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STATEMENT BY SECRETARY-GENERAL DAG HAMMARSKJOLD
TO THE 1959 PLEDGING CONFERENCE FOR UN REFUGEE PROGRAMS

I have already had occasion to report that the World Refugee Year -- a purely humanitarian endeavor -- has begun auspiciously, but that most of the real work remains to be done. I can now tell you that 65 countries and five territories are participating -- a good omen indeed. As to the financial targets that have been set and the other ways that participants will contribute, I shall not anticipate what distinguished delegates will say today. I leave with you two key points for this stage of the Year. Firstly, if the various undertakings in progress or being considered are actually fulfilled, many refugees will find their problems solved and others will have been very greatly helped. Secondly, there are no grounds for complacency: if the World Refugee Year is really to be remembered as a helpful endeavor, it must be seen as a first and not a last effort pointing to a more effective and humane approach to refugee problems everywhere.

Very briefly the programs and financial requirements of the two United Nations agencies concerned with refugees are the following:

The mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees, as I think you all know, is global and extends to all refugees who meet the definitions of the statute of his Office with the exception of the Palestine refugees for whom the United Nations has created a special agency. The programs of assistance of the High Commissioner, however, are designed to meet the needs of special groups of refugees who require help over and above that normally available from countries of asylum and nongovernmental organizations.

Refugee emergencies have demonstrated again and again the wisdom of dealing rapidly with refugee problems as they arise. The current UNHCR programs are, on the whole, directed toward solving refugee problems which are still on the world's conscience today because of a lack of funds and a lack of interest in the past.

The High Commissioner has therefore, in accordance with the objectives of World Refugee Year and with the approval of his Executive Committee, prepared a program for 1960 which would enable him to solve the old refugee camp problem in Europe, to make an impact on many other programs, and at the same time to keep abreast of the continuing flow of new refugees which, happily, is fairly small.

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A program totalling 12 million dollars has been approved which will, if the target is reached, provide the funds needed to clear the camps in Europe of refugees who have been there for ten years or more, enable a start to be made toward solving the problem of the nonsettled refugees living out of camps in Europe, provide the amount needed by UNHCR to cover its share in solving the problems of refugees of European origin in the Far East and provide for the new refugees in Greece.

I must warn the Assembly, however, that this modest sum of \$12 million nevertheless represents a very considerable increase over normal receipts in past years. It is only the hopes that have been raised by World Refugee Year which have permitted planning on such a relatively ambitious scale, but a scale which is nevertheless lower than the needs indicate. In addition the cost of the assistance program for refugees from Algeria in Morocco and Tunisia is \$6 million, including \$3 million estimated value of donations and services in kind and \$3 million cash requirements.

Turning now to UNRWA, this Agency whose mandate has just been extended for three years by the General Assembly, has, as its first and, of necessity its most important task, the job of providing food, medical care, shelter, rudimentary welfare care and general education for upwards of a million Palestine refugees. This costs, at current prices, between \$33 and \$34 million a year.

Considering what is done, this is an amazingly low figure; in any event it represents the essentials of life to the refugees and an essential of stability to the Middle East, which is, of course, a prerequisite to a solution.

In addition, in response to the wishes of the refugees themselves, in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly and in harmony with the humanitarian aspects of the World Refugee year, UNRWA has a modest program of helping refugees to become self-supporting, mainly through more vocational training, improvements in its general education system, including especially more university scholarships, and a program of individual grants to help finance various small-scale agricultural and commercial enterprises. This is estimated to cost an additional \$4 to \$5 million in 1960 which brings UNRWA's total budget for 1960 to the figure of \$38.7 million.

In the past few years contributions to UNRWA have averaged between \$33 and \$34 million, a little more than enough, in the circumstances, for the minimum essentials. This must, of course, be continued. If UNRWA is to do what the General Assembly has asked it to do in the self-support field, however, additional contributions must be forthcoming and very soon. The Director of UNRWA has already

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expressed his intention to use any such funds received through WRY for this purpose. I certainly hope the response will be generous.

To sum up, the President has already told you that the General Assembly faces a responsibility which it should welcome. As I have tried to indicate, we are dealing with a situation in which, quite literally, money and the understanding and sympathy which should accompany it can work miracles. This surely is an opportunity to be seized by the members of this Organization, by the many non-governmental organizations already serving so ably, and by all of us as individuals who are concerned for the refugee and everything of which he is a symbol.

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