

**ADDENDUM  
TO THE  
REPORT  
OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS  
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 12A (A/36/12/Add.1)



**UNITED NATIONS**



**ADDENDUM  
TO THE  
REPORT  
OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS  
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION  
SUPPLEMENT No. 12A (A/36/12/Add.1)



**UNITED NATIONS**

New York, 1981

#### NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

The report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has been issued under the symbol A/36/12 (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 12*).

CONTENTS

Report of the Executive Committee for the Programme of the United Nations  
High Commissioner for Refugees on the work of its thirty-second session

(Geneva, 12-21 October 1981)

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1 - 14	1
A. Election of officers .....	2	1
B. Representation on the Committee .....	3 - 7	1
C. Adoption of the Agenda .....	8	2
Decision of the Committee .....	8	2
D. Opening Statement by the Chairman of the Executive Committee .....	9 - 14	3
II. NOBEL PEACE PRIZE .....	15 - 18	5
Decision of the Committee .....	18	5
III. GENERAL DEBATE .....	19 - 39	6
General debate .....	19 - 38	6
Decisions of the Committee .....	39	10
IV. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION .....	40 - 57	13
Conclusions of the Committee .....	57	16
V. SUB-COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MATTERS ...	58 - 64	23
Report of the Chairman .....	58 - 63	23
Decisions of the Committee .....	64	24
VI. UNHCR ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES .....	65 - 78	27
Decisions of the Committee .....	79	29

# CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
VII. FINANCIAL QUESTIONS .....	80 - 89	31
A. Status of contributions and over-all financial situation for 1981 and 1982 .....	80 - 84	31
Decision of the Committee .....	85	32
B. Voluntary funds accounts for 1980 and report of the Board of Auditors .....	86 - 88	33
Decision of the Committee .....	89	33
VIII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS .....	90	33

## ANNEX

Opening statement made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme at its thirty-second session on 12 October 1981

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PROGRAMME OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES ON THE WORK  
OF ITS THIRTY-SECOND SESSION\*

(Geneva, 12-21 October 1981)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme held its thirty-second session from 12 to 21 October 1981 at the Palais des Nations, Geneva.

A. Election of officers

2. Under rule 10 of the rules of procedure, which provides that officers shall be elected for the whole year, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. P. H. R. Marshall (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
<u>Vice-Chairman:</u>	Mr. I. Kharma (Lebanon)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. A. L. Davéréde (Argentina)

B. Representation on the Committee

3. The following States members of the Committee were represented at the session:

Algeria	Holy See	Sweden
Argentina	Iran	Switzerland
Australia	Israel	Thailand
Austria	Italy	Tunisia
Belgium	Japan	Turkey
Brazil	Lebanon	Uganda
Canada	Lesotho	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
China	Madagascar	United Republic of Tanzania
Colombia	Morocco	United States of America
Denmark	Netherlands	Venezuela
Finland	Nicaragua	Yugoslavia
France	Nigeria	Zaire
Germany, Federal Republic of	Norway	
Greece	Sudan	

---

\* Previously issued under the symbol A/AC.96/601.

4. The Governments of the following States were represented as observers:

Angola	Gabon	Peru
Burundi	Ghana	Portugal
Central African Republic	India	Rwanda
Chad	Iraq	Senegal
Chile	Ireland	Somalia
Costa Rica	Kenya	Swaziland
Cuba	Liberia	Syrian Arab Republic
Cyprus	Luxembourg	United Arab Emirates
Democratic Kampuchea	Malaysia	United Republic of Cameroon
Djibouti	Mozambique	Uruguay
Ecuador	New Zealand	Viet Nam
Egypt	Pakistan	Zambia
El Salvador	Panama	Zimbabwe
Ethiopia		

as was the Sovereign Order of Malta.

5. The United Nations system was represented as follows:

United Nations, Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO)  
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV)  
World Food Programme (WFP)  
International Labour Organisation (ILO)  
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
World Health Organization (WHO)  
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

6. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented by observers:

Commission of the European Communities  
Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM)  
League of Arab States  
Organization of American States (OAS)  
Organization of African Unity (OAU)

7. The African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) were also represented at the meeting.

#### C. Adoption of the agenda

8. The Executive Committee decided to adopt the following agenda:



## Decision of the Committee

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda (A/AC.96/596/Rev.1).
3. Statement by the High Commissioner and general debate.
4. International protection (including consideration of the report of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection (A/AC.96/599), (A/AC.96/593 and Corr.1; INF.152/Rev.3).
5. Report of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters (A/AC.96/600).
6. Voluntary funds accounts for 1980 and report of the Board of Auditors (A/AC.96/591 and Corr.1, 591/Add.1 and Corr.1).
7. UNHCR assistance activities (A/AC.96/594 and Corr.1 and 594/Add.1 and Corr.1, 594/Add.2, 595 and 597).
8. Status of contributions and over-all financial requirements for 1981 and 1982 (A/AC.96/592 and Corr. 1 and 598).
9. Any other questions.
10. Consideration of the draft report on the session.

### D. Opening statement by the Chairman of the Executive Committee

9. The newly elected Chairman of the Executive Committee paid tribute to his predecessor and thanked those who had proposed and seconded his nomination. He said that it would be an understatement to say that times had changed in the 15 years since he first took part in the work of the Committee. In the intervening years, UNHCR's budget had risen 80 times. There had been an enormous growth in the number of refugees. The original hope that the problem of refugees was a temporary one had been dashed.

10. The Chairman examined four areas where the work of UNHCR and its content afforded a striking contrast with the position in 1966. First, administrative problems had grown virtually out of recognition. The Executive Committee had established a Sub-Committee on Financial and Administrative Matters. There was a need for a great deal of effort of analysis and advocacy if Governments, in times of great economic difficulty and stringency, were to be enabled to help the High Commissioner meet the ever-increasing demands made upon him.

11. Second, the context. The question of refugees was present in one way or another at almost any major international gathering. It had indeed been the specific occasion for major conferences in its own right. There had been three such conferences at Geneva in the last two years. Whereas UNHCR's first task must naturally be to tackle the consequences of the flow of refugees, the world community was forced to look not only at the consequences of these flows but at

their root causes. This was not the job of the UNHCR itself, but its wisdom and experience should be taken into account by Governments when pursuing this problem at the General Assembly and elsewhere.

12. Third, the Chairman stated there had been a great expansion of the humanitarian tasks of the United Nations system of which UNHCR was a prime example. In addition to UNHCR, the Human Rights Commission, and the humanitarian work of a number of other agencies, all reflected the concern for the individual which is such a prominent feature of the United Nations Charter.

13. Fourth, concern for the individual was not only the preserve of Governments, but also the concern of people, grouped together in the voluntary agencies. Thanks to their determination and dedication they played an invaluable part in the humanitarian field. They were an important element in the co-operative effort of the United Nations system.

14. Finally, the Chairman stated that, though the function of the Executive Committee had evolved, its prime role remained the same. It remained action-oriented, offering support to the High Commissioner and his colleagues to tackle successfully their heavy responsibilities.

## II. NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

15. The Permanent Representative of Norway took the floor on Wednesday 14 October to announce that the Norwegian Nobel Committee had awarded the 1981 Nobel Peace Prize to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

16. The Representative of Norway quoted the Chairman of the Nobel Committee who had stated, inter alia, that UNHCR had carried out work of major importance to assist refugees despite the many difficulties with which it had to contend. The Chairman had also underlined that the establishment of the UNHCR was founded on respect for human life. It was on that basis that an answer to the refugee problems of our age must be sought, both at the national and international level. Refugees who dared not return to their native land had to be given an opportunity to start a new life in their host country. Still more important in the long run was the work of ensuring that people were not compelled to save their lives by escaping from their native land with no prospect of ever returning. The stream of refugees, moreover, created serious problems in relations between States, and for this reason the activities of the UNHCR served the interest of humanity and peace as well.

17. In response, the High Commissioner said he would accept the Nobel Peace Prize not only on behalf of the Office but also on behalf of refugees everywhere. The prize constituted an honour and an encouragement to all who were in a position to care for refugees.

### Decision of the Committee

#### 18. The Executive Committee:

(a) Heard with deep appreciation the statement made by the Representative of Norway announcing that the Norwegian Nobel Committee had awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1981 to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

(b) Congratulated the High Commissioner's Office on the award of the 1981 Nobel Peace Prize and expressed its deep satisfaction with this highly deserved recognition of the invaluable work that the Office continues to perform on behalf of refugees throughout the world.

### III. GENERAL DEBATE

(Item 3 of the agenda)

19. In replying to the Higher Commissioner's opening statement, which is reproduced in the annex to the report, speakers paid tribute to the High Commissioner and his staff for their devotion to the cause of refugees. They expressed their confidence in the ability of his Office to respond to humanitarian needs in the face of persecution, tension and conflict which have continued to produce a flow of refugees. The Executive Committee was very much aware that, in recent years, refugee problems had become aggravated to a degree which made it more imperative than ever that the High Commissioner receive all necessary support in order to carry out his mandate. Speakers welcomed the fact that the High Commissioner had undertaken consultations with the members of the Executive Committee over the past year and they stressed the importance of continuing dialogue.

20. In the debate, particular emphasis was placed on the magnitude and gravity of the refugee problem which constituted one of the most serious issues facing the international community. In particular, speakers referred to the disquieting developments in several regions of Asia and Central America and in the Horn of Africa and expressed their concern that early durable solutions do not appear likely at present. Although the situation with regard to refugees in many parts of the world was a sombre one, the Office had achieved many notable results. Voluntary repatriation and rehabilitation of refugees and displaced persons from Zimbabwe had been successfully completed. Other voluntary repatriation operations for refugees from Chad, Ethiopia, Democratic Kampuchea and the Lao People's Democratic Republic had started. Local integration had successfully been undertaken in China, the Sudan, and the United Republic of Tanzania. Resettlement of Indo-Chinese refugees had progressed well and, to date, some 700,000 persons had found new homes. Some speakers welcomed the increased departures under the Orderly Departure Programme and expressed the hope that Governments concerned would intensify their support for this important scheme.

21. One representative mentioned that according to his Government there were some 150,000 refugees from the Western Sahara in South Western Algeria. He hoped that the recent decision taken by the eighteenth Summit Meeting of the OAU and the OAU Implementation Committee on the Western Sahara would pave the way for a definite solution to the problems of Sahrawi refugees. Another representative denied that the persons referred to were real refugees and added that most of these persons were not from the Western Sahara.

22. Some representatives drew the attention of the Committee to the situation of a number of refugees from Afghanistan in Iran. One representative referred to the number and situation of refugees from Afghanistan and Iraq in Iran and informed the Committee that his Government had requested UNHCR to study the matter with a view to providing them with assistance. One observer refuted that statement and declared that those persons repatriated to Iran were Iranian citizens who had abused the hospitality of Iraq through subversion. She added that any alleged group of Kurds originally from Iraq in Iran are remnants of former rebels against Iraq, namely the sons of Barazani and his followers. The statements of the delegations concerned are recorded in the Summary Records.

23. Many speakers mentioned the importance of examining in the appropriate fora the root causes which gave rise to movements of refugees. Some speakers stated that the initiative taken at last year's session of the General Assembly, and adopted in resolution 35/124 of 7 December 1980, to discuss international co-operation to avert new flows of refugees, was most positive. However, it was acknowledged that this lay outside the essentially humanitarian role of UNHCR, and that it was up to the community of nations to seek modes of co-operation which were essential to stemming the rising tide of uprooted persons. Certain speakers welcomed the decision by the Human Rights Commission to have a comprehensive study undertaken on the causes of mass movements of populations.

24. Appreciation was frequently voiced concerning the success of the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA) in drawing world attention to the serious refugee problems on that continent. It was pointed out that intensive follow-up measures were necessary to maintain the momentum of awareness as well as a sufficient level of funding. Some speakers added that Africa was still not receiving its fair share of assistance, taking into account the total number of refugees throughout that continent. A number of speakers stressed the need to review periodically the situation of refugees in Africa, and stated that another international conference on assistance to refugees in Africa should be held in the future.

25. As in previous years, there was a general reaffirmation of the fundamental character of the function of international protection and of the need for increasing efforts to promote still further accessions to, and implementation of, the basic instruments. The Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection was the subject of warm commendation and many delegations expressed appreciation of its continuing important contribution. Several speakers expressed satisfaction that new accessions during the year had brought the total number of States party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and/or the 1967 Protocol, to 90. Great concern was expressed at cases in which refugees had been refused asylum, and speakers reaffirmed their belief that it remains imperative to observe scrupulously the principles of asylum and non-refoulement. Many speakers expressed their anguish over the perseverance of piracy in the South China Sea which was directed against refugees who were being subjected to truly appalling aggression in their quest for safe haven. The need was expressed for UNHCR to co-operate fully with the Governments of the region, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties in order to arrive at more effective ways of protecting such refugees at sea. A number of speakers expressed grave concern over the continued armed attacks by South African military forces against refugee camps in southern Africa. They felt that the time had come for the High Commissioner to look specifically into the problem with a view to considering ways to ensure greater protection of these innocent refugees.

26. It was felt that, in the light of the volume and intensity of UNHCR's activities, strengthening of UNHCR management was long overdue and that close attention should continue to be given to improving programme management methods. In this context, the Committee welcomed the constitution of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters whose work focused in particular on these questions. It was generally agreed that UNHCR would need to continue efforts to ensure the most efficient possible management including the delegation of decision-making, both at Headquarters and in the field. In this connexion, the Executive Committee welcomed administrative measures taken by the High Commissioner

in order to ensure that the capacity of the Office corresponded to its tasks. On personnel policy questions a number of speakers expressed the view that this policy was not transparent and that certain countries were over-represented on the High Commissioner's staff.

27. On the question of the financing of UNHCR's administrative costs, several speakers referred to the disproportionate share of such costs which are at present being met from voluntary funds. While noting the efforts of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General to establish a proper basis for the financing of UNHCR's administrative costs, they felt that urgent action was required in order to allow some progress, even during the current session of the General Assembly.

28. In discussing the renewal of the High Commissioner's mandate at the end of 1983, one speaker wondered whether the High Commissioner's Office should not be placed on a permanent basis. Speakers noted that the mandate of the High Commissioner, as laid down in the Office's Statute, was clear. The evolution of refugee situations had, however, led to a broadening of UNHCR's concerns. Traditional concepts had consequently been reviewed, notably by the General Assembly of the United Nations which, through successive resolutions, had progressively assigned new tasks to UNHCR. Also, speakers emphasized the need for clear definitions of the nature, modalities and the limits of UNHCR's activities, as well as the conditions for phasing out of material assistance programmes.

29. Members of the Committee appreciated the fact that the High Commissioner had shared with them the paper on "Guidelines for UNHCR Activities". Some speakers felt there was a need to pursue discussions along the lines of this paper, especially with a view to defining as clearly as possible the exact beneficiaries of UNHCR activities, as well as the scope and duration of UNHCR assistance programmes. All agreed on the High Commissioner's responsibilities to promote, in close co-operation with Governments, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, durable and speedy solutions to the problems of refugees and reiterated the belief that voluntary repatriation, if practicable, remained the ideal solution.

30. UNHCR's responsibility for providing emergency aid was considered of vital importance but, as soon as possible in each situation, activities aiming at bringing the refugees to a state of social and economic self-sufficiency should start. The need to encourage Governments to plan such activities within the context of national development plans was recognized by many speakers. Some speakers underlined the necessity for UNHCR to keep within the framework of its traditional activities leaving developmental activities to those competent in that field.

31. It was noted with satisfaction that UNHCR had taken steps to improve its emergency preparedness by establishing procedures for dealing with different contingencies. The Handbook for Emergencies was welcomed, as was the preparation of a roster of experts and other personnel who can be called on at short notice to serve in urgent circumstances.

32. Many speakers emphasized the importance of the catalytic and co-ordinating role of UNHCR. They urged organizations within the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, voluntary agencies and other non-governmental bodies to complement further, in their respective fields of competence, UNHCR's

assistance activities. They also stressed the need for effective co-ordination of humanitarian relief among United Nations agencies, and expressed the hope that initiatives undertaken in this regard by the Economic and Social Council would arrive at early results.

33. Many speakers recognized the great sacrifices made by countries receiving refugees, especially since many of them were low-income countries, and commended them for continuing to offer generous hospitality and assistance despite the heavy burden imposed on them by the flow of refugees. In these circumstances, it was imperative for the international community to assume its full share of responsibility by supporting assistance programmes on a scale commensurate with the magnitude of the refugee situations.

34. Many speakers noted that the High Commissioner must be provided with the level of resources corresponding to his task and, in this respect, called for a wider participation and financial involvement in UNHCR's programmes which would result in more equitable burden-sharing.

35. The observer from the Organization of African Unity (OAU) made a statement to the Committee in which he referred to the alarming proportions the refugee problem throughout the African continent had assumed. In particular, he underlined the plight of children who make up half the refugee population. He noted the excellent co-operation between OAU and UNHCR, not least in the implementation of the recommendations of the 1979 Arusha Conference, and pledged the fullest support of his organization for the work of the Executive Committee and the High Commissioner.

36. The observers from the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) and the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) made statements on behalf of their movements and expressed appreciation for assistance provided to refugees under their auspices by UNHCR and other organizations. The recent attacks by South African military forces on refugee camps in the region were the cause of grave concern. The importance of education for young refugees was noted and an appeal made in favour of every effort to assist in this sphere.

37. The observer from the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) noted with concern a deteriorating trend in the physical safety of refugees due to increasing incidents of aggression of various kinds. In particular, the voluntary agencies were concerned for the safety of women refugees in such circumstances. The observer noted the vital role played by voluntary agencies in the humanitarian field and expressed particular appreciation of the NGO/UNHCR Consultation organized at Geneva from 20 to 22 May 1981. The Consultation underlined the importance of the links between the two bodies, and the voluntary agencies remained particularly interested in proposals for follow-up especially with regard to assistance programmes. During the debate, many speakers expressed satisfaction at the growing and important links between UNHCR and a wide range of non-governmental organizations working in the humanitarian field.

38. Throughout the debate, representatives and observers described the efforts by their Governments, both nationally and internationally, for the benefit of persons of concern to the High Commissioner. Speakers also took the opportunity to highlight areas where their Governments required additional assistance from the international community.

## Decisions of the Committee

### 39. The Executive Committee

(a) Expressed appreciation of the introductory statement of the High Commissioner in which he had reviewed, inter alia, the evolution of the Office during the last few years, the basic principles guiding UNHCR's activities and the major refugee situations which had either developed or substantially increased in magnitude since the previous session of the Committee.

(b) Noted with deep concern the continuing scope and intensity of the refugee problem in a number of regions in the world.

(c) Recalled the need for Governments to co-operate with the High Commissioner to facilitate the effective exercise of his essential function of international protection.

(d) Urged the international community to continue its support to UNHCR's assistance programmes throughout the world, both with a view to meeting emergencies and promoting durable solutions as soon as feasible, on a scale commensurate with the extent of the situation.

(e) Noted with great concern the need for the continuation of long-term care and maintenance programmes of considerable magnitude and commended the High Commissioner for his efforts to continue to promote, in close co-operation with Governments, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, the search for durable and speedy solutions, including local settlement and integration, to the problems of refugees.

(f) Noted with interest the "Guidelines for UNHCR Activities" circulated by the High Commissioner, the explanations given in the High Commissioner's opening statement and the various points made on them during the General Debate. These should be the subject of further elaboration through more detailed examination. For the purposes of this examination the Executive Committee invited the Chairman, in consultation with the High Commissioner, to arrange for further discussions, as appropriate, with the members of the Executive Committee.

(g) Reaffirmed the purely humanitarian and social character of the High Commissioner's activities for the benefit of refugees and displaced persons of concern to his Office, reiterated its conviction that such activities must be kept distinct and separate from the activities of the United Nations concerned with the root causes of refugee situations.

(h) Expressed the view that such root causes should continue to be addressed as a matter of urgency in the appropriate fora and welcomed the recent initiatives which have been taken to this effect in the United Nations.

(i) Noted with appreciation the High Commissioner's continued efforts to seek the best and most effective use of resources made available to him and the measures taken by him to enable his Office to meet new and changing circumstances and commended him for the considerable progress made by the Emergency Unit in the elaboration of adequate procedures to meet emergency situations.



(j) Urged the High Commissioner to continue to co-ordinate closely the efforts of his Office in the field of emergency humanitarian assistance with those of other relevant bodies in the United Nations system in order to avoid duplication and ensure the most effective possible assistance to those in need.

(k) Expressed appreciation of the continued important contribution of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection to the work of the High Commissioner and welcomed the establishment of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters (the reports of the Sub-Committees are considered under the relevant items of the agenda).

(l) Expressed appreciation of the continuing contacts between the High Commissioner and members of the Executive Committee and urged the High Commissioner to continue to seek the advice of member States.

(m) Noted with appreciation the continuing follow-up action taken with a view to implementing the recommendations of the Arusha Conference on the Situation of Refugees in Africa.

(n) Expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the High Commissioner in the convening, in co-operation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa; noted the success achieved by the Conference and requested the High Commissioner to continue participating in the necessary follow-up of the Conference's work; urged the international community to keep the momentum thus gained in providing assistance to refugees in Africa commensurate with the magnitude of the problem in the continent which has given refuge to half the world's refugees and whose countries of asylum are among the poorest in the world; also noted with appreciation the High Commissioner's specific information activities both in the preparation and in the follow-up of the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, and took note of the wish expressed by a number of delegations that there should be a follow-up conference to ICARA in the future.

(o) Greatly welcomed the successful conclusion of the United Nations humanitarian assistance programme for the initial settlement and rehabilitation of returnees and displaced persons in Zimbabwe co-ordinated by the High Commissioner.

(p) Expressed appreciation for the action taken by the High Commissioner in seeking solutions for the problem of refugees in South-East Asia.

(q) Noted with concern the continuing increase in numbers of refugees arriving elsewhere in Asia, and recognized the importance of having assistance programmes corresponding to the needs of the respective situations.

(r) Expressed concern at the increasingly serious situation of refugees in Central America and called on Governments to continue co-operating fully with the High Commissioner in extending international protection and material assistance to the refugees in that region.

(s) Warmly commended the High Commissioner for his efforts on behalf of disabled refugees during 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons.

(t) Reaffirmed the importance of effective public information to increase awareness of refugee situations among the international community and urged the High Commissioner to continue his efforts in that direction.

(u) Paid tribute to other organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations, voluntary agencies and other non-governmental bodies for their invaluable co-operation with the High Commissioner and for their humanitarian assistance in favour of refugees and displaced persons.

#### IV. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

(Item 4 of the agenda)

40. Opening the debate on this item, the Chairman of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection introduced the report of the 6th meeting of the Sub-Committee. At that meeting particular attention had been given to the report the Group of Experts on Temporary Refuge in situations of large-scale influx. Consideration had also been given to problems related to the rescue of asylum seekers in distress at sea and family reunification. The question of military attacks by South African forces on refugee camps in southern Africa had also been examined. The Sub-Committee's conclusions on these various matters had been recommended to the Executive Committee for adoption.

41. The Director of International Protection introduced document A/AC.96/593 in a statement which, upon request, was available to the members of the Committee. In his opening remarks, he drew attention to a number of important developments in the field of international protection. Asylum was now widely granted by States, and the peremptory character of the principle of non-refoulement had been repeatedly reaffirmed. Since the Executive Committee's thirty-first session, eight more States had acceded to international refugee instruments, including two States - Japan and the Philippines - in Asia. Further States - as reflected in document A/AC.96/INF.151/Rev.3 - had adopted procedures for determining refugee status under the international refugee instruments and in other States legislation or administrative rules had been introduced with a view to improving existing procedures.

42. Increased importance was now being attached to promoting the concepts of international protection, particularly at the regional level. The close and long-standing co-operation between UNHCR and the Council of Europe and the Organization of African Unity which had led to remarkable achievements for the protection of refugees in these two continents called for special mention. One of the most significant of these achievements was the widened definition of the term "refugee" figuring in the OAU Refugee Convention which had been accepted by various groups of jurists and legal experts outside the region, most recently by the Group of Experts on Temporary Refuge in situations of large-scale influx, convened by the High Commissioner at the request of the Executive Committee in April 1981. There had also been increased recognition of international refugee law as a separate branch of university study. The symposium on this subject to be held in Tokyo in December 1981 under the joint auspices of UNHCR, UNESCO and the United Nations University would be a further landmark in this regard.

43. While these various matters were of course highly encouraging, there had been a serious disregard of the principles of international protection in certain areas. Of the most profound concern were the violations of the principle of non-refoulement which continued to occur. Infringements of the physical safety of asylum-seekers and refugees in various parts of the world, including military attacks, abduction, unjustified detention and disappearances called for the continuing attention of the international community. The tragedy of the boat people who fall victim to pirate attacks - an international crime - required an

urgent response. There was also an increasing tendency on the part of States to consider that asylum-seekers could only be admitted on a temporary basis. While certain States, because of their geographical situation, might not be in a position to admit asylum-seekers permanently, it was very much to be hoped that this would not develop into a general practice. There was also a tendency on the part of certain States to apply the refugee definition in the Convention and the Protocol in too restrictive a manner.

44. In the ensuing discussions, the fundamental significance of the Office's international protection function was widely emphasized. It was noted that UNHCR was the only organ entrusted by the international community with the task of extending international protection and that this function related both to individual refugees and asylum-seekers and also to persons forming part of a large-scale influx. Many representatives stressed the need for the co-operation of States in order to facilitate the effective exercise of the High Commissioner's international protection function.

45. The fundamental importance of the principle of non-refoulement was recalled by a number of representatives. It was emphasized that the very exercise of international protection was dependent upon the scrupulous observance of this principle by States.

46. Many representatives, speaking under this item, and in the General Debate, viewed with alarm the deteriorating situation with regard to the physical safety of refugees. Particular concern was expressed at the continued attacks on refugee camps in southern Africa by South African military forces. These were clearly contrary to accepted principles relating to the grant of asylum which was essentially peaceful and humanitarian in nature. It was generally considered that the High Commissioner should examine the various humanitarian problems resulting from attacks on refugee camps and settlements of concern to UNHCR, and also the need for special measures to protect and ensure the safety of these refugees.

47. The accessions to the international refugee instruments which has taken place since the Committee's thirty-first session were greatly welcomed and in particular by States in areas where neither the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention nor the 1967 Protocol had hitherto been acceded to. On the other hand, some 50 States had yet to become parties to these instruments and UNHCR was urged to pursue its strenuous efforts to ensure their universal adoption. One representative stressed the need for further accessions to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

48. A number of speakers, both under this item and in the course of the General Debate, noted the extension of the High Commissioner's protection activities in Africa to persons falling within the widened definition of the term "refugee" in the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention. Certain speakers believed that this definition together with that contained in the universal refugee instruments should be regarded as the basis for UNHCR protection activities in other parts of the world. Other speakers expressed reservations as to the adoption on a universal level of a wider refugee definition before giving further consideration to all the implications and consequences. One speaker considered that in his region efforts to apply a wider refugee concept might be premature before the principles contained in the existing international refugee instruments had been more widely adopted there.

49. Tribute was paid to the work of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection. It was recognized that the Sub-Committee had played a vital role in formulating standards for the conduct of States in their treatment of refugees. One representative believed that the constant reaffirmation of the principle of non-refoulement by the Sub-Committee had greatly contributed to the now general acceptance by States of its peremptory character. Another speaker noted that the conclusions of the Sub-Committee had special authority since the Sub-Committee comprised representatives of different regional groups. Mention was also made of the need for States to apply the conclusions of the Sub-Committee in practice and it was suggested that information on the follow-up of these conclusions should be submitted to a future session of the Executive Committee.

50. Satisfaction was expressed with both the topics considered and the conclusions adopted by the Sub-Committee at its 6th meeting. The Sub-Committee's discussions on the question of temporary refuge in situations of large-scale influx were viewed as being particularly valuable. A number of speakers welcomed the fact that it had been possible to reconcile divergent views. They believed that the conclusions reached on this item were well-balanced and represented an important first step in the formulation of international standards to be applied in the case of large-scale influx.

51. One representative drew attention to the close relation between the minimum standards of treatment of asylum-seekers in large-scale influxes and the principles of international solidarity and burden-sharing. He pointed out that in order to ensure the application of these minimum standards the assistance of the international community would frequently be necessary. Several representatives stressed the need to maintain recognized international principles for the protection of refugees in large-scale influxes. One speaker pointed out that both the UNHCR Statute and the international refugee instruments were drawn up against the background of the major refugee problems that existed at the time of their adoption. He therefore considered that they were also applicable to large-scale influxes which had arisen in more recent times. Another speaker, however, believed that these large-scale influxes might call for a review of the international refugee instruments. One representative considered that the conclusions of the Sub-Committee on this question dealt with a number of very complex issues which should appropriately be the subject of continuing examination with a view to finding solutions to the problems which currently arise in large-scale influxes.

52. Several speakers referred to the discussions of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection on the question of rescue of asylum-seekers in distress at sea. One delegate believed that present arrangements whereby resettlement guarantees were required by coastal States against disembarkation by asylum-seekers rescued at sea gave rise to certain inequities. She referred, in this connexion, to the proposals which her delegation had submitted to the Sub-Committee with a view to achieving a more equitable sharing of responsibilities and a more orderly arrival of refugees in the maritime countries concerned. One speaker also stressed that present arrangements involved an undue burden for smaller maritime States. Another speaker, however, expressed the view that present arrangements already reflected the principle of burden-sharing between maritime and coastal States and should therefore be maintained.

53. It was generally agreed that a number of important practical questions needed to be addressed in this field and there was general support for the recommendation of the Sub-Committee that the High Commissioner be requested to convene a Working Group for this purpose at an early opportunity. This was interpreted by one speaker to mean that UNHCR would initiate consultations for convening the Working Group soon after the end of the present session of the Executive Committee.

54. Several representatives welcomed the initiative of UNHCR in placing the question of family reunification on the agenda of the Sub-Committee. It was recognized that, in view of their special situation, members of a refugee's family deserved more generous treatment by the country of asylum than in cases of ordinary immigration. Several speakers indicated that their authorities followed liberal practices in admitting the family members of refugees and one speaker stated that such practices were specifically authorized by his country's recently adopted legislation on asylum. Several speakers considered that the Committee's conclusions should not be too specific, thus enabling States to develop their own liberal criteria regarding the admission of refugee family members.

55. Several representatives referred to their respective countries' participation in the work of the Council of Europe in the field of protection of refugees which was to a large extent based on the conclusions of the Sub-Committee. Two representatives announced their Governments' intention to ratify the 1980 European Agreement on Transfer of Responsibility for Refugees.

56. At the close of the discussion, the Executive Committee adopted the following conclusions which include those recommended by the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection.

#### 57. Conclusions of the Committee

The Executive Committee:

##### (1) General

(a) Reiterated the fundamental importance of international protection as the primary task entrusted to the High Commissioner under the Statute of his Office and noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in this field since the Committee's thirty-first session;

(b) Noted in particular the progress made as regards further accessions to the 1951 United Nations Convention and the 1969 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees and welcomed accession to these basic international refugee instruments by Angola, Chad, Egypt, Japan, Lesotho, the Philippines, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe;

(c) Expressed the hope that further States would accede to the Convention and to the Protocol and that those States which still maintain the geographical limitation in respect of their obligations under the Convention will give active consideration to the possibility of withdrawing this limitation;

(d) Noted with satisfaction the measures taken by various States to ensure the effective implementation of their obligations under the Convention and Protocol, in particular as regards procedures for determining refugee status as described in document A/AC.96/INF.152/Rev.3 and expressed the hope that such measures be taken by all States parties to the international refugee instruments;

(e) Noted that, despite an increasingly broad understanding of the principles of international protection, the basic rights of refugees had been disregarded in a number of areas in the world;

(f) Noted with particular concern that in certain areas refugees have been refused asylum, have been rejected at the frontier or subjected to measures of expulsion or forcible return in disregard of the fundamental principle of non-refoulement and that asylum-seekers had been the victims of physical violence;

(g) Expressed its serious pre-occupation that while a certain measure of progress had been achieved in this matter, asylum-seekers at sea continued to be the victims of piracy attacks and called upon the High Commissioner, in co-operation with the International Committee of the Red Cross and other interested organizations and Governments to seek the support of the international community for the continuation and intensification of efforts to protect refugees from acts of violence at sea and to assist the victims;

(h) Noted with grave concern the inhuman military attacks on refugee camps in southern Africa and elsewhere, involving extreme and indescribable hardships to refugees and called upon the High Commissioner to examine the serious humanitarian problems resulting from military attacks on refugee camps and settlements which are the concern of UNHCR, and the need for special measures to protect and ensure the safety of such refugees, and to report thereon at the earliest possible date to the Executive Committee;

(i) Noted with renewed appreciation the work of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection which has greatly facilitated the High Commissioner's efforts to extend international protection to refugees and has contributed to a clearer formulation of the standards for their treatment, and noted with particular satisfaction the work of the Sub-Committee with regard to the question of temporary refuge in situations of large-scale influx;

(j) Welcomed the increasing understanding for the problems of international protection shown in governmental, non-governmental and academic circles and the continuing efforts undertaken by the High Commissioner to promote a wider knowledge of international refugee law.

**(2) Protection of asylum-seekers in situations of large-scale influx**

**The Executive Committee:**

Noting with appreciation the report of the Group of Experts on temporary refuge in situations of large-scale influx, which met at Geneva from 21 to 24 April 1981, adopted the following conclusions in regard to the protection of asylum-seekers in situations of large-scale influx.

## **I. General**

1. The refugee problem has become particularly acute due to the increasing number of large-scale influx situations in different areas of the world and especially in developing countries. The asylum-seekers forming part of these large-scale influxes include persons who are refugees within the meaning of the 1951 United Nations Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees or who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of their country of origin or nationality are compelled to seek refuge outside that country.

2. Asylum-seekers forming part of such large-scale influxes are often confronted with difficulties in finding durable solutions by way of voluntary repatriation, local settlement or resettlement in a third country. Large-scale influxes frequently create serious problems for States, with the result that certain States, although committed to obtaining durable solutions, have only found it possible to admit asylum-seekers without undertaking at the time of admission to provide permanent settlement of such persons within their borders.

3. It is therefore imperative to ensure that asylum-seekers are fully protected in large-scale influxes, to reaffirm the basic minimum standards for their treatment pending arrangements for a durable solution, and to establish effective arrangements in the context of international solidarity and burden-sharing for assisting countries which receive large numbers of asylum-seekers.

## **II. Measures of protection**

### **A. Admission and non-refoulement**

1. In situations of large-scale influx, asylum-seekers should be admitted to the State in which they first seek refuge and if that State is unable to admit them on a durable basis, it should always admit them at least on a temporary basis and provide them with protection according to the principles set out below. They should be admitted without any discrimination as to race, religion, political opinion, nationality, country of origin or physical incapacity.

2. In all cases the fundamental principle of non-refoulement - including non-rejection at the frontier - must be scrupulously observed.

### **B. Treatment of asylum-seekers who have been temporarily admitted to a country pending arrangements for a durable solution**

1. Article 31 of the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees contains provisions regarding the treatment of refugees who have entered a country without authorization and whose situation in that country has not yet been regularized. The standards defined in this article do not, however, cover all aspects of the treatment of asylum-seekers in large-scale influx situations.

2. It is therefore essential that asylum-seekers who have been temporarily admitted pending arrangements for a durable solution should be treated in accordance with the following minimum basic human standards:



(a) They should not be penalized or exposed to any unfavourable treatment solely on the ground that their presence in the country is considered unlawful; they should not be subjected to restrictions on their movements other than those which are necessary in the interest of public health and public order;

(b) They should enjoy the fundamental civil rights internationally recognized, in particular those set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(c) They should receive all necessary assistance and be provided with the basic necessities of life including food, shelter and basic sanitary and health facilities; in this respect the international community should conform with the principles of international solidarity and burden-sharing;

(d) They should be treated as persons whose tragic plight requires special understanding and sympathy. They should not be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment;

(e) There should be no discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, political opinion, nationality, country of origin or physical incapacity;

(f) They are to be considered as persons before the law enjoying free access to courts of law and other competent administrative authorities;

(g) The location of asylum-seekers should be determined by their safety and well-being as well as by the security needs of the receiving State. Asylum-seekers should, as far as possible, be located at a reasonable distance from the frontier of their country of origin. They should not become involved in subversive activities against their country of origin or any other State;

(h) Family unity should be respected;

(i) All possible assistance should be given for the tracing of relatives;

(j) Adequate provision should be made for the protection of minors and unaccompanied children;

(k) The sending and receiving of mail should be allowed;

(l) Material assistance from friends or relatives should be permitted;

(m) Appropriate arrangements should be made, where possible, for the registration of births, deaths and marriages;

(n) They should be granted all the necessary facilities to enable them to obtain a satisfactory durable solution;

(o) They should be permitted to transfer assets which they have brought into a territory to the country where the durable solution is obtained and;

(p) All steps should be taken to facilitate voluntary repatriation.

### III. Co-operation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Asylum-seekers shall be entitled to contact the Office of UNHCR. UNHCR shall be given access to asylum-seekers. UNHCR shall also be given the possibility of exercising its function of international protection and shall be allowed to supervise the well-being of persons entering reception or other refugee centres.

### IV. International solidarity, burden-sharing and duties of States

- (1) A mass influx may place unduly heavy burdens on certain countries; a satisfactory solution of a problem international in scope and nature cannot be achieved without international co-operation. States shall, within the framework of international solidarity and burden-sharing, take all necessary measures to assist, at their request, States which have admitted asylum-seekers in large-scale influx situations.
- (2) Such action should be taken bilaterally or multilaterally at the regional or at the universal levels and in co-operation with UNHCR, as appropriate. Primary consideration should be given to the possibility of finding suitable solutions within the regional context.
- (3) Action with a view to burden-sharing should be directed towards facilitating voluntary repatriation, promoting local settlement in the receiving country, providing resettlement possibilities in third countries, as appropriate.
- (4) The measures to be taken within the context of such burden-sharing arrangements should be adapted to the particular situation. They should include, as necessary, emergency, financial and technical assistance, assistance in kind and advance pledging of further financial or other assistance beyond the emergency phase until durable solutions are found, and where voluntary repatriation or local settlement cannot be envisaged, the provision for asylum-seekers of resettlement possibilities in a cultural environment appropriate for their well-being.
- (5) Consideration should be given to the strengthening of existing mechanisms and, if appropriate, the setting up of new arrangements, if possible on a permanent basis, to ensure that the necessary funds and other material and technical assistance are immediately made available.
- (6) In a spirit of international solidarity, Governments should also seek to ensure that the causes leading to large-scale influxes of asylum-seekers are as far as possible removed and, where such influxes have occurred, that conditions favourable to voluntary repatriation are established.

### (3) Problems related to the rescue of asylum-seekers in distress at sea

The Executive Committee

Adopted the following conclusions on problems related to the rescue of asylum-seekers in distress at sea.

1. It is recalled that there is a fundamental obligation under international law for ships' masters to rescue any persons in distress at sea, including asylum-seekers, and to render them all necessary assistance. Seafaring States should take all appropriate measures to ensure that masters of vessels observe this obligation strictly.

2. Rescue of asylum-seekers in distress at sea has been facilitated by the willingness of the flag States of rescuing ships to provide guarantees of resettlement required by certain coastal States as a condition for disembarkation. It has also been facilitated by the agreement of these and other States to contribute to a pool of resettlement guarantees under the DISERO scheme which should be further encouraged. All countries should continue to provide durable solutions for asylum-seekers rescued at sea.

3. In accordance with established international practice, supported by the relevant international instruments, persons rescued at sea should normally be disembarked at the next port of call. This practice should also be applied in the case of asylum-seekers rescued at sea. In cases of large-scale influx, asylum-seekers rescued at sea should always be admitted, at least on a temporary basis. States should assist in facilitating their disembarkation by acting in accordance with the principles of international solidarity and burden-sharing in granting resettlement opportunities.

4. As a result of concerted efforts by many countries, large numbers of resettlement opportunities have been, and continue to be, provided for boat people. In view of this development, the question arises as to whether the first port of call countries might wish to examine their present policy of requiring resettlement guarantees as a pre-condition for disembarkation. Pending a review of practice by coastal States, it is of course desirable that present arrangements for facilitating disembarkation be continued.

5. In view of the complexity of the problems arising from the rescue, disembarkation and resettlement of asylum-seekers at sea, the High Commissioner is requested to convene at an early opportunity a working group comprising representatives of the maritime States and the coastal States most concerned, potential countries of resettlement, and representatives of international bodies competent in this field. The working group should study the various problems mentioned and elaborate principles and measures which would provide a solution and should submit a report on the matter to the Executive Committee at its thirty-third session.

#### (4) Family reunification

~~The~~ Executive Committee:

Adopted the following conclusions on the reunification of separated refugee families:

1. In application of the principle of the unity of the family and for obvious humanitarian reasons, every effort should be made to ensure the reunification of separated refugee families.

2. For this purpose it is desirable that countries of asylum and countries of origin support the efforts of the High Commissioner to ensure that the reunification of separated refugee families takes place with the least possible delay.
3. The generally positive trends in regard to the reunification of separated refugee families are greatly to be welcomed but a number of outstanding problems still need to be resolved.
4. Given the recognized right of everyone to leave any country including his own, countries of origin should facilitate family reunification by granting exit permission to family members of refugees to enable them to join the refugee abroad.
5. It is hoped that countries of asylum will apply liberal criteria in identifying those family members who can be admitted with a view to promoting a comprehensive reunification of the family.
6. When deciding on family reunification, the absence of documentary proof of the formal validity of a marriage or of the filiation of children should not per se be considered as an impediment;
7. The separation of refugee families has, in certain regions of the world, given rise to a number of particularly delicate problems relating to unaccompanied minors. Every effort should be made to trace the parents or other close relatives of unaccompanied minors before their resettlement. Efforts to clarify their family situation with sufficient certainty should also be continued after resettlement. Such efforts are of particular importance before an adoption - involving a severance of links with the natural family - is decided upon.
8. In order to promote the rapid integration of refugee families in the country of settlement, joining close family members should in principle be granted the same legal status and facilities as the head of the family who has been formally recognized as a refugee.
9. In appropriate cases family reunification should be facilitated by special measures of assistance to the head of family so that economic and housing difficulties in the country of asylum do not unduly delay the granting of permission for the entry of the family members.

## V. REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

### Report of the Chairman

58. During the debate on Management, Programme Support and Administration, under agenda item 5, a number of speakers remarked that a great deal of what was discussed had already appeared, or had been referred to, in the General Debate, or in the consideration of other items.

59. The sense of the discussion indicated that the Executive Committee generally endorsed the proposals made by the High Commissioner as contained in document A/AC.96/594/Add.1 and Corr.1. Three elements emerged in the debate on this subject: first, a number of speakers had stressed the importance for the High Commissioner to continue his efforts to achieve an equitable representation among the staff of his Office between geographic areas and between men and women at all levels. Second, they stressed the importance of increased delegation of authority at Headquarters and to the field officers. Third, they welcomed the High Commissioner's intention to conduct a management review of the Office with the assistance of the Administrative Management Service, and expressed the wish to have the results of such a review made available for the next regular session of the Executive Committee.

60. The Committee endorsed the recommendation of the Sub-Committee to convey to the General Assembly, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions the note on financing of UNHCR's administrative costs (A/AC.96/598) with the hope that early action could be taken by the General Assembly. Some speakers referred to the observation made by the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly that UNHCR voluntary funds were meeting a disproportionate share of administrative costs. Several speakers urged a proper apportionment of UNHCR administrative costs between the regular budget of the United Nations and voluntary funds.

61. In endorsing the view of the Sub-Committee, the Committee urged greater emphasis on evaluation and control of programme and project planning and implementation. It was noted that since it was too early to assess the impact of project evaluation on the implementation of assistance programmes, such a review should be undertaken at the next regular session of the Executive Committee.

62. Many speakers referred to the importance of "transparency" and a continuing flow of information to be provided to the Committee throughout the year and the role of the Sub-Committee in systematically examining this information. The view of the Sub-Committee was accepted that the Sub-Committee should be charged with the task of drawing up, in consultation with UNHCR, a list of criteria for the provision of information required. Such a list should be drawn up at an early date so as to assist the UNHCR with documentation for the Committee along the lines desired.

63. The proposed terms of reference of the Sub-Committee, which appear in the decisions, were accepted by the Committee on the understanding that they would be reviewed at the next session of the Executive Committee. Speakers stressed,

however, that the Sub-Committee should regard assisting the Executive Committee as its principal function. Several speakers noted that, while it had been convenient this year for the report of the Sub-Committee to have been submitted under the authority of the Chairman, it was clearly desirable that the report be submitted by the Sub-Committee as a whole. In this connexion, it was noted that the Sub-Committee should, in future, meet earlier. The suggestion was made that the Monday and Tuesday of the week preceding the opening of the Executive Committee session would be opportune.

#### Decisions of the Committee

##### 64. The Executive Committee

###### A

Took note with appreciation of the report of the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters.

###### B

1. Recalling its decision at its thirty-first session in which it welcomed the intention of the High Commissioner to reinforce, in consultation with the States members of the Executive Committee, the senior management level of his Office;
2. Noting the relevant section of the report of the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters (A/AC.96/600);
3. Taking note further of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/AC.96/597) and the comments and requests for further information contained therein;
4. Noting further the supplementary information prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner in response to the requests of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters (HCR/EC/XXXII/SC.2/CRP.1):

(a) Generally endorsed the High Commissioner's staffing proposals for 1981 and 1982 as contained in document A/AC.96/594 and Corr.1 and 2 and his recommendations concerning the strengthening of UNHCR's management as contained in document A/AC.96/594/Add.1 and Corr.1;

(b) Invited the High Commissioner to take the necessary steps to achieve the widest possible representation at all levels in the staff of his Office and emphasized the opportunity which the implementation of the proposals referred to in the previous paragraph afford in this regard;

(c) Stressed the importance of delegation of authority as part of the arrangements for the strengthening of the Office;

(d) Welcomed the intention of the High Commissioner to request the Administrative Management Service to undertake expeditiously a review of UNHCR's managerial methods and organizational structure and welcomed further his assurance that his proposals on strengthening the management would in no way prevent such a review;

(e) Expressed the view that the Administrative Management Service review should in particular include consideration of additional steps to facilitate decision-making, examination of possibilities for improving programme delivery through redeployment of existing staff and consideration of the question of administrative costs and their implications for the United Nations regular budget;

(f) Expressed the desire that the dialogue and information flow established between the High Commissioner and members of the Executive Committee on managerial and structural questions be actively maintained, both informally and through the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters;

(g) Requested the High Commissioner to furnish a first report on the foregoing to the Executive Committee at its thirty-third session in time for its prior consideration by the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters.

### C

(a) Recalled its recommendation to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session and its thirty-fifth session that the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General review the question of the apportionment of the administrative costs of UNHCR between the regular budget of the United Nations and UNHCR's voluntary funds;

(b) Observed that the report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session on the accounts of the voluntary funds administered by UNHCR for the year ended 31 December 1980: 1/

(i) had noted that over the years voluntary funds have assumed an ever-increasing share of the administrative costs of UNHCR;

(ii) had recommended that appropriate steps be taken to ensure compliance with article 20 of the High Commissioner's Statute;

(c) Noted with appreciation the information contained in document A/AC.96/598 and the efforts of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General to establish a proper basis for the financing of UNHCR's administrative costs;

(d) Urged the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General to continue their efforts to arrive at an equitable apportionment of the administrative costs of UNHCR and report to the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions at the earliest opportunity.

### D

Welcomed the High Commissioner's initiative to introduce project evaluation and requested that a report on the first results of such evaluations be submitted to the thirty-third session of the Executive Committee.

---

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 5E (A/36/5/Add.5).

E

(a) Decided to establish a Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters with the terms of reference set out below:

1. To assist the Executive Committee in its consideration of the managerial, financial and administrative aspects of its work;
2. To provide for and evaluate the systematic flow of information to Members of the Executive Committee and otherwise to maintain contact with UNHCR as required;
3. To review on behalf of the Executive Committee and where appropriate make recommendations on -
  - (i) the documentation submitted to the Executive Committee;
  - (ii) management, programme support and administration;
  - (iii) the financing of the activities of UNHCR;
  - (iv) policies and principles for project management and evaluation;
  - (v) co-ordination of UNHCR activities with those of other bodies in the United Nations system;
4. To examine questions in its field of competence which the Executive Committee or the Bureau of the Executive Committee may refer to it;

(b) Decided to review these terms of reference at its thirty-third session;

(c) Invited the Sub-Committee to report annually to the Executive Committee and to arrange its regular annual session sufficiently far in advance of the Executive Committee to facilitate this.

F

Invited the Chairman of the Executive Committee and the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters, in consultation with the High Commissioner, to arrange for an early meeting of the Sub-Committee to draw up with UNHCR, the criteria for the flow of information referred to in paragraph 2 of the report of the Sub-Committee.



## VI. UNHCR ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

(Item 7 of the agenda)

65. In introducing the report on UNHCR assistance activities in 1980-1981 and proposed voluntary funds programmes and budget for 1982 (A/AC.96/594 and Corr.1 and 2 and Add.2), the Director of Assistance addressed himself to four main problem areas: refugee statistics; the difference in the assistance available to various groups of refugees; the volume of resources for relief as compared to durable solutions; and the question of where to draw the line between durable solutions and what might be seen as development aid.

66. The Director recalled the prerogative of Governments to compile statistics on the refugee populations in their territories, noting that it would be beneficial to all parties concerned if a mechanism could be adopted which would allow for a census of the refugee population as an essential element of the assistance process. On the second point, he acknowledged that some disparities in assistance were inevitable given the types of solution available; general criteria for assistance adapted to specific regions were currently being developed and should be helpful in arriving at the greatest possible consistency in delivery of assistance. The Director reiterated the emphasis on seeking durable solutions, at the same time expressing his concern that a disproportionate amount of resources was being devoted to relief as compared to durable solutions, which were the essential objective of UNHCR assistance. On the final point, he recalled that the goal of UNHCR's assistance activities was to bring refugee groups to a level of self-sufficiency comparable to that of the local population. Economic and social integration beyond that point lay largely outside the direct responsibility of UNHCR; nevertheless, certain essential activities of a "developmental" nature would have to be undertaken in order to facilitate the transition from the emergency to the phase of self-sufficiency.

67. During the ensuing discussion, many delegates commented on the points raised by the Director. Several referred to the problem of statistics and voiced their appreciation of UNHCR's endeavours to assist Governments in this regard. Others thanked the High Commissioner for his efforts to ensure that all refugees received a share of the available resources commensurate with their needs, no matter where in the world they were located. It was felt, however, that more should be done to assist refugees in Africa.

68. Some delegates mentioned the need for clearer definitions of refugee assistance and development aid. While noting the importance of relief aid, it was stressed that assistance programmes should include measures aimed at rehabilitation and durable solutions for refugees. Whereas UNHCR should not engage in development projects per se, some speakers called for increased assistance from UNHCR for activities needed to ensure self-sufficiency of refugee groups as early as possible; others supported efforts aiming at achieving a regional approach to complex refugee situations like the one in the Horn of Africa.

69. Speakers recognized the difficulties inherent in projecting aid to refugees; however, some speakers suggested that long-term plans and indicative multi-year budgets should be drawn up whenever appropriate.

70. Echoing feelings expressed in the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters, several speakers felt that the assistance report should be further improved so as to include even more detailed information on proposed assistance measures as well as problems encountered in the delivery of assistance. Assistance activities needed to be more precisely defined with regard to their presentation in schedule B of the annual report.

71. Some representatives felt that the relevant chapter in document A/AC.96/594 did not clearly reflect the situation of Sahrawi refugees and requested that, in future, the information given by the host country on the numbers of refugees be taken into account. One representative reiterated a request previously made that the situation of refugees in Algeria be reported separately. Another representative, in referring to the situation of persons actually in camps in Tindouf and the surrounding region, questioned the figure quoted in interventions during items 3 and 7 and denied that the persons concerned were refugees.

72. As in the course of the General Debate, a number of speakers expressed appreciation for the High Commissioner's role in the organization and follow-up of the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA) held in April 1981. Although the Conference itself was considered a success, concern was expressed that the momentum should be maintained. In this regard, it was of vital importance that donors honour their pledges at the earliest opportunity and that agencies and Governments increase resources to be devoted to solving the problems of refugees in Africa.

73. A number of representatives and observers took the floor to inform the Committee of their countries' individual efforts on behalf of refugees including their financial contributions both to UNHCR and to other international organizations engaged in refugee assistance. Certain Governments felt they were not receiving adequate assistance from the international community to enable them to cope with their refugee problems, and requested that this assistance be increased.

74. The observer from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) delivered a special message from the Director-General of FAO on the occasion of the first World Food Day which summarized the general problems of food self-sufficiency. The observer from the World Food Programme (WFP) recalled the substantial role WFP played and continues to play in the provision of food to refugees, noting that, in 1980, food aid worth more than \$120 million, representing 62 per cent of WFP's emergency food assistance, went to refugees; the figure for 1981 thus far was \$97 million. WFP pledged to continue its support of the work of the High Commissioner.

75. The observer from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) expressed the willingness of his organization to assist the High Commissioner and member States in a number of critical areas such as employment-creation schemes, vocational training, rehabilitation programmes for handicapped or disabled refugees, and labour-intensive self-help programmes.

76. The representative of UNESCO reported that collaboration between that organization and UNHCR was increasing. UNESCO staff members were working closely with UNHCR to assist with the technical aspects of education programmes for refugees.

77. The Executive Committee also had before it a report on the resettlement of refugees (A/AC.96/595) which was introduced by the Director of Assistance. Some speakers commended the High Commissioner for his activities in the field of resettlement and referred to their own considerable efforts in accepting large numbers of refugees for permanent stay. Several speakers expressed appreciation for the High Commissioner's endeavours to establish an International Refugee Integration Resource Centre. Other delegates referred to the High Commissioner's appeal for handicapped refugees indicating that this would receive their close attention. One delegation expressed the hope that a separate statement on resettlement would be made at the next Executive Committee, as this had been the practice in previous years.

78. The Chairman recalled part C of the decision recorded in paragraph 69 of the report of its thirty-first session (A/AC.96/588). He believed that the Committee would wish to take note of the report of the High Commissioner on this question and to request him to pursue his efforts. He thought that the Committee would likewise welcome the developments since the thirty-first session which could facilitate the achievement of a permanent solution and requested the High Commissioner to present a further report to the Committee at its thirty-third session.

#### Decisions of the Committee

79. The Executive Committee

#### A

(a) Commended the High Commissioner for the progress made in the implementation of his General and Special Programmes in 1980 and the first months of 1981 as reported in document A/AC.96/594 and Corr.1 and 2;

(b) Took note of the allocations made by the High Commissioner from his Emergency Fund during the period 1 July 1980 to 30 June 1981;

(c) Took note with appreciation of the observations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions submitted in part A of document A/AC.96/597;

(d) Approved, in the light of supplementary information received by the High Commissioner, the proposals set out in paragraphs (a) to (h) of schedule A of the Introduction of document A/AC.96/594 and Corr.1 and 2, as well as the proposals contained in Addendum 2 thereto;

(e) Took note of paragraphs (viii) and (ix) of document A/AC.96/594 concerning the Fund for Durable Solutions and agreed with the recommendation of the High Commissioner;

(f) Expressed concern regarding the increasing number of refugees in northern Latin America, Pakistan, Iran, Angola and Zaire, and urged the High Commissioner to continue to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to these refugees;

(g) Noted with approval the High Commissioner's regional approach in the Horn of Africa and the Sudan in dealing with the refugee problems in this area, and called on him to continue to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to these refugees and those returning voluntarily to their country of origin;

(h) Took note with satisfaction of the High Commissioner's co-operation with members of the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations;

(i) Endorsed the view of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters that there is a need for the High Commissioner to review the presentation of the Report on UNHCR Assistance Activities in 1980-1981 and Proposed Voluntary Funds Programmes and Budget for 1982 to the Executive Committee to include more detailed information in connexion with assistance programmes.

B

(a) Took note of the report on the resettlement of refugees (A/AC.96/595) and of the activities undertaken by the High Commissioner in co-operation with Governments concerned;

(b) Urged Governments to continue to admit refugees who are in need of resettlement in the absence of any other durable solution and to apply liberal admissions criteria to that effect, in order to alleviate hardship of refugees and the burden of countries of first asylum;

(c) Commended Governments who continue to accept Indo-Chinese refugees rescued on the high seas by ships flying their flag or owned by companies registered in their country and requested countries to facilitate their disembarkation;

(d) Requested Governments to admit speedily refugees who have special needs such as emergency cases or the disabled for whose resettlement the High Commissioner has appealed;

(e) Commended the High Commissioner for his efforts in promoting the Orderly Departure Programme and urged Governments concerned to facilitate the implementation of this programme;

(f) Noted with appreciation the agreement reached between UNHCR, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies and the Inter-governmental Committee for Migrations on the establishment of an International Refugee Integration Resource Centre.

C

Agreed that a separate statement on resettlement would be made at the thirty-third session of the Executive Committee, in accordance with the practice of previous years.

## VII. FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

### A. Status of contributions and over-all financial situation for 1981 and 1982

(Item 8 of the agenda)

80. In introducing the report on the status of contributions and the over-all funding situation (A/AC.96/592 and Add.1), the Director of External Affairs indicated to the Committee that voluntary funds expenditure in 1981 would be somewhat lower than in 1980. Total funds available against the 1981 revised General Programmes target of some \$365 million amounted to \$349 million, leaving a current shortfall of some \$16 million. The Director further informed the Committee that contributions to UNHCR announced at or as a result of the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA) amounted to some \$227 million for the period 1981 and 1982, for which UNHCR's total needs in Africa amounted to some \$310 million. In over-all terms, it would be prudent to estimate UNHCR's total contribution requirements in 1982 as being at a similar or perhaps somewhat lower level than in 1981.

81. Concerning the 1982 General Programmes target of almost \$388 million approved by the Executive Committee, the Director emphasized the fundamental importance of these programmes, unspectacular though they might be, and urged Governments and other donors to make early and firm contributions, preferably at the UNHCR Pledging Conference in New York on 20 November 1981, so that sufficient funds would be available to the High Commissioner at the beginning of the 1982 programme year to start the implementation of the General Programmes in the scope and the cost-effective planning level at which they were approved by the Executive Committee.

82. The Director welcomed the considerable increase in contributions from certain Governments in 1981 and hoped that this situation could be consolidated in pursuit of a more equitable sharing of the necessary response to the financial needs of refugees.

83. In conclusion, he assured the Committee that UNHCR would continue to do its utmost to keep demands on the international community to the minimum necessary to give adequate help to refugees. UNHCR would also continue to explore ways of improving relationships with donors and potential donors. In this context, the discussions held in the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters had been very helpful.

84. In the course of the session, a number of Governments made reference to the importance of the contributions made at ICARA and to the current and future level of their voluntary contributions to the High Commissioner's programmes. Several important additional contributions to the 1981 programmes of UNHCR were announced while certain delegations emphasized the need for early contributions to the High Commissioner's programmes. Several Governments also welcomed the improvement and increase in the level of information exchange between UNHCR and the Committee and expressed the hope that such exchanges would continue and develop further in the future.

## Decision of the Committee

### 85. The Executive Committee:

(a) Took note of the report submitted by the High Commissioner on the Status of Contributions to UNHCR Voluntary Funds and the over-all financial requirements for 1981 and 1982 (A/AC.96/592 and Corr.1);

(b) Noted with appreciation the increased financial support given to the High Commissioner by a number of Governments in 1981, expressed appreciation of the generosity of all Governments and non-governmental organizations which had responded to the financial requirements of the High Commissioner's Programme and affirmed the hope that the additional funds required would be made available to ensure the full financing of the 1981 Programme;

(c) Reaffirmed the universal character of the refugee problem in the world and the need for more equitable and widespread financial support within the international community for the programmes undertaken by the High Commissioner;

(d) Recognized that the increased requirements of the UNHCR General Programme in 1982 called for a corresponding increase in financial support from the members of the international community and to this end invited donors to at least maintain a proportionate level of contribution in relation to the increased requirements;

(e) Recognized also that the orderly implementation of the 1982 General Programme required that a substantial proportion of the total funds required of \$387,670,000 should be available to the High Commissioner at the beginning of the programme year in January 1982 and to that end urged Governments to announce sufficient substantial pledges to the UNHCR General Programmes for 1982 at the Pledging Conference to be held in New York in November 1981;

(f) Urged Governments and others to make, to the maximum extent possible, unearmarked contributions to the 1982 General Programmes to enable the High Commissioner to implement those programmes as approved by the Executive Committee;

(g) Requested and encouraged the High Commissioner to pursue all appropriate means to obtain the necessary contributions to ensure full financing of the 1982 programme.

### B. Voluntary Funds Accounts for 1980 and the report of the Board of Auditors

(Item 6 of the agenda)

86. As he had already reported to the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters, the Director of Administration and Management explained that the accounts for 1980 were presented in the format agreed upon with the Auditors, consisting of two main statements and nine supporting schedules (A/AC.96/591 and Add.1 and Corr.1). They provide details on all contributions received and obligations entered into, both under General Programmes as well as Special Programmes, including all trust funds.

87. In addition to balances brought forward from 1979, income in 1980 totalled \$466 million of which 85 per cent was contributed by Governments. On the expenditure side, obligations came to almost \$497 million, an increase of 84 per cent over 1979. With \$282 million, the Annual Programme and the Emergency Fund accounted for more than half of the annual expenditure. As regards the status of obligations, the Director of Administration and Management reported that the rate of liquidation in 1980 had been considerably higher than in previous years.

88. During its review of the report of the Board of Auditors, the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters was provided with detailed information on action taken by UNHCR on matters raised by the Auditors and which have been reproduced in annex B of document A/AC.96/600.

#### Decision of the Committee

#### 89. The Executive Committee:

(a) Took note of the accounts for the year 1980 and the report of the Board of Auditors thereon (A/AC.96/591 and Corr.1);

(b) Took note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in respect of the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors on the financial reports and accounts of the voluntary funds administered by UNHCR for the year ended December 1980 (A/AC.96/591/Add.1 and Corr.1).

#### VIII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(Item 9 of the agenda)

90. Under this item, the Chairman proposed that the Committee, with effect from the thirty-third session, may wish to have before it an annotated agenda. He also proposed that it might be beneficial for the Committee to organize its agenda under four main items: General Debate, International Protection, Assistance Activities and Administrative and Financial Matters. These suggestions were adopted by the Committee.

ANNEX

Opening Statement by the United Nations High Commissioner  
for Refugees to the Executive Committee of the High  
Commissioner's programme at its thirty-second session  
on 12 October 1981

1. Mr. Chairman, I would like, first of all, to extend to you and your distinguished colleagues, the Vice President and the Rapporteur, my hearty congratulations on your election. Your experience, ability and commitment will be of great value to the deliberations of this Committee.
2. May I also introduce my new Deputy, Mr. William Richard Smyser, who joins us after a distinguished career as diplomat and scholar. Most recently, Mr. Smyser directed the Refugee Programme of the United States Department of State. We are glad to give him a warm welcome.
3. Mr. Chairman, the year that is drawing to a close marks the thirtieth anniversary of UNHCR. It is perhaps worth recalling that this Office was originally set up in 1951 for a period of three years. The sense of perseverance that must characterize people dealing with problems of human beings already prompted the first High Commissioner, Mr. van Heuven Goedhart, to say the following in his inaugural speech to the Third Committee of the General Assembly: "... I submit that the refugee problem is by no means a dead problem, that it is not even a dying problem, but a living problem, and I further submit that the only true solution to the refugee problem is world peace in the true sense of the term ...". Sadly the age in which we live is one of conflict and violent change. It is a long while since this Office had no more than one major crisis to handle at a time. These last years, we have witnessed everywhere emergency situations requiring prompt and large-scale interventions. Far from phasing out, the responsibilities of UNHCR have grown over the decades and the Office has been obliged to assume burdens of dimensions unforeseen by the founding fathers. The ability of national and international humanitarian aid to meet the refugee needs fully is challenged daily; the plight of masses of mostly destitute people is a problem of increasing universal concern.
4. Never has this growth of UNHCR commitment been as drastic as during the past five years. The volume of material assistance is a good indicator - although by no means the only one - of the dramatic trend. At this juncture, I would like to share with you the way I see UNHCR involvement, its evolution during these last few years of heavy demands, its main characteristics, its aims and its limits.
5. In 1977, for the first time, UNHCR's annual budget exceeded \$100 million, a trend that was confirmed in 1978. In 1979, the figure had more than doubled and again it doubled in 1980 to exceed \$500 million. I am relieved to see that such sharp annual increases are not recurring: this year even some decrease is expected as also for 1982. Since refugees are victims of world events beyond our control, only time will tell whether, indeed, the upward trend has been reversed, or at least the global situation somewhat stabilized.



6. As all of us know, UNHCR's expanded commitments resulted directly from the great increase in the number of refugees during the past several years. Crises in various areas in Africa and Asia caused millions to take to flight. It was the responsibility of this Office to assist them. UNHCR's expanded commitment, however, was brought about not only by the sheer increase of refugee numbers but - as I have recalled during previous sessions - by a broadening of my Office's concerns. Indeed, the international community, particularly through the United Nations General Assembly, has empirically and progressively assigned new tasks to UNHCR in successive resolutions. The concept of good offices, the initial rehabilitation of returnees in their homelands after large-scale voluntary repatriation, responsibilities for persons displaced as a result of conflicts or radical man-made changes in their countries, have led to UNHCR's involvement in a wide range of situations. The increasing magnitude and complexity of situations affecting persons of concern to UNHCR have called for clearer definition of the nature, the modalities and the limits of our material assistance, and the conditions for phasing out. In the face of these questions, of both an institutional and of a practical nature, I shared our points of view earlier this year with members of this Committee, through a paper called "Guidelines for UNHCR activities". Without repeating the contents of this paper, I would like - instead of proceeding to our usual "tour d'horizon" of the main world refugee situations - to take specific examples, which will illustrate our thinking. I shall turn first to operations where relief assistance or care and maintenance remain the predominant aspects, then to situations where durable solutions can be achieved.

7. We have given considerable thought to the degree of UNHCR's involvement in long-term material assistance. UNHCR's mandate suggests that relief assistance should lead to some form of durable solution as soon as possible. We have found, however, that this is not always feasible. We cannot, and the international community cannot, in good conscience cease supporting refugees who still need assistance. Thus, UNHCR finds itself embarked on relief programmes of long duration and often of considerable magnitude.

8. Mr. Chairman, one example of such a situation is Pakistan, from where I returned two weeks ago. The Afghan refugees in Pakistan are among the largest concentrations of uprooted people in the world. Assistance in the form of tents, food, quilts, medical care and other commodities and services is distributed to some 1.7 million persons. It was certainly a moving experience to meet the refugees in their tented villages or traditional houses in the desert or at the foot of huge barren mountains - all eagerly expressing their wish to return to their homeland when circumstances permit. They are received with hospitality by the Pakistan authorities and by the local population, notwithstanding the fact that they compete for limited water, for pasture land, for employment opportunities. The two provinces where they are - North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan - must face their own considerable development problems. One of the many refugee villages is the second largest town of Baluchistan, after the provincial capital. What can these refugees do? A few find wage-earning activities, some are trained in carpet-weaving or cottage industries, some practise crafts and small trades, some draw meagre resources from the land. But for the great majority, the only answer for the time being is to rely on care and maintenance. The Pakistan authorities themselves are making considerable efforts to assist this group. The support of the United Nations system - notably the World Food Programme - has been enlisted, as well as that of voluntary agencies; UNHCR, however, in its humanitarian task, is faced with a heavy and costly operation.

9. If we change continents we find some similar characteristics in Somalia. The energetic multipurpose measures initiated by the international community and co-ordinated by my Office to complement the Government's own efforts in favour of the refugees are now bearing fruit. Such is the case regarding food distribution to the some 35 existing refugee camps. Water supply has improved, as has the general health condition of the populations concerned. The decisive role of the 28 voluntary agencies involving some 350 people can hardly be overemphasized. The situation constitutes a strong challenge for the authorities and people, who have shown great generosity and sense of fellowship, and for the international community. Djibouti, to which I have often referred, is another example of a long-term relief operation, in a country of scarce resources that has generously opened its doors to a number of refugees that make up 14 per cent of the country's population.

10. In northern Latin America, where the largest refugee problem is that of Salvadorians, care and maintenance pending durable solutions has been a necessary temporary answer for the refugees - who sometimes arrive in a most destitute condition - in Belize, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama.

11. Even if it often seems that there is a long way to go to reach durable solutions, we never give up hope. Relief is necessary, sometimes over years, but it remains a temporary palliative measure. Fortunately, if we turn to durable solutions, the final objective of all UNHCR material assistance, there is a wide range of positive experience to recount. The best solution, voluntary repatriation, has taken place these last few years all over the world: 200 Burmese returned to their country from Bangladesh as from 1978; also in 1978, repatriation started for 150,000 Zairian refugees from Angola; conversely in 1979, UNHCR assisted in the return home from Zaïre of some 50,000 Angolan refugees; the same year, 100,000 Nicaraguan refugees repatriated from Costa Rica and Honduras; in 1979 and 1980, refugees returned to Democratic Kampuchea, Uganda and Equatorial Guinea, and received basic assistance. Today, repatriation is under way to the Lao People's Democratic Republic - some 599 persons so far - and negotiations are taking place in Thailand and in Phnom Penh to ensure the safe voluntary return and reintegration of further groups of Kampuchéans. The returnee movement to Ethiopia has been gaining momentum since last year and plans are in hand to expand the current returnee programme.

12. The most recently completed repatriation operation took place in Zimbabwe. As is well known by this Committee, UNHCR co-ordinated, at the request of the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a humanitarian assistance programme to provide for the initial settlement and rehabilitation of 660,000 persons. These included both returning refugees and persons who had been displaced within Zimbabwe itself and who, following independence, could go back to the homes they had had to abandon.

13. A UNHCR programme has now started for the return and initial rehabilitation of Chad nationals who were uprooted during disturbances in their country. At the request of the authorities and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a number of persons internally displaced, who have returned to the capital, will be included among the beneficiaries. This is the most rational formula, as in practice it would hardly be possible to differentiate between the two groups, the former refugees and the internally displaced.

14. In the Zimbabwe and Chad programmes, UNHCR has been guided by two important considerations. Firstly, the limitation of the programmes in time and scope. Secondly, the inclusion of assistance to internally displaced persons, in addition to a sizeable programme for returnees: it obviously appears more rational for the United Nations system to mobilize the efforts of one single organization for a whole group of persons - returnees and internally displaced - in similar predicaments, and in similar locations.

15. This rapid review of repatriation programmes testifies that, in the dynamics of refugee problems, strong forces work in the direction of dignified, durable solutions. It shows that one fundamental right, of which nobody can deprive a refugee - the right to hope - is not a void and meaningless concept.

16. Let me emphasize that, short of a substantial programme for refugees, externally displaced persons or returnees, in any one country, UNHCR as a rule does not engage in assistance to internally displaced persons. Indeed, on a few occasions when I have been approached, I have declined to engage in operations geared almost exclusively towards internally displaced persons. This applies all the more when the main cause for internal uprooting is a disaster which is not man-made.

17. Unless or until voluntary repatriation can take place, local integration in the first asylum country is the best solution. This is no easy task, especially if one considers that the majority of refugees in the world are in developing countries, often in the group of the least developed. However, here again, there are encouraging examples which make the national and international efforts a highly worthwhile proposition.

18. Just over a month ago I was in China, a country that has received some 265,000 refugees, where most of them are on the road towards integration, thanks to far-reaching efforts by the authorities, supported by the international community. While the majority of the refugees are being resettled in the countryside on State farms, we visited another most interesting type of settlement in the Kuangsi Autonomous Region. Near the town of Beihai, some 11,000 refugee fishermen are being helped to self-sufficiency. The authorities, partly with UNHCR support, are providing the refugees with housing in apartment blocks, with a hospital and a school and with the necessary means to continue their traditional activity: fishing boats are being repaired, new boats are provided as necessary, as well as a number of trawlers for fishing on the high seas. Some refugees have attained self-sufficiency and no longer need international assistance, others are still in the process of becoming self-sufficient. Except for some 50 persons seeking family reunion with relatives abroad, the numerous refugees with whom I was able to talk expressed gratitude and the wish to remain where they are.

19. In the Sudan, a country that has received some half a million refugees, major emphasis is laid, within the UNHCR programme, on local integration of refugees in rural or suburban areas. Progress is currently under way, affecting over 100,000 refugees in organized settlements.

20. In the United Republic of Tanzania, large numbers of refugees have settled and have become productive farmers; as a highly welcome development, 36,000 have been naturalized.

21. In these and other countries, numerous elements have been combined to achieve durable solutions for the refugees: the Governments' contributions, including land, existing infrastructure and services; the operational and managerial know-how of Governments; the contributions made UNHCR and by the United Nations system; the impressive and fruitful efforts of non-governmental organizations. Similar integration projects have been or are being pursued in Botswana, Burundi, Lesotho, Rwanda, Uganda, Zaire and Zambia. Local integration projects are also implemented for sizeable groups in northern Latin America.

22. The other durable solution being pursued is resettlement to third countries. The resettlement of Indo-Chinese refugees, particularly, has been marked by considerable progress over the past four years. To date, some 700,000 persons have been resettled abroad. Of this number, over 400,000 are boat people.

23. Results in terms of durable solutions, in the form of voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement, are thus encouraging. They pose the problem of how best to phase out UNHCR assistance. Help should normally cease once refugees have attained self-sufficiency. However, to reach the stage of self-sufficiency, as well as to help speed relief to refugees, may require some measures that would normally be considered developmental in character, such as digging wells to provide water in areas where there has been virtually no development. The principle behind our action is to assist the refugees as quickly and effectively as possible. We see to it that assistance is limited in scope, with a double objective in mind: to bring the refugees to a level of self-sufficiency comparable to that of the local population, and to enable them to participate in the social and economic life of the host country. It is then that we consider that UNHCR's role in terms of material assistance is at an end. We are, therefore, encouraging Governments, at an early stage of the integration process, to include and harmonize refugee programmes in their national development plans. Thus, UNHCR's programmes as such will constitute the basis for subsequent action within the wider framework of development. Further relevant measures on behalf of the refugees will become, as far as international assistance is concerned, the responsibility of other appropriate bilateral and multilateral aid agencies.

24. Mr. Chairman, in facing our task, we have been endeavouring to adhere to a number of guiding principles in which we firmly believe, as they have become an inherent part of our thinking. Above all, while making every effort to avoid eluding our responsibilities, and while fully appreciating the legitimate claims from developing countries for substantial international assistance to face large-scale refugee problems on their soil, the volume of our programmes must be maintained at a reasonable level, wastage must be carefully avoided, the need to economize in a rational way must prevail. Efficiency is part of the answer.

25. In seeking to attain these goals, we appreciate that numerous resources outside UNHCR - in terms of funds, competent staff and equipment - can be mobilized at international level. We are aware of the views expressed in many quarters - notably in the Economic and Social Council - for streamlining interagency co-operation, ensuring complementarity and avoiding duplication. The co-operation of the various agencies and programmes of the United Nations system has proved very valuable in this respect. Our partnership with the World Food Programme is a model example. Many other organizations join in the effort in their respective fields of competence. Our co-operation with the non-governmental organizations is also a source of constant encouragement to my Office. Whether they act as operational

partners, donors or technical advisers, their contributions to improve the refugees' plight is of immense importance. The Consultation between the non-governmental organizations and UNHCR, which took place here at Geneva in May of this year, was a great step forward in our continuing efforts to strengthen our links and co-ordinate our tasks. Over 125 voluntary agencies participated in this historic meeting, which is now being followed up actively.

26. To mobilize resources for great humanitarian causes of a much larger scope than UNHCR can reasonably include in its own programmes, there may be major events evoking vigorous responses. We all remember that in May 1979 a Conference on the Situation of Refugees in Africa was held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania. In close co-operation with OAU, we continue to follow up actively on the far-reaching recommendations then made and endorsed that year by the OAU Council of Ministers in Monrovia, in the spirit of international solidarity and burden-sharing that prevailed throughout the meeting and came out as forceful principles for future action.

27. This year, on 9 and 10 April, the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA) gathered some 100 countries. The international community rose to the occasion and showed its will to help solve the plight of some 5 million refugees in Africa, by arousing world-wide interest and support and pledging \$US 572 million. Of this amount, a total of \$443 million has been specifically indicated by donors to be channelled to various organizations, which include the World Food Programme, UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross and UNHCR. The efforts of the three conveners of ICARA, namely, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and my Office, have thus helped to lay a solid base for coming to grips with the urgent needs of nearly a score of African countries struggling under the burden of uprooted people.

28. There are other world-wide efforts, aimed at specific categories of vulnerable people, such as women or the disabled. In these cases, we endeavour to mobilize and organize support directed at the refugees. Following last year's World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, I have appointed a focal point for activities relating to refugee women charged with the responsibility of assisting in the development and co-ordination of programmes for their benefit. I have also asked the UNHCR field offices to ensure involvement of women refugees in the administration and management of refugee centres, encourage Governments to compile data on the number and needs of women refugees, especially women heads of families, single women without support and others in need of special care. Attention is given to closer co-operation with Governments in extending necessary protection against violence to women refugees and measures are taken to promote programmes for enhancing the training, as well as social and economic potential of refugee women.

29. As regards the disabled, I would say that being a refugee is in itself a handicap. When refugees suffer from a physical or mental disability, they are doubly handicapped. They often constitute the so-called "residual caseload". In view of the increasing number of disabled refugees warranting development of a special programme on their behalf, and as a measure of UNHCR participation in and support to the International Year of Disabled Persons, my Office has taken steps to institute a systematic solution-oriented identification of physically and mentally

disabled refugees. It has also been possible to establish some special country and regional projects for their benefit. Likewise, I made a special appeal last August to a number of countries to give particular consideration to accepting a larger number of refugees in need of resettlement.

30. Mr. Chairman, UNHCR remains a tool at the hub of world-wide efforts and expectations. In order to implement efficient and economic programmes, we must also look at ourselves, and avoid complacency. I have had numerous opportunities in the past, during our formal and informal meetings, to explain the steps we are taking to keep pace with developments, to improve our delivery capacity, to keep our progress and our procedures under close scrutiny. A few words will suffice today - on one specific aspect - just to show our continuing and active concern.

31. Special attention has been given this year to how best we can meet emergency situations. Details of our progress appear in a background paper (EC/SC.2/2 of 26 August 1981) prepared for the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters. We hope that the UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies will indeed provide the necessary guidance to UNHCR staff on all aspects of an emergency response. Drafted in close consultation with the competent organizations of the United Nations system, and with a number of experts, the Handbook - in a provisional form - is ready to stand the test of practice. The purpose of this Handbook is to enable UNHCR personnel anywhere to meet an emergency. Now that the Handbook is completed, the Emergency Unit will concentrate on making such changes as appear necessary and will, as before, stand ready to assist in actual response to specific emergencies.

32. In all the difficult periods we have faced, my Office has always had the privilege of enjoying the support of Governments, not only those represented here, but also Governments in the world at large, in response to specific situations or in the United Nations General Assembly and other important fora. Governments have, in most cases, received refugees with generosity. Refugees or returnees have been given land or employment opportunities, allowed to settle and share in available resources, however limited they may have been, and eventually reciprocate the hospitality by becoming useful and dignified citizens again.

33. I have also appreciated Governments' understanding of the increased nature of the increase in our programmes, and I have been deeply grateful for all efforts in securing the necessary funding. I shall not enter into details today: I only wish to voice a plea for the effort to be continued and strengthened where possible, in the face of the magnitude and worthiness of the needs. This is very relevant for the General Programmes in 1982, towards the financing of which we shall need substantial contributions at the UNHCR Pledging Conference, which will be held in New York on 20 November this year.

34. The extension of the Office's action to different areas of the world and to a variety of different refugee problems, with the corresponding increase in the material assistance programme, should not detract attention from the Office's basic task to extend international protection to refugees. Events since the last Executive Committee have once again confirmed that the effective exercise of this function is indeed an essential necessity. There have, of course, been some encouraging developments, especially as regards further accessions to the basic international refugee instruments and an increasing awareness on the part of Governments and of public opinion of the importance of ensuring that refugees are treated in accordance with basic minimum standards. On the other hand, in many

areas of the world there are still cases in which refugees are refused asylum, are forcibly returned to their country of origin in disregard of the principles of non-refoulement and are the victims of arbitrary detention, acts of violence and piracy attacks. I am confident that these grave humanitarian problems will receive the full attention of the Executive Committee and that efforts to find the necessary remedies will receive the Committee's unqualified support.

35. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would say that the principles that have guided my Office during the past few years of refugee crises are simple to state but more difficult to apply: to help those who are our concern; to help them quickly and in such a way that they can preserve themselves and their way of life; to try, when possible, to reduce and phase out our assistance; and, where necessary, to assist refugees either in returning to their former lives or in moving to new ones. We play our role in conjunction with other elements of the United Nations and of the international community.

36. We warmly welcome the advice, commitment and guidance of the members of the Executive Committee on these principles and on how best to apply them. They are reflected in the documents placed before the Executive Committee at this session. A fruitful and constructive dialogue can only benefit the refugees.

37. Even as we engage in such a dialogue, we must keep in mind that each refugee situation is unique. Therefore, our principles must be adapted to each situation in different ways, and our doctrine must be constantly applied by new and different methods.

38. The efforts of the international community, through this Office and through this Executive Committee, have borne and are bearing fruit. Millions who were in distress have been given the opportunity to rebuild their existence. Lives have been saved. There is an old saying, which reminds us that even the longest journey begins with a first step. All of us here are responsible at least for enabling each refugee to take a first step in the right direction, in his, or her, journey towards a restored dignity.

-----

---

### كيفية الحصول على منشورات الأمم المتحدة

يمكن الحصول على منشورات الأمم المتحدة من المكتبات ودور التوزيع في جميع أنحاء العالم. استعلم عنها من المكتبة التي تتعامل معها أو اكتب إلى : الأمم المتحدة، قسم البيع في نيويورك أو في جنيف.

#### 如何购取联合国出版物

联合国出版物在全世界各地的书店和经售处均有发售。请向书店询问或写信到纽约或日内瓦的联合国销售组。

#### HOW TO OBTAIN UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS

United Nations publications may be obtained from bookstores and distributors throughout the world. Consult your bookstore or write to: United Nations, Sales Section, New York or Geneva.

#### COMMENT SE PROCURER LES PUBLICATIONS DES NATIONS UNIES

Les publications des Nations Unies sont en vente dans les librairies et les agences dépositaires du monde entier. Informez-vous auprès de votre libraire ou adressez-vous à : Nations Unies, Section des ventes, New York ou Genève.

#### КАК ПОЛУЧИТЬ ИЗДАНИЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ

Издания Организации Объединенных Наций можно купить в книжных магазинах и агентствах во всех районах мира. Наводите справки об изданиях в вашем книжном магазине или пишите по адресу: Организация Объединенных Наций, Секция по продаже изданий, Нью-Йорк или Женева.

#### COMO CONSEGUIR PUBLICACIONES DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS

Las publicaciones de las Naciones Unidas están en venta en librerías y casas distribuidoras en todas partes del mundo. Consulte a su librero o diríjase a: Naciones Unidas, Sección de Ventas, Nueva York o Ginebra.

---