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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Thirty-eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 414th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 5 October 1987, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. ROBERTSON (Australia)

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General debate (continued)

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

GENERAL DEBATE (agenda item 4) (continued)

1. Mr. LINJEWILE (United Republic of Tanzania) said that, as a member of the international community, his country recognized its duty to preserve human life, and to promote the welfare and alleviate the sufferings of all people. It had a long history of co-operation with UNHCR and with governmental and non-governmental organizations in the provision of protection and assistance to refugees; it wished to express its gratitude to UNHCR for the services which the Office rendered to the refugees received by it, and also to the countries and organizations which had displayed solidarity and a spirit of co-operation by providing material support to supplement its own resources.
2. His delegation would continue to contribute to a fruitful dialogue within the Executive Committee on the problems to be solved and the most effective means of solving them. In that connection it had a number of proposals to submit.
3. Firstly, a new approach must be taken to the "handing-over" of settlements to Governments of asylum countries, entailing a redefinition of self-sufficiency and a continuing role by UNHCR. His delegation accordingly welcomed the High Commissioner's initiative in holding on 3 October a brainstorming session with UNHCR, Governments and voluntary agencies on that important subject.
4. Secondly, it was imperative, in the interests of refugees, that the activities resulting from the second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA II) should be put back on track, that the agreed projects be revived and that practical measures be adopted to safeguard the spirit of ICARA II, especially with regard to the concept of "additionality".
5. Thirdly, his delegation requested UNHCR, the United Nations and the voluntary agencies to give full support to the proposed international conference on the situation of refugees and war-displaced persons in southern Africa. The uprooting of thousands of people in Angola and Mozambique and the influx of refugees into Malawi, Zambia, Zaire, Zimbabwe and his own country had necessitated both emergency support and realistic medium and long-term solutions.
6. Lastly, with regard to international protection, his delegation was pleased that the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection had been able to agree on a set of principles on the prohibition of military and armed attacks on refugee camps and settlements. Particular credit was due to the outgoing Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Charry Samper, to the High Commissioner and to the current Chairman for their efforts to secure consensus on that difficult subject. The adoption of those principles was an outstanding achievement by the Committee and would make a great contribution towards the protection of refugees' right to safety.
7. His delegation welcomed the fact that attention was being focused on the plight of the most vulnerable refugee groups, and in particular women and children. In order to provide adequate protection and assistance for those groups, an assessment of their numbers, characteristics and needs and the best

means of meeting those needs should, in his view, be undertaken and a report on the question submitted to the Committee at its thirty-ninth session.

8. With regard to management and personnel policies, although unwarranted costs must be eliminated, it would be a serious mistake when pursuing that aim to lose sight of the manifest need for an appreciable increase in UNHCR resources in order that it might undertake its expanding commitments with the assurance of being able to fulfil its mission and meet the demands made on it.

9. There was no doubt that the world would breathe a sigh of relief when those who had the power to eliminate the causes of the refugee problem devoted themselves whole-heartedly to that cause.

10. Mrs. RENOARD (France) said that her country, true to its tradition of granting asylum and protecting human rights and in spite of the difficulties caused by the increasing number of asylum-seekers, had maintained the legal guarantees in its procedure for the recognition of refugee status, in accordance with its Constitution and the international commitments which France had undertaken, in particular the 1951 Convention. There was a close link with UNHCR at all stages in that procedure. In view of the disturbing increase in the number of asylum-seekers, not all of them genuine, France had allocated greater resources to the examination and processing of requests, at both the administrative and legal levels, with the result that the time taken to examine applications did not at present exceed six months. In addition, with the aim of preserving the credibility of refugee status, her Government had increased its vigilance with regard to abusive and fraudulent practices.

11. Her Government endorsed UNHCR's proposals concerning the question of refugee children since those proposals, which constituted the application of basic humanitarian principles to especially vulnerable groups, were consistent with UNHCR policy as a whole, and in particular the durable solution of voluntary repatriation, which presupposed the proper reintegration of refugees.

12. France attached particular importance to the protection and integration of refugees. Nearly 200,000 persons currently held refugee status in France, which continued to receive large numbers of people every year, without setting quotas, and had moreover in 1987 issued 900 visas to boat people, some of whom had already spent several years in camps.

13. France was also doing a great deal for displaced populations, in particular in French Guyana, where 9,000 refugees had been received on a temporary basis and provided with protection and assistance. They were to be visited by a UNHCR delegation in November. Her delegation also welcomed the agreement recently reached on a draft text on military attacks on refugee camps and settlements.

14. The increasing extent and complexity of population movements, fleeing conflicts, violence and systematic violations of human rights, were a challenge to UNHCR, whose task was often complicated by the economic problems of countries of asylum and the poverty of countries of origin. In order to meet that challenge, the High Commissioner had taken a number of steps which had the support of her delegation: the patient search for specific measures to facilitate the implementation of self-sufficiency programmes and durable solutions for refugees, the establishment or strengthening of co-operation between agencies performing complementary tasks in order to avoid duplication

in all forms of humanitarian assistance and, in general, the recent orientation of UNHCR's work towards irregular movements of asylum-seekers in Europe.

15. With regard to the reorganization of UNHCR during the past year, it was the view of her delegation that a mission such as that of UNHCR could not be accomplished without conceptual, human or material resources commensurate with the dimensions of the problems to be faced. It accordingly welcomed the improvements already made in the implementation of assistance, self-sufficiency and repatriation programmes. While supporting in principle the reorganization undertaken, her delegation emphasized that recruitment and increased administrative expenditure aimed at enhancing the efficiency of UNHCR were acceptable only on a transitional basis and must, as far as possible, lead to a situation conforming to the recommendations of the Group of 18.

16. She informed the Committee that an exhibition on the subject of refugees, organized by Radio France with the co-operation of UNHCR, would be held in Paris from 2 to 23 November. The aim of the exhibition was to promote a better public understanding of the nature of refugee problems.

17. Her delegation paid tribute to the High Commissioner and his staff, at headquarters and in the field, for their dedication to the cause of refugees.

18. Mr. LEHMANN (Denmark) commended the Office for its efforts to help refugees. In the face of such an enormous task, it needed the support of all sovereign States, not only in words but in deeds.

19. Denmark had contributed \$US 18.6 million to UNHCR in 1986, 30 per cent more than in 1985, thus becoming one of the principal donors. The figure for 1987 was already over \$US 15.1 million and it would undoubtedly make a contribution before the end of the year. The Danish contribution to solving the refugee problem was not merely financial, however, since over 20,000 asylum-seekers had been received since 1984, and 80 per cent had been granted refugee status.

20. Three problems were of particular concern to his delegation, first and foremost the international protection of refugees, which was the basic function of the Office. The High Commissioner had referred in his report to unprecedented violations of the physical safety and security of refugees over the past few years, and his delegation resolutely supported the efforts made by the office to intervene in instances of refoulement which were brought to his attention. Given the magnitude of the task, UNHCR's international protection function deserved particular attention. His delegation was not, however, entirely convinced of the justification for the reorganization undertaken in 1986, which had resulted in the integration of UNHCR's protection and assistance functions and the creation of the Division of Refugee Law and Doctrine. It was especially important, in his view, that the balance between the Office's protection and assistance function should not shift and that the concept of protection as the cornerstone of UNHCR should be maintained.

21. Secondly, although his Government fully supported the aims of the reorganization carried out since May 1986, namely, its emphasis on better needs assessment, improvements in project design and execution, and more

efficient budgetary procedures, it nevertheless wished to stress the need for a flexible administrative structure, enabling UNHCR to respond promptly and effectively to any new tasks that might arise. The reorganization would certainly involve changes in the composition of UNHCR staff and a transition period would accordingly be necessary; his delegation had no doubt that the reorganization would be carried out in close consultation with staff members of UNHCR, whose dedication was unanimously recognized. While accepting that the reorganization might involve increased administrative costs for a few years, in his delegation's view the increase had been very substantial and had rightly given rise to criticism from members of the Committee. He welcomed the statements made on that subject by the High Commissioner and Deputy High Commissioner.

22. He fully endorsed the draft conclusions of the Sub-Committee on Administration and Finance, which reflected the Committee's legitimate interest in monitoring the activities of the Office and would provide guidance to the High Commissioner in the course of the reorganization.

23. Thirdly, he emphasized the need to adopt a global approach to refugee problems rather than - as one tended to do - viewing the problem from the point of view of a particular country or category of countries or attempting to resolve a particular type of problem, a course of action which could only produce solutions of limited validity. With that aim in view, his delegation, which had submitted at the most recent session of the General Assembly of the United Nations a draft resolution on international procedures for the protection of refugees, had decided to revise the draft and submit it for consideration by the Committee. His delegation would return to that question in due course.

24. In conclusion, his delegation emphasized the important work done by the many NGOs concerned with refugees. Those organizations, which were in closer contact with the refugees themselves, could often find solutions to individual cases, whereas Governments were unable to do so. On the other hand, Governments had means at their disposal for promoting durable solutions which were not available to NGOs. There was therefore a basis for a dialogue between Governments and NGOs, or better still a "trialogue" between NGOs, UNHCR and Governments. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the paper presented by a number of NGOs on the question of a refugee policy for Europe; it contained many interesting ideas on which Governments would do well to reflect. He hoped that at the present session the Committee would be able to provide answers to some of the problems raised by the NGOs in that paper.

25. Mr. HACENE (Algeria) said that the current session of the Committee demonstrated the active commitment of the international community to the cause of refugees but at the same time, unfortunately, the persistence of those factors which had given rise to the movements of refugees who, in ever increasing numbers, were leaving their countries in order to save their lives.

26. It was clear from the High Commissioner's report that the stabilization of refugee flows in recent years had in no way diminished the scale of the challenge facing the international community, particularly in Africa, where more than half the refugee population of the world was located. The burden of accommodating refugees was accompanied, in many countries of asylum, by serious economic and social difficulties which, were it not for the efforts of UNHCR, would rapidly place those countries in an intolerable situation. The

African countries, which had set great store by the promises made at ICARA II, were accordingly very concerned about the delays which had ensued in the implementation of ICARA II projects and hoped that the Committee would endeavour to determine the reasons for those delays and assess their consequences, in co-operation with the countries concerned, the international development agencies and NGOs.

27. The High Commissioner's report also brought out the beneficial effect of UNHCR activities in support of millions of refugees. That beneficial effect should induce the Committee to grant the High Commissioner the necessary margin of freedom and flexibility to enable him to accomplish his difficult task. Unless such flexibility were granted, the High Commissioner's operational procedures, which had proved their worth, were liable to be paralysed.

28. The report also made clear the important part played by UNHCR in the international protection of refugees. At a time when the physical safety of refugees was particularly at risk in southern Africa, Palestine and other regions, his delegation was delighted to note that agreement had finally been reached on the draft conclusions regarding the prohibition of armed attacks on refugee camps and settlements. It paid tribute to the efforts made by Mr. Charry Samper and by the High Commissioner and his staff which had enabled the Committee to reach agreement on that particularly complex problem.

29. UNHCR's international protection and assistance functions were all the more vital in that they were intended to meet the needs of refugees who were not yet eligible for a durable solution, in particular those who had sought asylum in other countries pending an opportunity to return freely to their country of origin, like the Sahrawi refugees who had been granted asylum in Algeria and still hoped that implementation of the relevant General Assembly and OAU resolutions would enable them to be repatriated. In the meantime, Algeria would press on with its policy of solidarity, hospitality and assistance, striving to achieve just solutions to the problems which had given rise to the exodus of refugees, taking part in the formulation and enforcement of legal instruments promoting protection and durable solutions, and continuing to grant asylum to thousands of Sahrawi refugees, through the work of the Algerian Red Crescent which, in conjunction with the UNHCR office in Algiers, was distributing international assistance and promoting the implementation of projects to ensure the self-sufficiency of those refugees. UNHCR had been providing regular assistance to the Sahrawi refugees since 1980; although it covered only a limited proportion of their needs, that assistance demonstrated the solidarity of the international community. Algeria hoped that UNHCR would continue and even step up that assistance.

30. Mr. FRANCESCHI (Italy) said that in an international climate characterized by serious tension, the situation of refugees throughout the world remained a source of concern to the international community and especially to Italy, which was receiving a growing number of refugees and asylum-seekers. There had been some encouraging signs in 1987, however, especially with regard to voluntary repatriation, which was increasing in Africa and Central America. That was certainly the most satisfactory solution for refugees, provided that they chose it freely and that it was accompanied by the necessary guarantees. For its part, Italy was considering the possibility of making a more substantial contribution to the financing of the repatriation of Ethiopian refugees in Somalia.

31. His delegation also found encouragement in the initiatives taken by the High Commissioner to strengthen and rationalize co-operation between UNHCR and the other specialized agencies, and indeed the United Nations system as a whole. Expanded co-operation would not only foster the better use of resources, but also enable refugee assistance to be tailored to long-term development programmes being carried out in the regions where refugees lived.

32. His delegation congratulated the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection on the results it had achieved: agreement appeared to have been reached on draft Conclusions on Military and Armed Attacks on Refugee Camps and Settlements. It would be highly desirable for the thirty-eighth session of the Committee to conclude with the adoption of such an instrument. His delegation paid tribute to Mr. Charry Samper, who, as Chairman of the thirty-seventh session, had certainly made a great contribution to reconciling the different positions. The Governments in question had finally succeeded in harmonizing the interests of refugees, i.e. securing protection against the danger of often senseless military and armed attacks, and legitimate national positions. His delegation would also join in efforts to reach a consensus on the other questions considered by the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection.

33. The High Commissioner, in his preliminary statement, and some delegations had not hesitated to take up several controversial questions concerning the programme for restructuring UNHCR. The Italian delegation believed that the reorganization of UNHCR was necessary. It also considered that the High Commissioner should have some freedom of choice in using the most appropriate means for attaining objectives that had been collectively agreed. Nevertheless, the problems involved might have been dealt with in the framework of broader and clearer consultation. He was thinking especially of the increase in staff at a time when the general trend throughout the United Nations system was towards rationalization. His delegation would be following closely the progressive implementation of the plan of action, and had taken note of the High Commissioner's remarks on that question.

34. Italy, which made a significant contribution to UNHCR programmes, would always be guided by one fundamental principle: refugees must be given all the protection and assistance that a generous and responsible international community could offer them.

35. Mrs. ENGMAN (Sweden), referring to the dangers faced by refugees, who were mostly women and children, said that her delegation accordingly welcomed the High Commissioner's note on international protection and the draft conclusions prepared by the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection.

36. The escalating destabilization policies of South Africa and its use of armed force and economic pressure against neighbouring countries had put the refugees in southern Africa in a particularly vulnerable situation. In 1987, attacks had again occurred against offices and refugees belonging to liberation movements. Her delegation therefore welcomed the UNHCR programmes for Mozambican refugees and returnees, and believed that it was of utmost importance that those efforts should continue. Although co-ordination between the organizations involved in various emergency relief activities had improved, further progress was necessary.

37. The refugees in Central America were the victims of the conflicts and crises afflicting the region. No effort should be spared to promote peaceful solutions as proposed by the five presidents of the countries of the region, and Sweden strongly supported the Guatemala peace accord. Meanwhile, durable solutions must be found both in countries of asylum and in countries of origin for refugees who wished to avail themselves of voluntary repatriation.

38. As long as the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan continued, the refugee problem would remain and humanitarian assistance would be needed. Millions of Afghan refugees - mostly women and children - had been forced to leave their homes and their country. It was vital that international assistance to the Afghan refugees should be continued, but the most desirable solution would obviously be a return to a political situation which would encourage voluntary repatriation. In Sri Lanka, the peaceful solution to the conflict was now making it possible for Tamil refugees to return to their homes, which was very encouraging. Sweden sincerely hoped that the peace accord would be respected by the parties and lead to constructive developments in Sri Lanka.

39. The vast majority of the world's 15 million refugees lived in developing countries, especially in Asia and Africa. However, the annual number of asylum-seekers in Europe had risen from 80,000 in 1983 to 185,000 in 1986. Certain aspects of that situation were of concern to her Government. She was thinking in particular of asylum-seekers who abused the principle of refugee status, irregular movements of migrants that were being disguised as refugee movements, and the emergence of persons without passports or other documentation at borders. Sweden had proposed that those matters should be considered at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection.

40. Her Government, for its part, was prepared to continue its current policy, based on the concept of generous solidarity and the principle that all were working in the same direction. It therefore welcomed the High Commissioner's decision to strengthen co-ordination with a number of European countries. In Sweden, the number of asylum-seekers had increased fivefold between 1983 and 1986. In addition, for several years Sweden had maintained a general refugee quota. A generous refugee policy was a question not only of applying the law, but also of giving refugees the possibility of achieving equality with other citizens and treating them humanely, whether or not they were allowed to stay. However, with the change in the nature of the asylum-seeking and refugee population in Europe, the ugly face of xenophobia was re-emerging. Since the policies followed by Governments shaped public opinion to a large extent, her Government believed that it was for the international community to reject such an attitude. Sweden had recently established a parliamentary commission to formulate and implement strategies against racism and xenophobia.

41. Her delegation would like to make it clear that, in its opinion, the legal protection of refugees was the cornerstone of UNHCR activities. Although it recognized the importance of reorganization, modernization and work in the field, it believed that the priorities that had been established must be maintained and that it was unacceptable for them to be changed as a result of administrative reorganization.

42. Durable solutions were obviously the most desirable ones. When voluntary repatriation could not be considered, integration into countries of the region

with a similar culture and language would seem to be the second best solution. In connection with assistance to refugees in various parts of the world, Sweden attached great importance to the work of the non-governmental organizations and the co-operation of UNHCR with them.

43. As had been stressed on many occasions, UNHCR had an important role to play in promoting linkage between refugee aid and development. In that respect, Sweden appreciated the High Commissioner's efforts to increase co-operation with other international organizations, development agencies and NGOs. The current financial crisis within the United Nations was a further inducement to make better use of available resources, for example by co-ordinating and rationalizing the administration of emergency, humanitarian and development programmes.

44. Although restructuring might have been necessary in order to improve the performance and effectiveness of the organization, it must not divert attention from the primary task, the refugees themselves. It was true that the task of maintaining the morale and enthusiasm of the staff was particularly difficult in the current period of financial restraint. The measures taken under General Assembly resolution 41/213, which recommended staff reductions, had been supported by Sweden, on the understanding that they should be applied with some flexibility and with due consideration for the specific character of each organization. Sweden therefore welcomed the measures taken by UNHCR to effect certain reductions in the regular budget, but it had difficulty in accepting major staff increases financed by voluntary funds. Such increases did not seem to be in keeping with the spirit of the General Assembly's decisions.

45. If her delegation had uttered some words of criticism, it had done so because of the importance it attached to UNHCR and its work, to which Sweden would remain one of the major contributors. Whatever financial or organizational problems UNHCR was facing, it should never forget its main task: to protect and assist the world's refugees.

46. Mr. ANDRES (Switzerland) paid a tribute to Mr. Charry Samper, Chairman at the thirty-seventh session, for his outstanding contribution to the achievement of consensus which should enable the Committee to adopt conclusions on the prohibition of military attacks on refugee camps. The Swiss delegation agreed with the High Commissioner that the Committee provided a framework for an open and ongoing dialogue between Governments and UNHCR, and reaffirmed the importance Switzerland attached to that dialogue. Switzerland's support for the important role of UNHCR in promoting international solidarity in support of refugees was a major component of its humanitarian policy and its participation in multilateral co-operation within the United Nations system. That support was reflected, in particular, in a contribution to the general and special programmes in the amount of 25.5 million Swiss francs, or about \$17 million, for the current financial year.

47. The task assigned to the High Commissioner was to lead refugees from dependence to self-sufficiency in as short a time as possible, and then to seek durable solutions. Given the serious economic difficulties of the various countries of asylum and origin, the formulas for self-sufficiency and local settlement, and the execution of repatriation programmes required refugee or returnee aid to be integrated into more general development

programmes. Switzerland intended to support UNHCR efforts to link its work, from the outset, with that of the multilateral development agencies and bilateral co-operation programmes.

48. Voluntary repatriation, which was the optimum durable solution, had been accessible to only a very small proportion of refugees. However, Switzerland hoped that embryonic political solutions, in Central America and the Indian subcontinent for example, would soon pave the way for more refugees to return to their countries. It supported the action taken by the High Commissioner to that end.

49. In cases where solutions other than resettlement appeared impossible, Switzerland had not failed to make a contribution. But the inflow of persons who had no claim to refugee status but were attempting to misuse the asylum procedure for immigration purposes had led Switzerland, like other European countries, to adopt measures aimed at safeguarding the institution of asylum for persons who met the criteria of the Convention. Switzerland had also played an active role in the consultations sponsored by UNHCR aimed at promoting agreed solutions for certain groups of asylum-seekers, taking into account the interests of countries of first asylum and those of countries on the receiving end of irregular movements.

50. UNHCR had undertaken a large-scale reform, in keeping with the Committee's desire that the organization should acquire management instruments and mechanisms to ensure better use of the funds at its disposal and its human resources, the essential medium for the performance of its mission. It was to be expected that such a reform would require investments and entail extra costs during a transitional period, but now the UNHCR administrative apparatus, too, had become subject to the measures taken to remedy the financial crisis in the United Nations. However, the staff reduction plans that had been presented indicated that staff increases would be of a temporary nature and that UNHCR was determined to manage its staff in a spirit of economy. On that basis, the dialogue taking place in the Committee was leading to a constructive solution, which would take account of the principles of economical management while preserving UNHCR's indispensable flexibility.

51. All those considerations should not, however, divert attention from the importance and quality of the work being done by UNHCR every day for the benefit of countless refugees. Much of the credit should go to the staff, whose motivation was based on full dedication to the cause of refugees, but also on the importance attached to it in the organization's management.

52. Non-governmental organizations, whether local, international or based in donor countries, also provided considerable support for the fulfilment of UNHCR's mission. They, too, made a contribution to the dialogue with UNHCR. Lastly, his delegation wished to mention the contributions of the countries of asylum and of their people: without their sacrifices, UNHCR's task would far exceed its capacities.

53. Mr. YAVUZALP (Turkey) said that despite a few encouraging signs, the general situation of refugees throughout the world had unfortunately not improved and remained a serious matter of concern to the international community; there were some 12 million refugees in the world, creating serious problems both for receiving countries and for countries of first asylum or transit. The High Commissioner and his staff, who carried out their mission

with energy and determination, should also be able to count on the support of all members of the international community: the solution of the refugee problem was not UNHCR's responsibility alone; it was also linked to the policies pursued by Governments which chose to open or close their doors to asylum-seekers.

54. The refugee problem was appearing in a new light and was much more complex and extensive than it had been in the past. Efforts to resolve all aspects of that difficult problem must therefore be based not on national interests but on humanitarian considerations. Like any other humanitarian problem, the refugee problem required a spirit of sacrifice, and also a spirit of collective responsibility and respect for the principle of equitable burden-sharing among the members of the international community.

55. Approximately 80 per cent of refugees were being sheltered in countries of first asylum or transit that were developing countries. Despite their limited means, those countries were offering their hospitality, on the understanding that they were providing temporary refuge and that the burden of receiving the refugees would then be shared fairly, in keeping with the principle of collective responsibility. The massive inflow of refugees, however, was creating different problems according to whether the country concerned was one of transit, first asylum or resettlement. The initiatives taken to resolve those problems must therefore avoid giving the impression that an attempt was being made to pass on the problem from one category of country to another.

56. Furthermore, humanitarian obligations could not be discharged merely by supplying financial aid: the problems posed by refugee flows had social and political consequences, which could not be resolved by financial assistance alone.

57. As the High Commissioner had stressed, a collective approach to the problem would create favourable conditions for a solution, whereas unilateral action could create a deadlock or cause one party to foist the problem on another. Instead of applying increasingly restrictive measures, each party involved should support UNHCR efforts to find solutions in a purely humanitarian and impartial spirit, taking into account the interests of all, and first and foremost the refugees.

58. His delegation believed that a realistic approach should be maintained: the goal should be not to seek a magic formula, but rather solutions adapted to each case. Neither should the well-established refugee principles be called into question or the balance between them altered.

59. His country appreciated the protection and assistance work carried out by the High Commissioner and his staff, and the efforts made to improve the management and effectiveness of UNHCR in the field. It hoped that the full implementation of the plan of action would result in savings and enable programme implementation to be improved and better results to be achieved.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.

55. Près de 80 % des réfugiés sont hébergés dans des pays de premier asile ou de transit qui sont des pays en développement. Malgré leurs moyens limités, ceux-ci offrent leur hospitalité, étant entendu qu'ils accordent un refuge temporaire et que la charge de l'accueil sera ensuite partagée d'une façon équitable, conformément au principe de la responsabilité collective.

L'afflux massif de réfugiés crée toutefois des problèmes qui sont différents selon qu'il s'agit du pays de transit, du pays de premier asile ou du pays de réinstallation. Il faut donc éviter que les initiatives prises pour résoudre ces problèmes donnent l'impression que l'on cherche à transférer le problème d'une catégorie de pays à une autre.

56. Par ailleurs, on ne peut se décharger de ses obligations humanitaires en se contentant de fournir une aide financière : les problèmes que pose l'afflux de réfugiés ont des conséquences sociales et politiques que la seule assistance financière ne permet pas de régler.

57. Comme l'a souligné le Haut Commissaire, une approche collective de ce problème permet de créer les conditions propices à une solution, alors que l'action unilatérale risque de déboucher sur l'impasse ou d'amener une partie à se décharger du problème sur une autre. Il faudrait que chaque partie en présence, au lieu d'appliquer des mesures de plus en plus restrictives, soutienne les efforts du HCR pour trouver des solutions dans un esprit purement humanitaire et impartial, compte tenu des intérêts de tous, et en premier lieu de ceux des réfugiés.

58. La Turquie estime qu'il convient de rester réaliste : il ne faut pas chercher une formule magique, mais plutôt des solutions adaptées à chaque cas. Il ne faut pas non plus remettre en question les principes bien établis concernant les réfugiés, ni modifier l'équilibre entre ces principes.

59. La Turquie apprécie les activités de protection et d'assistance menées par le Haut Commissaire et ses collaborateurs ainsi que les efforts entrepris pour améliorer la gestion et l'efficacité du HCR sur le terrain. Elle espère que l'application complète du plan d'action se traduira par des économies et permettra d'améliorer l'exécution des programmes et d'obtenir des résultats accrus.

La séance est levée à 16 h 30.