



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/36/316
11 June 1981

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-sixth session
Item 83 (b) of the preliminary list*

OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

* A/36/50.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 1980/55 of 24 July 1980, the Economic and Social Council, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to consult with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity on appropriate ways and means of convening an international pledging conference for refugees in Africa and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session on the progress of his consultations. The report of the Secretary-General (A/35/606) was submitted to the Assembly accordingly.

2. On 25 November 1980, the General Assembly adopted resolution 35/42, entitled "International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa", the operative part of which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

. . .

"1. Notes with profound regret that the international community has not given sufficient attention to the plight of refugees in Africa;

"2. Requests, consequently, the international community to contribute substantially to programmes designed to help those refugees;

"3. Approves the report of the Secretary-General calling for an international conference to mobilize assistance for refugees in Africa, as well as the measures proposed for a concerted programme of information and publicity by the relevant bodies of the United Nations system in support of the conference;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General, in close co-operation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to convene at Geneva on 9 and 10 April 1981 at the ministerial level, an International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa;

"5. Further requests the Secretary-General in the process of preparing for the Conference, and in close co-operation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to assist the concerned African countries in identifying priorities and preparing necessary documents and programmes for assistance to African refugees;

"6. Authorizes the Secretary-General to meet the expenses for organization of the Conference under the regular budget of the United Nations;

"7. Appeals to the international community, all Member States, the specialized agencies, regional and intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to provide the utmost support for the Conference with a view to offering maximum financial and material assistance to refugees in Africa;

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"8. Further appeals to the international community to provide all necessary assistance to the countries of asylum to enable them to strengthen their capacity to provide the necessary facilities and services essential to the care and well-being of the refugees and to assist the countries of origin in the rehabilitation of genuine voluntary returnees.

"9. Urges the international community to continue to support the annual programmes of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and of other United Nations agencies co-operating with the High Commissioner on behalf of refugees in Africa;

"10. Requests the High Commissioner, in close co-operation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of the African Unity, to keep under constant review the situation of refugees in Africa in order to ensure maximum international assistance on a global basis;

"11. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty sixth session and to the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1981 on the implementation of the present resolution."

3. The objectives of the Conference, as stated in the Secretary-General's report and approved by the General Assembly, were as follows:

- (a) To focus public attention on the plight of refugees in Africa;
- (b) To mobilize additional resources for refugee programmes in Africa;

(c) To assist countries of asylum adversely affected by the large-scale presence of refugees to obtain international assistance for projects aimed at strengthening the ability of those countries to carry the extra burden placed on their services and facilities.

II. PREPARATORY WORK FOR THE CONFERENCE

A. Programme of information and publicity

4. One of the most important purposes of the Conference was to increase international awareness of the plight and needs of refugees in Africa. Towards this purpose a concerted programme of information and publicity was undertaken by the relevant bodies of the United Nations system in support of the Conference. While the public information services of UNHCR took the lead in publicizing the cause of African refugees, the entire United Nations system was invited to contribute to the common effort. Since the aim was also to mobilize effective international coverage, it was necessary to undertake public information activities in donor countries, particularly where the cause had been less publicized.

5. The information unit of the Conference together with the public information section of UNHCR and those of the United Nations system, were able to generate a considerable amount of material, thus making it possible to reach the international news media both effectively and successfully.

6. In addition to printed materials, including a press kit, effective use was made of visual aids, such as special photo exhibits, posters and films.
7. As part of the concerted effort to place the Conference on the television screens and front pages of major international newspapers, two itinerant seminars for journalists were organized. Each seminar took over 15 journalists to areas in Africa where refugee situations had reached crucial proportions.
8. A special effort was made to reach the general public through enhanced contacts with the community of non-governmental organizations. At Geneva the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) co-ordinated support among such organizations for the Conference. A special brochure describing in detail the activities of voluntary agencies on behalf of African refugees, entitled "Assistance to African Refugees by Voluntary Organizations", was produced by ICVA with a subsidy from UNHCR.
9. The Conference itself witnessed the culmination of the information effort; the combined public information resources of the United Nations Office at Geneva and UNHCR were put at the disposal of the Conference. This included general briefing of journalists, press conferences, distribution of materials on the Conference and provision of services for the large number of international media representatives present during the Conference. The information campaign proved a vital component of the over-all effort and succeeded in focusing world attention on the plight of African refugees.

B. Mobilization of assistance

10. In response to General Assembly resolution 35/42, UNHCR assisted the African countries concerned in preparing necessary documents and programmes for assistance to refugees in their respective countries. A document entitled "The Refugee Situation in Africa: Assistance Measures Proposed", containing all proposals made by Governments for additional humanitarian and infrastructure assistance, was assembled by the Conference secretariat and served as the principal document for the Conference. These proposals called for assistance totalling \$893,126,792.00.
11. As part of the general effort of mobilizing support for the Conference, representatives of the Secretary-General, OAU and UNHCR held several joint meetings with regional groups at Geneva. Meetings were also organized with representatives of the United Nations system and of non-governmental organizations. In addition, joint missions were sent to various donor countries in the Far East, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Africa and North and South America.

III. PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

12. In accordance with criteria approved by the General Assembly, invitations to participate in the Conference were extended to 131 States.

13. The Conference met at the Palais des Nations at Geneva on 9 and 10 April 1981. The following 99 States participated in the Conference:

Algeria	Madagascar
Angola	Malawi
Argentina	Malaysia
Australia	Mali
Austria	Mexico
Bangladesh	Morocco
Belgium	Mozambique
Botswana	Netherlands
Brazil	New Zealand
Burundi	Nicaragua
Canada	Nigeria
Central African Republic	Norway
Chile	Oman
China	Pakistan
Colombia	Peru
Congo	Philippines
Cuba	Portugal
Cyprus	Qatar
Denmark	Republic of Korea
Djibouti	Rwanda
Dominican Republic	Saudi Arabia
Ecuador	Senegal
Egypt	Sierra Leone
Ethiopia	Singapore
Finland	Somalia
France	Spain
Gabon	Sudan
Gambia	Swaziland
Germany, Federal Republic of	Sweden
Ghana	Switzerland
Greece	Syrian Arab Republic
Holy See	Thailand
Iceland	Togo
India	Trinidad and Tobago
Indonesia	Tunisia
Iran	Turkey
Iraq	Uganda
Ireland	United Arab Emirates
Israel	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Italy	United Republic of Cameroon
Ivory Coast	United Republic of Tanzania
Jamaica	United States of America
Japan	Upper Volta
Jordan	Venezuela
Kuwait	Viet Nam
Lebanon	Yugoslavia
Lesotho	Zaire
Liberia	Zambia
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Zimbabwe
Luxembourg	

In addition, over 120 governmental and non-governmental organizations attended the Conference as observers.

A. Opening statements

1. Statement by the Secretary-General

14. Opening the Conference on 9 April, the Secretary-General said that the number of refugees in that continent had been growing alarmingly and their suffering had increased correspondingly.

15. In 1970, there were about 750,000 refugees in Africa, in 1980 there were around 5,000,000. That was a staggering increase and most of it had taken place in the past two years. Africans now accounted for more than half of the total world refugee population, the Secretary-General said.

16. In Africa, as elsewhere, the Secretary-General stated, refugees were for the most part innocent victims of circumstances beyond their control. Whatever the reason that caused them to flee - whether persecution, social upheaval, war or famine - human compassion demanded that they be given all possible help. The call for that help became even more compelling, given the fact that African Governments had consistently opened their doors and offered hospitality to those seeking asylum.

17. The Secretary-General said that the situation in Africa commanded special sympathy because four out of the five million refugees were being sheltered in 18 African countries, the majority of which were among the least developed in the world. The resources of those countries could barely sustain their own populations. It was, therefore, not difficult to imagine the social and economic impact caused by the arrival of tens or even hundreds of thousands of uprooted people in a state of total destitution.

18. International programmes presently directed to solving their emergency needs covered only the tip of the iceberg, the Secretary-General said. The pressures created by the influx were felt throughout the economy: in employment, housing, transportation and in basic health and education services. That less publicized but much larger part of the refugee burden was quite disproportionate to the resources available to the countries of asylum.

19. The African refugee problem must be viewed in its totality, he said. The first priority must be to meet the immediate life-sustaining needs of refugees. But beyond the immediate needs of food, medicine and shelter was the essential requirement of providing adequate living conditions for those large numbers of people. In addition, resettlement programmes for refugees or returnees must be fully supported, otherwise, the refugee problem would be merely perpetuated.

2. Statement by the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity

20. Mr. Siaka Stevens, President of Sierra Leone and Chairman of OAU, said that the Conference would go down as the moment in history when the world community unanimously decided to focus full attention on the plight of African refugees.

21. One of the root causes of the refugee problem, he said, was the persistence of racial discrimination and subjugation in South Africa and Namibia; another was intra-African conflicts. Sixty per cent of the African refugees were women and children and the aged, President Stevens said.

22. The sight of the hungry, thirsty and sick scattered in camps all over Africa was indeed enough to convince one that the problem of refugees had now reached such crisis proportions that urgent and adequate assistance of the entire international community was needed to supplement the already extremely generous sacrifices being made by the African countries affected.

23. Initiatives for solving the problem must be African inspired, the Chairman stated. But the economic and trade realities of the present time impaired the ability of many African countries to meet their total food needs. In those circumstances, the convening of the Conference was timely and necessary.

24. Measures and programmes for refugees, in his view, should take cognizance of two important factors, namely, the hardships suffered by the refugees themselves and the burden imposed on the host countries by the presence of a refugee population.

25. The assistance of the world community should aim initially at meeting the basic needs of refugees as a means of offsetting the undue hardships suffered by them. Secondly, it should aim at helping them to help themselves, particularly in cases where repatriation could no longer be envisaged. Refugees should not be assisted in ways which would create conditions of overdependence, he said. Rather, they should be guided and enabled to become self-supporting as quickly as possible.

3. Statement by the President of the General Assembly

26. In his statement the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Rüdiger von Wechmar, said that his participation in the Conference was meant to emphasize the paramount interest the international community was taking in the plight of millions of refugees in Africa, a region of the world that by numerous circumstances was suffering more heavily from natural and human-caused afflictions than other areas of the planet. Droughts, famine and scourges of mankind continued to hold sway over the people of Africa, he stated.

27. He said that the international community had so far responded to those tragedies by increasing relief action providing assistance to people in dire need and to States that received refugees.

28. But those efforts were not enough, he said; the need by far exceeded available means. It was the task of the Conference to make the desperate call of its African brothers heard throughout the world.

4. Statement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

29. In his statement the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Poul Hartling, said that Africa had indeed more refugees than any other continent and that African countries had granted them refuge and shared their resources with them.

30. The number of refugees had grown immensely, and so had their needs. There seemed to be no respite. The problem, in many aspects, had grown more complex, he said, because the refugees had in most cases sought asylum in countries where development problems were the most pressing.

31. Traditional African hospitality was being strained to the extreme as large numbers of refugees drew on limited resources. The efforts of the African countries must evoke a vigorous response from the international community, and the Conference offered a unique opportunity to bind efforts together, the High Commissioner said.

32. The situation, although critical, was by no means hopeless. Indeed, throughout 20 years of close co-operation between African Governments and UNHCR, large numbers of refugees had found a solution to their plight after an initial period of assistance.

33. Over one and a half million had returned of their own free will to their home countries. They ceased to be refugees and were now free citizens and leaders. When repatriation had proved impossible, durable solutions in the form of local integration had been pursued, he said.

34. The many activities launched over the years must be pursued and amplified, the High Commissioner said. Large-scale relief operations were necessary and imperative. But relief was not a dignified solution for a refugee, whose individual aspiration went far beyond that situation of dependence. The basic objective was the satisfactory integration of the refugee.

35. The High Commissioner called on all participants in the Conference to join forces to focus world attention and to mobilize resources. The terms of the pleas addressed to the world were strong in their simplicity: give the refugees a new life and a new dignity and give the countries of asylum, in support and acknowledgement of their efforts, the resources commensurate with the considerable burden they had to bear.

B. Election of the President

36. At its first meeting, on 9 April 1981, following a proposal by the Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone, supported by the Minister of Internal Affairs of the

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Sudan, the Conference elected by acclamation Mr. Kurt Waldheim, Secretary-General of the United Nations, as its President. It was also decided that in the performance of his duties the President would be assisted by the Secretary-General of OAU and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

C. Organization of work

37. At the same meeting, the Conference decided upon the organization of work and, inter alia, agreed that the formal conclusion of the Conference would be the summing up of the President and that therefore no resolutions or motions would be considered in order.

D. General debate

38. In the course of the debate the representatives of the following States took the floor: Netherlands, Nigeria, United States of America, Egypt, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, Zaire, Switzerland, Canada, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, Finland, Singapore, Swaziland, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Sweden, China, Japan, Lesotho, Norway, Burundi, United Republic of Cameroon, Spain, Ghana, Australia, Zambia, Italy, Morocco, Pakistan, Algeria, Thailand, Turkey, Somalia, Iran, Oman, Uganda, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, United Republic of Tanzania, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Argentina, Yugoslavia, Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Mozambique, Angola, Senegal and Viet Nam.

39. During the course of their statements, several Governments announced financial contributions totalling \$560 million towards alleviating the sufferings of the refugees in Africa. The Chairman of the African Group, Mr. O. Birido of the Sudan, made a statement opposing the extension of the invitation to Israel to participate in the Conference. Details of contributions pledged at the Conference are contained in annex I. The Chairman of the African Group made a further statement on behalf of the African States (annex II) in connexion with the mobilization of assistance for refugees.

IV. CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

40. At the end of the debate, the President made the following statement summarizing the conclusions of the Conference:

"1. We have heard the last speaker and are now about to conclude our Conference. At this time I should like to sum up and evaluate the results of our work.

"2. In doing so let me recall that our three basic purposes were to focus attention on the plight of refugees in Africa, to mobilize additional resources for their help and to assist the countries of asylum in bearing

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the tremendous burden imposed on them by the massive flood of refugees. I am happy to say that we have made major strides on all three fronts. There can be no doubt that we have significantly raised the threshold of world consciousness about the magnitude of the refugee problem in Africa. The world now clearly recognizes that one half of the entire world refugee population is to be found on the African continent, that 5 million homeless persons are living in conditions of destitution and that a small number of host countries, who are themselves economically disadvantaged, are bearing the greatest share of the burden. Evidence of this may be found in the fact that representatives of 99 Governments assembled here to concentrate on this one great problem. We have also had excellent representation by numerous non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations and of the world's information media. Both the extent and the level of participation have been most gratifying. In this regard, I wish again to express my appreciation to His Excellency, the President of Sierra Leone and Head of OAU for joining with us. I also extend my thanks to the many members of Governments and other distinguished representatives who assembled here from nearly all parts of the world to join in this important endeavour.

"3. I am grateful that so many delegates have taken the floor in a spirit of co-operation and generosity. This leads me to our second accomplishment, which was the mobilization of additional resources to cover the immediate and short-term needs of the African refugees.

"4. Over the past two days we have heard many welcome statements of support. As you will have noticed, various types of contributions were pledged. It is, therefore, not possible immediately to correlate the different forms and terms of aid which were announced precisely with the format presented in the conference document. A more thorough analysis and follow-up clarifications with some donors will be required before a final report can be completed. Nevertheless, even now we can point with considerable satisfaction to the following accomplishments:

"(a) Pledges announced but not specified: \$451.9 million;

"(b) Pledges announced to ongoing United Nations programmes and to the Conference: \$66.9 million;

"(c) Indications of bilateral assistance: \$41.1 million.

"5. Turning to the non-governmental organizations, I should like to pay special tribute to their important work. With the massive expansion of the refugee problems in Africa, their partnership with UNHCR, the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and the OAU has reached new and unprecedented dimensions. The presence of over 120 non-governmental organizations at this Conference clearly demonstrates their deep concern. They have asked me to give this Conference an assurance that they will continue to commit their maximum resources in terms of funds, supplies and personnel in our common task of alleviating the plight of African refugees.

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"6. Looking at the total picture, I am happy to report that, taking into consideration all pledges, the Conference has realized approximately 560 million dollars in response to the urgent needs of Africa. One may conclude, therefore, that the major immediate priority requirements will be met and that a solid base has been laid for the development of the necessary support to accommodate the longer-term needs involved.

"7. The Conference has also provided an opportunity for the international community to express its appreciation of the approach to the problem by the African countries of asylum. This is true both with regard to their material contribution and their adherence to the spirit of the Arusha recommendation that the refugee problem in Africa should be solved within Africa. In this connexion, many speakers have based their hope for the future on the positive lessons of the past. Indeed, the eminent role of voluntary repatriation as a durable solution to the problem has repeatedly been underlined. Also many statements have noted with appreciation Africa's respect for the principle of the 1969 OAU Convention that the granting of asylum is a peaceful and humanitarian act. Adherence to this Convention and other conventions covering the status of refugees will greatly help to promote the self-sufficiency of refugees through various local integration programmes.

"8. It is also significant that some of the statements made involved important commitments toward seeking a fundamental solution of the problem. We did not gather here to deal with the root causes, but they are very much on our mind. We are keenly aware of the fact that the refugee problem cannot be resolved unless the political and economic reasons which created it are effectively dealt with.

"9. This Conference has also reconfirmed the central role of OAU and its member States in pursuit of basic remedies to the problem. There was welcome reaffirmation of support by the Conference of the leading role of the UNHCR, which, I am sure, will give the High Commissioner for Refugees and his colleagues great encouragement as they continue their important efforts to assist the refugees. In this connexion, I wish to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General of the OAU, and to the High Commissioner for Refugees for their effective co-operation in the preparation and conduct of this Conference.

"10. Many statements correctly recognized that a large share of the needs caused by the refugees also fall within the competence of other United Nations agencies. In some of those areas there is an urgent need, as recognized by the OAU Council of Ministers, for data and studies which will help to define priorities.

"11. Distinguished delegates, you have just heard the Chairman of the African Group read out an important statement, annexed hereto, containing constructive proposals. These merit careful consideration by all parties concerned in the humanitarian spirit that has pervaded the Conference.

"12. I believe I also correctly reflect the consensus of this meeting in expressing the view that all relevant international agencies should give higher priority to the African refugee problem giving due weight to the massive size and expense involved. It is a fortunate coincidence that next week a meeting of all Heads of United Nations agencies will be convened in Geneva under my chairmanship, and I shall not fail to communicate this conclusion to them.

"13. Given the enormity of the problem, I am sure we would all agree that despite the progress registered at this Conference, our efforts are far from complete. The problem of African refugees must be kept under active and continuing review. I have no doubt that the forthcoming meetings, of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly will give the necessary consideration to this topic. In addition, OAU and UNHCR must continue their active collaboration in consultation with the donor countries and other agencies and organizations both within and outside the United Nations system. All these efforts can only succeed, of course, if there is a continued readiness on the part of the international community to provide the necessary resources. An important part of our ongoing task, therefore, will be to continue to mobilize public opinion, building on the solid foundation of awareness created by our present Conference.

"14. Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. We came here to answer a cry for help from five million desperate human beings in Africa and from the countries giving them asylum. With your generous support we can now answer that appeal with a promise of commitment and of action. To the refugees we now say: 'The world is eminently aware of your plight. We stand ready to help. You will not be abandoned'.

"15. All of us in this room can take deep satisfaction in having joined together to send this message of hope."

41. As agreed by the Conference, the statement of the President formally concluded the proceedings.

ANNEX I

Total contributions announced at the Conference
(in cash or in kind) a/

(in United States dollars)

Algeria	300 000
Argentina	500 000
Australia	11 627 906
Belgium	2 492 754
Canada	18 823 529
China	1 000 000
Cyprus	3 000
Democratic Kampuchea	1 000
Denmark	9 090 909
Egypt	1 000 000
Finland	2 962 963
France	2 474 747
Germany, Federal Republic of	42 857 143
Ghana	50 000
Iceland	10 000
India	10 000
Indonesia	20 000
Italy	17 000 000
Japan	33 000 000
Lesotho	2 597
Luxembourg	17 390
Malawi	5 882
Malaysia	30 000
Netherlands	9 698 276
New Zealand	186 916
Nigeria	3 000 000
Norway	3 055 555
Pakistan	44 000
Philippines	10 000
Republic of Korea	20 000
Saudi Arabia	30 000 000
Sierra Leone	100 000
Singapore	10 000
Spain	1 000 000
Sweden	6 493 509
Switzerland	2 356 020

a/ All contributions converted into United States dollars at the official United Nations exchange rate for April 1981.

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Syrian Arab Republic	10 000
Thailand	10 000
Trinidad and Tobago	2 083
Tunisia	15 000
United Arab Emirates	2 000 000
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	13 863 636
United Republic of Tanzania	12 500
United States of America	283 400 000
Upper Volta	4 032
Yugoslavia	78 125
European Economic Community	68 000 000
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Total	566 649 472
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ANNEX II

Statement by the Chairman of the African Group
at the closing meeting of the Conference

1. In your opening statement you did underscore an idea which should be the backbone of our thinking. You stated that, and I quote:

"We must view the African refugee problem in its totality. Of course, the first priority must be to meet the immediate life-sustaining needs of refugees. But beyond the immediate needs of food, medicine and shelter is the essential requirement of providing adequate living conditions for these large numbers of people. In addition, resettlement programmes for refugees or returnees must be fully supported; otherwise, the refugee problem will be merely perpetuated."

2. If we try to translate this into action, then I think that, without prejudice to the competence of UNHCR and the responsibilities of the relevant legislative bodies of the United Nations, careful consideration had to be given to the following:

(a) UNHCR, whose action had been and is still very commendable, is the body that assumed primary responsibility for refugee protection and assistance. There is a need for UNHCR to maintain close liaison with other United Nations bodies and development-oriented organizations so that medium- and long-term assistance to refugees is not conceived on an ad hoc basis, nor assumed separately from ongoing development programmes.

(b) There is subsequently a need for all United Nations bodies to embark on having defined by their institutional organs the policies and programmes they should assume to contribute to refugee assistance in the African countries. Co-ordination of these policies and programmes is an obvious exercise which also requires careful attention.

(c) We suggest that the co-sponsors of this Conference make arrangements for an equitable and appropriate allocation of unearmarked funds contributed by the donors in response to this Conference for assistance to refugees in Africa.

3. During our meeting, it has been repeatedly stated and confirmed that this Conference is not an end per se, because the urgent refugee situation in Africa is likely to continue for some time to come. We should therefore consider this Conference as the initial stage of a long-term exercise. As part of the follow-up to the Conference, fact-finding missions, accurate data collection and feasibility studies are essential to help in defining the priorities and formulating projects whose impact on refugee situations could pave the way for more durable solutions. In addition, the impact of these activities should be the subject of continuous international review, including the possibility of holding further international conferences in the future.

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4. Turning to the much-required efficiency of our assistance programmes, and because of the urgency, magnitude and complexity of the refugee situation in Africa, we think that all international relief organizations need to consider enhancing their capacities and harmonizing their activities so that the greatest and most positive impact is brought to bear on the refugee situations.

5. As to the protection of refugees, we feel that this Conference should invite all States that had not done so to accede and adhere to the existing international covenants on refugees, namely the Geneva Convention of 1949, the 1951 Convention on Refugees and the 1967 Protocol pertaining thereto.

6. Finally we need to consider ways and means of instilling in our thinking the fact that it is better to prevent than to cure. Our action in favour of the refugees is a curative approach to the problem. The preventive approach would be not to allow this problem to become a permanent feature of the African social situation. Asylum-seeking in Africa should, therefore, become the subject-matter of research work and studies intended to pave the way for at least checking the present trend, if it is now impossible to reverse it.
