the refugee problem was to be found, those guiding principles must focus on the fundamental causes of refugee flows, guarantee respect for the human rights set out in various international instruments - first and foremost of which was the right of refugees to return to their countries - and also be applicable to the victims of armed conflicts, military occupation and inhuman practices, such as mass expulsions resulting from racist colonization.

72. The report of the Group of Experts (A/41/324) stated that there were 10 million refugees throughout the world, or one refugee for every 450 people on earth. Africa alone had 4 million refugees, a situation brought on by numerous natural disasters, political instability caused by racist colonization in Namibia and the domination of the white minority in Azania, and the effects of the world

(Mr. Fartas, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

economic crisis. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was aware of the burden that the sheltering of refugees constituted for many countries, given that the number of refugees had increased by nearly five times while those countries' gross domestic product had declined. Not only did that burden entail serious humanitarian consequences, but it also jeopardized the stability and security of the host countries. It was therefore imperative that Namibia should be granted its right to self-determination and independence, that the occupation troops should be withdrawn from that country and that Pretoria's racist policy, which posed a serious threat to international peace and security, should be ended.

73. As important as it was, the refugee problem was only one aspect of broader problems. In Africa, it was an integral part of the problems caused by the colonialist occupation of Namibia and the infamous policy of racial discrimination imposed in Azania. Likewise, the problem of Palestinian refugees was only one aspect of the question of Palestine and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to return, the right to self-determination and the right to establish an independent State throughout the whole territory of Palestine.

74. The problem of refugees must therefore be attacked at the root, with consideration given simultaneously to causes, preventive measures and remedies, so that just and lasting solutions in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter, human rights and the objectives of relevant international resolutions might be found. The colonialist racist entities, whose policy and expansionist aims lay at the origin of the refugee problem, bore full moral and political responsibility for that problem and must by no means be relieved of it.

75. The laudable and exemplary efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on behalf of refugees were no substitute for a fundamental solution to the problem. It was of course difficult to prevent refugee flows from occurring in cases of force majeure or natural disaster; however, when political factors were involved, the international community had a duty to act because it was equipped with the means of exerting pressure provided for in the Charter, which, if it truly wished to use them, would enable it to ensure that its resolutions were respected and obtain positive results very quickly.

76. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take up draft resolution A/SPC/41/L.5 and announced that Bangladesh, Cameroon, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Swaziland had become sponsors.

77. Mr. SEIFU (Ethiopia), noting that his country had participated in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts, proposed that paragraph 6 of the draft resolution under consideration should be amended slightly: the words "and, in view of paragraph 72 of the report," should be inserted in the second line, after the words "of Member States"; the words "as well as" should be deleted.

78. As the amendment had been the subject of consultations, his delegation hoped it would not prevent the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

79. The CHAIRMAN asked the sponsors of the draft resolution whether they accepted the Ethiopian amendment.
80. Count YORK (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the sponsors had accepted the Ethiopian amendment in the hope that it would facilitate the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.
81. Draft resolution A/SPC/41/L.5, as amended, was adopted by consensus.
82. Mr. ROSEN (Israel) said that his delegation had supported the draft resolution that had just been adopted. It was his delegation's understanding that, in those cases where there existed an anomalous relationship, including a state of war, between the States concerned, the so-called right of return of refugees or displaced persons and the question of compensation must be dealt with in an appropriate manner. In such cases, those matters would be among the elements to be considered in the context of negotiations between the States concerned to reach a comprehensive settlement and peace agreement.
83. Mr. ADJOYI (Togo), speaking as the Chairman/Rapporteur of the Group of Governmental Experts on International Co-operation to Avert New Flows of Refugees, said that the same spirit of compromise and co-operation that had prevailed during the work of the Group ought to guide Member States and the entire international community in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report. In adopting draft resolution A/SPC/41/L.5, which endorsed the Group's conclusions and recommendations, by consensus, Member States were demonstrating their determination to take appropriate measures to avert new flows of refugees. Indeed, that goal could not be attained unless all States committed themselves to displaying the necessary political will and assuming their responsibilities.
84. Certain recommendations were addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. After warmly congratulating the Secretary-General on his re-election, he expressed his conviction that the Secretary-General would spare no effort in carrying out the mandate given him in that area. It was essential that States should fulfil their obligations in order to help the Secretary-General accomplish that important task.
85. Perhaps the adoption of the Group's recommendations during the International Year of Peace might be taken as an indication that Member States intended to make the Organization into an instrument of peace to be used in strengthening international co-operation.
86. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 76.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.