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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Assistance to student refugees in southern AfricaReport of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is being submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 42/138 of 7 December 1988, which, inter alia, requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in co-operation with the Secretary-General, to continue to organize and implement an effective programme of educational assistance for student refugees from South Africa and Namibia who have been granted asylum in Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-third session on the implementation thereof. The report covers the period from 1 July 1987 to 30 June 1988.

2. Even though the overall situation in both South Africa and Namibia is generally unchanged, talks concerning the independence of the latter have recently taken place. There was no massive exodus of refugees recorded from either South Africa or Namibia during the period under review. The nation-wide school boycott in South Africa was called off in early 1987 and most of the striking students have since returned to their classes, with a few hundred opting to seek asylum elsewhere. With respect to Namibia, there is an ongoing massive school boycott in protest of South Africa's policy of stationing troops in close proximity to some of the schools. While it is too early to predict the likely consequences of the school boycott in Namibia, there are indications that unless the occupying troops are withdrawn from one of their present locations, the boycott might intensify and eventually lead to a substantial increase in the numbers of Namibian student refugees in neighbouring countries.

* A/43/150.

3. As highlighted in the report to the General Assembly at its forty-second session, the continuing insecurity felt by refugees in countries contiguous to South Africa has necessitated emergency evacuation of nearly all the newly-arriving refugees from South Africa and Namibia. These refugees, most of whom are young males, are usually evacuated to other African countries in the southern and eastern African regions.

4. While the present report, in accordance with the terms of General Assembly resolution 42/138, highlights UNHCR's assistance in the countries explicitly mentioned in the resolution, it ought to be noted that there are several other organisations and agencies, intergovernmental as well as non-governmental, which continue to provide invaluable assistance in the field of education on behalf of South African and Namibian refugees. It should also be noted that there are ongoing educational programmes for those refugees in other countries that are not specifically mentioned in General Assembly resolution 42/138.

5. It should be noted further that in one of the countries explicitly mentioned, i.e. Zambia, the national liberation movements recognized by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations continue to play a crucial implementing role for UNHCR-assisted humanitarian programmes on behalf of their respective refugee affiliates in the field of education.

Botswana

6. The number of South African and Namibian refugees has not changed appreciably during the reporting period: 1,000 South Africans and some 200 Namibians, the majority of whom live in urban areas.

7. Refugee students living in Dukwe Settlement (180 South Africans and 120 Namibians) continue to benefit from the educational facilities (academic and vocational) which are offered at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. A junior secondary school, open both to refugees and nationals, is being constructed with European Economic Community (EEC) and UNHCR funding, while the Educational Resource Centre provides informal adult education.

8. For the urban case-load, UNHCR and other organizations are involved in the provision of educational assistance at various levels - academic as well as vocational - as needed to improve refugees' chances of obtaining gainful employment. The attached table shows the numbers of students assisted by UNHCR and other agencies.

Swaziland

9. There are 14,550 officially registered refugees in Swaziland, with an estimated similar number having spontaneously settled in the border areas. This official case-load represents an increase of some 30 per cent since 1984, and is comprised of 6,500 South Africans, 5,500 Mozambicans, and others of various nationalities. The South African refugees, mainly of Swasi ethnic origin and of rural background, left South Africa in the late 1970s.

10. UNHCR assistance activities on behalf of South African refugees are centred at Ndzevane Rural Settlement, where the majority of the refugees are at present located.

11. At the request of the Government, UNHCR is also providing assistance aimed at facilitating the transfer of individual South Africans to second countries of asylum. Meanwhile, UNHCR has continued to provide basic care and maintenance.

12. The number of South Africans receiving educational assistance from UNHCR during the period under review has increased to over 220; of these, more than 50 per cent were in the academic levels. There were no Namibian refugee students sponsored in Swaziland again during this period.

Zambia

13. The majority of the 3,200 refugees are affiliated to the African National Congress (ANC). The Namibian refugees in the country, mainly affiliates of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), number 7,300. The majority of the urban case-load consists of South Africans (400), Namibians (200) and Malawians (450). Non-affiliated refugees number approximately 400.

14. Other refugees from South Africa and Namibia benefited from educational assistance provided by UNHCR and other agencies, both intergovernmental and non-governmental.

Lesotho

15. The Government estimate of the total number of persons in a refugee-like situation has remained stable at 11,500 since the end of 1986 through March 1987; of these, 269 were registered as refugees and some 114 received assistance from UNHCR. Nearly all of these refugees originate from South Africa and are predominantly of urban background, with males constituting a large proportion (70 per cent). In 1986, 317 new arrivals were recorded while 375 persons departed for resettlement to third countries.

16. Since 1967, Lesotho has increasingly become a temporary asylum country for South African refugees, particularly for those affiliated to national liberation movements. This trend is likely to continue in the foreseeable future, with possible negative implications for refugees who have been in the country for an extended period and who are already well integrated.

17. UNHCR's assistance activities in Lesotho have continued to focus on individual refugees. Refugees continue to receive various forms of assistance, mainly in education (at the primary and secondary levels) and local integration, through the establishment of small-scale income-generating projects, counselling, supplementary aid and resettlement to another country.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH AFRICAN AND NAMIBIAN
REFUGEE STUDENTS AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL IN 1987

	SOUTH AFRICANS						NAMIBIANS					
	Number of beneficiaries			Obligations			Number of beneficiaries			Obligations		
	Academic		Vocat./Tech.	in United		States dollars	Academic		Vocat./Tech.	in United		States dollars
M	F	M	F	TOTAL	States dollars	M	F	M	F	TOTAL	States dollars	
I. SCHOLARSHIPS												
A. In countries of asylum												
Botswana	8	7	15		12 450	1	3			4	3 320	
Kenya	2	3	5		3 875	4	3			7	5 425	
Lesotho	7	7	14		7 336					0	0	
Liberia			1		5 000					0	0	
Swaziland	93	112	10	5	109 120					0	0	
Zambia		1			496					0	0	
Zimbabwe	5	3		8	8 000					0	0	
Subtotals	115	133	11	5		5	6	0	0			
TOTALS (M+F)	Acad. 248	Vocat. 16	264		146 277	Acad. 11	Vocat. 0	11		8 745		
B. Outside countries of asylum												
Cameroon*						5	22	3	30	70	327 089	
Ghana						8	36			44	76 364	
Nigeria										0	**	
Sierra Leone						8	62	2	11	83	67 230	
Subtotals						21	130	5	41			
TOTALS (M+F)	Acad. 0	Vocat. 0	0		0	Acad. 151	Vocat. 46	197		470 702		
GRAND TOTALS I	Acad. 248	Vocat. 16	264		146 277	Acad. 162	Vocat. 46	208		479 447		
II. TRAVEL ASSISTANCE												
	N/R	N/R	38		21 500	N/R		198		56 900		
GRAND TOTALS I + II			302		167 377			406		536 347		

Remarks: * In Cameroon, the amount obligated was for 100 Namibians.

** In Nigeria, the assistance provided to Namibians was covered by 1986 obligations.