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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Thirty-fourth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 362nd MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on  
Friday, 14 October 1983, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. EWERLÖF (Sweden)

later: Mr. MEBAZAA (Tunisia)

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CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING OF EXPERTS ON REFUGEE AID AND DEVELOPMENT  
(agenda item 7) (continued) (A/AC.96/627 and Corr.1)

UNHCR'S ROLE IN PROMOTING DURABLE SOLUTIONS (agenda item 8) (continued)  
(A/AC.96/620 and Corr.1)

1. Mr. DEWEY (United States of America) said that UNHCR had performed a valuable service in convening a meeting of experts to give thoughtful attention to the issue under discussion. While his delegation fully agreed with the conclusion that refugees should be engaged at the earliest possible opportunity in useful work and increased self-reliance, it could also envisage instances where setting a development orientation to a refugee project could have the effect of prolonging a refugee problem.
2. Funding procedures in several countries complicated the question of additionality, i.e., contributions in addition to current levels of relief donations and funds already earmarked for development. It was important that efforts to obtain additional development resources should not stand in the way of assuring those resources for essential relief needs which, in many cases, would continue to occupy the highest priority. His delegation suggested that the subject of additionality was important enough to warrant further analysis, along the lines of the interim assessment by UNHCR proposed by the representative of Canada, before any commitment was taken to principles or courses of action which might prove unworkable.
3. His delegation believed that the mandate of UNHCR could play an effective role in self-reliance activities, without crossing over the boundary line to development activities, and that UNHCR could effectively assist returnees without exceeding its mandate. It was encouraging that development projects for the second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA II) would receive the participation of UNDP, from the other side of the boundary line.
4. Mr. HAMRA (Sudan) said that the meeting of experts had dealt with the important relationship between aid to refugees and the problems of developing countries of asylum faced with numerous economic difficulties. There was a need to channel assistance in such a way that refugees could benefit to the maximum therefrom, preferably through the adoption of other durable solutions where voluntary repatriation was not feasible. In that context, there was a need to strengthen basic structures in the refugee-receiving countries so as to increase community services and provide guarantees for the integration of refugees into the communities. There was no reason to fear the use of the word "integration", because there had been many examples of successful integration, especially when refugees remained for a long time.
5. His delegation wished to pay tribute to the experts for their report and the preliminary results achieved. Their conclusions were in keeping with the objectives of ICARA II, and he would like to see them followed closely and a second meeting of experts held. He also welcomed the proposal by the representative of Morocco to establish a unit for durable solutions which would be responsible for implementing assistance to the refugees.
6. The CHAIRMAN said that the discussion on agenda items 7 and 8 had come to an end. With regard to item 7, he suggested that the Executive Committee should take note with appreciation of the report of the meeting of experts on refugee aid and development; should note the High Commissioner's introduction to the question and the statements made in the Executive Committee; and

should request the High Commissioner to invite relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to give their views and comments on the matter in an appropriate manner before the end of the year, to give his own views and comments on the matter before the end of the year, and to circulate the views and comments thus obtained to the member Governments.

7. He further suggested that the Executive Committee should agree to revert to the topic, as a matter of priority, at its next informal meeting in early 1984 with the participation of experts as required and that it should agree also that the two co-chairmen of the meeting of experts be invited to attend the informal meeting.

8. With regard to agenda item 8, he suggested that the Executive Committee should take note with satisfaction of the efforts made by the High Commissioner to give renewed emphasis to the promotion of durable solutions to the problem of refugees; should note that a growing proportion of annual programme funds for 1984 were earmarked for the promotion of such solutions and request the High Commissioner to continue to increase that proportion; should appeal to Governments to provide the necessary support to the High Commissioner in promoting durable solutions and creating conditions conducive to the voluntary repatriation or integration of refugees within new communities; should stress the need for co-operation between the High Commissioner, the organizations of the United Nations system and the voluntary agencies in promoting durable solutions and encourage the strengthening of such co-operation; should agree that the question of durable solutions would remain a permanent item on the agenda of the Committee; and should request the High Commissioner to make an annual report to the Committee on the progress achieved towards durable solutions.

9. Mr. MATIKO (Tanzania) asked for the inclusion of a reference to the interesting proposal by the representative of Morocco, namely that a unit for durable solutions be established.

10. The CHAIRMAN, suggested that, after the words "renewed emphasis to the promotion of durable solutions" in his statement on agenda item 8, the phrase "through integration into new communities, resettlement or, in particular, voluntary repatriation" should be added.

11. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Executive Committee wished to adopt his suggestions, as revised.

12. It was so decided.

UNHCR ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES (agenda item 9) (A/AC.96/620 and Corr.1, A/AC.96/INF.167)

13. Mr. ZOLLNER (Director, Assistance Division), introducing the discussion on agenda item 9, said that the reiteration by Governments of their support for UNHCR was a guarantee of their active involvement in the search for durable solutions in cases where such solutions could not yet be implemented.

14. The search for durable solutions in Africa would be one of the principal points for discussion during ICARA II. It was intended that about 56 per cent of the total funds allocated under the general programmes for Africa would be devoted to the implementation of durable solutions. As part of plans for 1984, it was proposed to earmark \$64 million for local integration activities.

15. All of those programmes derived from the generous political asylum afforded by African governments within the framework of the OAU Convention Relating to Refugees. That support by Governments was also reflected in their willingness to create conditions for the economic and social integration of refugees. In some cases, it would be necessary to reinforce arrangements for assistance to refugees in close association with national planning ministries, or else to work closely with non-governmental agencies, and to provide free access to markets and regions where possible employment existed.
16. Although the budget for 1984 seemed limited as far as voluntary repatriation programmes in Africa were concerned, that objective was still of basic importance to UNHCR. The budgetary implications of such programmes generally appeared only when the hope of repatriation actually materialized. If the operations for Ethiopian and Ugandan repatriates continued with success, additional financial needs would become apparent in the course of the year.
17. The programmes in northern Latin America continued to retain attention. Although the initial emergency stage had been passed, the major part of UNHCR's resources had been assigned to care and maintenance programmes, the largest of which were in Honduras and Mexico. An amount had also been foreseen for the installation of refugees and the promotion of self-sufficiency activities in Honduras. In the Southern Cone of South America, a programme had been undertaken to assist Bolivian repatriates, while efforts continued to assist the integration of Indo-Chinese refugees in Argentina.
18. Members of the Executive Committee would have noticed that allocations for general programmes in Europe had increased slightly in 1983 to approximately \$8 million for 1983 and 1984. Those figures showed that it was necessary for UNHCR to increase care and maintenance expenditures in several countries, where the integration of refugees required a longer time than in the past.
19. In the Middle East and South-West Asia, a substantial part of global resources continued to be devoted to meeting the needs of the refugees in Pakistan. Since the influx of refugees had stabilized and there were signs of economic activity in the refugees villages, it was felt that future assistance programmes should reflect that new situation. UNHCR, in close collaboration with the Government of Pakistan, hoped to devote an increasingly large part of its assistance programme in the country to promoting the self-sufficiency of the refugees.
20. Considerable delays had been suffered with regard to the programme of assistance to Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran, but it was hoped that discussions currently taking place would help finalize a plan of action so that at least a few of the objectives for 1983 could be realized.
21. Although efforts to resettle Indo-Chinese refugees would continue, UNHCR in collaboration with the interested Governments, would continue to examine possibilities of finding the most appropriate durable solutions to that problem.
22. Since the Committee had requested that resettlement be covered separately, following the discussion on the general aspects of assistance, he had not dwelt on that subject.
23. Mr. KRISTIANSSON (Sweden) said that he noted with satisfaction the continuing improvements in the documentation on assistance and agreed with the High Commissioner that the current report on UNHCR assistance activities (A/AC.96/620 and Corr.1) was more informative and more thorough in its presentation of facts and figures.

Although a factual description of programme delivery was of great value, some knowledge was also needed of the constraints and obstacles faced by UNHCR in the field, which might cause changes in the original plans. It would also be interesting to know how the High Commissioner viewed the future; perhaps he could add a brief comment regarding the prospects for each country programme.

24. The information on the number of beneficiaries of the country programmes was more interesting and adequate than before, but it was not satisfactory to be given only a vague impression of the numbers of refugees in a country. There was broad interest in the Executive Committee in learning more about the arrangements with and the functions of the partner bodies which actually carried out the programmes. Relations between them and UNHCR must be streamlined and guided by routines and procedures to ensure consistency. UNHCR must monitor all operations closely; as the organization in charge it needed its own comprehensive picture of the operations as a whole. His delegation thus welcomed measures towards the strengthening of UNHCR monitoring of programmes.

25. It also noted with satisfaction that co-operation with non-governmental organizations had been further intensified, since the bodies in question were suitable implementing partners. Voluntary agencies were able to make a valuable contribution to the initiation, planning, implementation or evaluation of assistance projects.

26. UNHCR was not, and should not become, an operational agency, but there might be occasions when it was not possible to find a suitable implementing body. In such cases, it should not be excluded that UNHCR could itself become operational.

27. His Government had been happy to put at the disposal of the United Nations the Swedish Special Unit for Disaster Relief. That stand-by unit of 160 persons had originally been thought of as required for natural disasters, but eight out of the 11 disasters in which it had been involved had concerned refugees or displaced persons.

28. His delegation felt that the Project Management System had been providing satisfactory results over the past years in terms of the planning and evaluation of assistance activities, but much remained to be done regarding the monitoring of progress in project implementation. The new system for reporting on project monitoring that had just been introduced should enable UNHCR to keep the Executive Committee and donors better informed of developments in assistance programmes.

29. The introduction of a "Specialist Support Unit" within the UNHCR Office was of great importance for the planning and implementation of projects for durable solutions, although other United Nations specialized agencies or non-governmental organizations would also be approached, where appropriate.

30. With regard to education activities, which received an important share of his Government's contribution to UNHCR, more information would be appreciated on the results of such activities as part of the High Commissioner's over-all effort. His delegation anticipated with interest the outcome of the research project on the effect of scholarship programmes in Africa, referred to in the section on ICARA II of the Report on assistance activities (A/AC.96/620, p.XIV).

31. He hoped that project evaluation, which had only recently been introduced in a systematic way, would be expanded and that reports thereon would be available at future sessions of the Executive Committee. Donors should be given an opportunity to participate in evaluation missions at the High Commissioner's invitation.

studies, designed as they were to produce income-generating projects for refugees, provided an excellent example of work towards a durable solution. He strongly supported the Moroccan representative's proposal for the establishment of a special unit on durable solutions within the Assistance Division.

46. On the subject of resettlement of refugees, he noted with thanks the assistance being given to his country, especially by the United States of America. It was to be hoped that satisfactory solutions of the problem of burden-sharing in Africa would be found within the Organization of African unity, so that countries such as Madagascar, which had no refugee populations of their own, would be able to make a contribution to resettlement programmes.

47. Assistance to refugees in Africa, where half the world's refugees were to be found, was far from adequate, however; as the 1979 Pan-African Conference at Arusha had revealed, only one-third of UNHCR assistance programmes went to African refugees. On a per capita basis, that amounted to a gross value of \$39 per annum, the actual amount reaching individual refugees being sometimes as low as \$2. Moreover, more than 60 per cent of African refugees were self-settled and received no assistance at all. That situation could hardly be justified by arguments invoking African traditions of hospitality or ethnic links across frontiers.

48. Assistance provided by voluntary agencies often suffered from a lack of co-ordination both among the voluntary agencies themselves and between the agencies, UNHCR and the host Governments. Voluntary agencies sometimes tended to arrive in the field with preconceived ideas which they were unable to reconcile with realities. When a voluntary agency decided to pull out, serious problems arose in connection with maintaining the programme in terms of both personnel and suppliers. Greater continuity could be ensured by inter-agency co-ordination with UNHCR participation, emphasis being placed on refugee training and on supporting national voluntary and refugee-based agencies.

49. His Government had recently launched a proposal for the formation of a voluntary agencies council to co-ordinate agency programmes and to represent the agencies in dealings with the Government. Unfortunately, the project still faced many obstacles, but efforts were being made to reach a satisfactory conclusion with the support of UNHCR.

50. It was to be hoped that assistance programmes would be genuinely increased and directed more and more towards durable solutions, particularly in Africa, and that implementation and dispersement rates would be enhanced. More monitoring of implementing agencies, by both Governments and UNHCR, should take place, and host Governments should have an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process from the very outset.

51. Mr. FINN (Deputy Executive Co-ordinator, United Nations Volunteers Programme) said that progressively closer co-operation between UNV and UNHCR had developed over the previous half-decade, a period which had witnessed a dramatic growth in UNV's over-all activities. Almost 1,000 volunteers of 80 different nationalities and 60 different professional categories were currently serving in 90 countries. Each volunteer was a qualified middle-level professional, generally with a working experience of not less than five years. Co-operating Governments and specialized agencies acknowledged them to be a cost-effective and technically competent input to projects and activities within the United Nations system.

52. Co-operation between UNHCR and UNV had been taking place in many areas, more especially in South-East Asia - where, however, there were some perceptible signs of a diminution in UNV involvement - and in the Horn of Africa. Since 1981, a team of 23 United Nations volunteers had been working with the UNHCR refugee programme in Somalia. The assignments, ranging from agriculture to management and from counselling to information, had been financed under "multi-bi" arrangements with various donor Governments, such as the United States of America, Finland and Norway, whose readiness to deploy funds for those practical and worthy activities was greatly appreciated.

53. The "multi-bi" arrangements were approaching their conclusion, but the volunteers were still needed. The Government of Somalia and UNHCR had proposed that the programme of collaboration with UNV should be expanded to bring the total number of UNV posts in that country to 45, with UNHCR providing the necessary finance from its own resources. Most of the assignments were directed towards achieving durable solutions; more than 20 of the proposed posts were in the agricultural sector and were intended to help refugees to engage in a productive livelihood pending a permanent solution, while six UNV community development workers would help to initiate, and later to co-ordinate, non-agricultural income-generating schemes in six refugee districts.

54. Constantly increasing numbers of refugees made the task of achieving durable solutions more and more difficult. The provision of emergency relief allied with the stimulation of self-sufficiency were the cornerstones of UNV involvement with UNHCR. The technical contribution by UNV could, however, be expanded further. Because of its ability to recruit from the broadest possible base, UNV had also successfully placed qualified refugees as United Nations volunteers in a variety of fields in a number of countries. More than 2,500 qualified candidates on the UNV roster, covering a very wide spectrum of skills and eager to serve in difficult circumstances, were available to UNHCR and the co-operating Governments.

55. Mr. COQUIN (Observer, European Economic Community) said that, because of its history, Europe had a particularly keen awareness of humanitarian problems, and therefore a natural vocation to respond to the sufferings of those who were the victims of world disorder, wherever they might be.

56. The growing involvement of EEC in refugee problems was reflected in the various items of its budget and had led to a policy which took account, in the first place, of the diversity of situations involved. In the emergency phase, food aid or aid in cash was provided, under article 950 of the budget and, in the case of the ACP partners of the Community, under article 137 of the Second Lomé Convention. Then, in what might be termed the subsistence phase, the necessary food aid was rendered under chapter 92 of the Community budget. Lastly, within the context of long-term assistance, EEC rendered assistance to the non-governmental organizations working in the refugee field.

57. The second feature of EEC assistance to refugees was the size of its commitment. It had contributed \$59 million to UNHCR in 1982 which, together with the sums contributed on a national basis by its member States amounted to a total of \$109 million for that year; while, in 1983, it had contributed 27.6 million Ecus to UNHCR for food aid, plus almost 2 million Ecus for refugees in Somalia.

58. EEC had maintained its emergency assistance in 1983 and trusted that the necessary funds would be earmarked as soon as possible. Nearly 28 million Ecus had been contributed to UNHCR for South-East Asia, Pakistan, Central America and Angola and 800,000 Ecus had been allocated for Ugandan refugees in Sudan and Zaire.

59. A number of EEC bodies were currently considering ways and means of strengthening the machinery and a budget line had been proposed which, if opened, would pay for subsistence needs and activities connected with the self-sufficiency of refugees in countries not associated with EEC. The possibility of meeting the cost of subsistence and of integration of refugees in ACP countries within the framework of a new convention was also under consideration.

60. Lastly, EEC intended to play an active part in the second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA II) to be held in 1984.

61. Mr. Ewerlöf resumed the chair.

62. Mr. MATIKO (Tanzania) said that, as it was not easy to separate assistance from durable solutions, it would be more logical if the unit for dealing with durable solutions, which had been suggested by the Moroccan delegation, were made a part of the Assistance Division.

63. The CHAIRMAN, noting that there appeared to be no further general comments, invited the Executive Committee to consider Section I of the Report on UNHCR assistance activities in 1982-1983 (A/AC.96/620 and Corr.1).

#### Section I - Africa

64. Mr. OULD-ROUIS (Algeria) said that his delegation had noted with satisfaction that, in recent years, UNHCR had endeavoured to find durable solutions and to develop activities aimed at promoting the self-sufficiency of refugees. While the latter were not, strictly speaking, development activities, since refugees were the prime beneficiaries, they were a basic necessity for low-income countries which found it difficult to meet the costs involved in massive influxes of refugees. His delegation trusted that ICARA II would provide the opportunity for strengthening such activities, and was certain that close collaboration between UNHCR, other international agencies and non-governmental organizations would guarantee the full success of the Conference and attain the objectives laid down in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 37/197.

65. With regard to the global volume of assistance, he noted that expenditure in recent years had fallen off significantly, partly because of UNHCR's rationalization effort and partly because, with the stabilization of the refugee situation throughout the world, there had been less demand for UNHCR assistance. It was to be hoped, however, that that trend was not a reflection of a certain lassitude and disengagement on the part of the international community.

66. In the case of the refugees in Algeria, UNHCR resources were allocated mainly to the health, housing and educational sector, while his Government bore the cost of the infrastructural operations. Priority was given to promoting activities designed to encourage refugee self-sufficiency, and administrative expenses were kept to the bare minimum. Where possible, his Government bore the cost of transport by sea and air.



67. As for the modalities of UNHCR assistance to Sahrawi refugees, under the 1980 agreement between his Government and the High Commissioner, the Government was responsible for the general co-ordination of humanitarian aid while the Algerian Red Crescent was responsible for the implementation of assistance projects. His Government had always complied fully with its obligations under the agreement and had made every effort to co-operate with UNHCR and to facilitate its assistance task, particularly with regard to projects financed under the programme for assistance to refugees in the Western Sahara. That co-operation dated back to 1975 since which date UNHCR, together with other United Nations agencies, had sent some 10 missions to Algeria. A further mission was envisaged for November 1983. Those missions had been able to take due note of the extent of the co-operation that existed between UNHCR and the Algerian Government and of the facilities which the latter made available to UNHCR.

68. The mission of two UNHCR officers appointed in 1974 to administer the programme had been ended by joint agreement, since it had been felt inter alia that the administrative costs involved were not justified by the amount of aid rendered. If there were any obstacles to the implementation of decisions regarding durable solutions, they certainly did not stem from his Government which had always maintained that, given the right conditions, voluntary repatriation was the best solution to the refugee problem. It remained convinced that a political settlement to the conflict in the Western Sahara would enable the Sahrawi refugees to return to their homeland. Until then UNHCR should maintain its assistance and concentrate on promoting the self-sufficiency of refugees.

69. UNHCR should also examine the problem of the slow implementation of assistance programmes for Sahrawi refugees which was mainly due to technical difficulties involved in UNHCR's internal procedures. In that connection, it should not be forgotten that the volume of UNHCR assistance was well below the needs of the Sahrawi refugees and represented a minute part of the costs borne by Algeria. His Government, for its part, was ready to engage in any discussion and to consider any proposal with a view to improving the lot of the refugees.

70. Mr. SKALLI (Morocco) said that, while it was gratifying to note from the report that UNHCR's priority objective remained the attainment of durable solutions to refugee problems, the amount of funds allocated for that purpose continued to decrease. In the circumstances, his delegation considered that the High Commissioner should concentrate his assistance on measures that were really necessary and justified and, to that end, should be highly selective in his activities and give help only to genuine refugees. It also considered that the High Commissioner should examine all offers of durable solutions with a view to improving the living conditions of displaced persons and, at the same time, reducing the expenses of his Office. In that connection, he reminded the Executive Committee of his own Government's offer - referred to in the report before the Committee - that had been made with a view to solving at the humanitarian level the problem of the persons at Tindouf.

71. Although the report had, once again, made use of terms and expressions which his delegation had been obliged to challenge on more than one occasion, he would not engage in any detailed criticism but would confine himself to the major points. There was a statement in the report to the effect that an allocation of \$3,500,000 was proposed for 1984 to provide for the continuation of assistance in the health, education and self-sufficiency sectors; and that the programme would be implemented

in close co-operation with the Algerian Red Crescent which would ensure the reception and distribution of goods procured by UNHCR (A/AC.96/620, para. 9). In that connection, he wished to point out that the problem had existed for eight years during which time the assistance had not simply been continued but had been constantly increased.

72. At the outset, it had been suggested that the assistance should be rendered in the framework of the special programmes: his Government had acquiesced, in a humanitarian spirit, thinking that emergency aid was involved. Then it had been proposed that the assistance should be rendered in the framework of the regular programmes: again, his Government had not raised any opposition, since it saw an opportunity to display its goodwill and desire to achieve durable solutions. Nevertheless, as he had stated at the Executive Committee's twenty-seventh session, UNHCR assistance could only be justified if it were the prelude to voluntary repatriation.

73. It was clear, therefore, that his delegation had never opposed assistance rendered for humanitarian considerations and in connection with the search for durable solutions. The Executive Committee, too, had recommended the promotion of durable solutions on a number of occasions, most recently, at its thirty-first session; and the High Commissioner had always stressed that the ideal solution was voluntary repatriation or, failing that, local integration and permanent settlement. Unfortunately, however, the assistance was becoming institutionalized to the detriment of durable solutions. Moreover, UNHCR assistance was granted without UNHCR being able to exercise control, as it was elsewhere, over the destination and use of such assistance.

74. His Government had repeatedly stated its, perfectly clear, position in the matter, which was the following: First, it was prepared to receive all persons whose Sahrawi origin had been established and who had voluntarily expressed their desire to return; secondly, it requested that the voluntary repatriation should be organized and carried out by UNHCR in accordance with its usual procedures; thirdly, it undertook to provide whatever guarantees UNHCR might require with a view to ensuring that those who opted for return could live in dignity and freedom and enjoy the same economic, social and political rights as those who had never left the country.

75. At a meeting with a delegation from UNHCR which had taken place at Rabat in July 1981 a minute had been drawn up which recorded that the Director of the UNHCR Assistance Division had taken note with satisfaction of the Moroccan Government's assurance regarding the welfare and security of persons returning to their homes (A/AC.96/INF.167). It should be recognized, therefore, that his Government had displayed patience, flexibility and goodwill. It formally renewed its commitment to deal with the humanitarian problems involved and to contribute to the promotion of genuinely humanitarian solutions, thereby relieving the UNHCR budget of a burden it had borne for eight years.

76. Mr. HARTLING (High Commissioner for Refugees) said that, in response to an invitation he had received, he planned to send a technical mission to Algeria in the near future with a view to discussing the modalities for a permanent UNHCR presence there. Possible durable solutions would, of course, be discussed in accordance with the usual UNHCR procedures. He would report back to the Executive Committee at the first opportunity.

77. Mr. GULIED (Observer for Somalia) said that, since a large number of refugees in Africa had come from Ethiopia, and indeed refugees were still doing so, he found it difficult to understand why that country should be the recipient of an assistance programme of such magnitude. It would be useful to receive further information about the numbers of refugees involved.

78. Mr. KONATE (Senegal) said he failed to understand why some projects in his country had been described in the Report as giving disappointing results (paragraph 213). His Government had provided all the necessary assistance and, if it had not proved possible to reach the targets, the reason was that insufficient resources had been employed.

79. Mr. OSMAN (Sudan) said that the large-scale influx of refugees into his country, which currently harboured the second largest refugee community in Africa, had placed great strains on the country's resources and fragile infrastructure. Furthermore, the problem appeared to be a permanent one, with no prospects of resettlement in third countries. The aim of the programmes should therefore be to enhance the refugees' self-reliance and lessen their dependence on the country's services and resources, a goal to which his Government had allocated considerable resources. UNHCR should take the necessary steps to tackle the problems bedevilling the programmes in his country, particularly by improving its procurement policy and speeding up the transfer of funds so that projects could be implemented on schedule.

80. Mr. ANGURA (Uganda) said he agreed with the emphasis placed by most delegations on durable solutions to the refugee problem. Such efforts should, however, be additional to the regular assistance programmes. He hoped that UNHCR would continue its support for Ugandan returnees from Sudan and Zaire, and would also make adequate preparations for ICARA II so that it would not be like ICARA I.

81. Mr. MATIKO (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the number of refugees given in the chapter on his country was a distinct understatement in that it took no account of the refugees who had settled there spontaneously. Some problems had arisen with regard to the transfer of the Mishamo settlement, which might result in some delay. Lastly, the question of the allocation of funds for spontaneously settled Burundi refugees in the Kigoma region should form the subject of further consultations between his Government and UNHCR.

82. Mr. ZOLLNER (Director, Assistance Division), replying to the question asked by the representative of Somalia, said that the number of refugees in Ethiopia was estimated at 11,000, and that was the number on which the proposed assistance had been based.

83. Mr. NOEL (Head, Regional Bureau for Africa), replying to the question asked by the representative of Senegal, said that the fact that the results of some projects in Senegal had been described as disappointing did not represent any judgement on the country's programmes as a whole, but was merely a reference to some small projects for self-reliance in individual cases. The projects had proved insufficient, and it would be necessary to find ways to improve such direct aid in individual cases.

84. Mr. KONATE (Senegal) said that the paragraph in question might, perhaps, be amended to reflect that explanation.

85. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Executive Committee wished to approve the whole of Section I.

86. It was so decided.

## Section II - Americas and Europe

### A. Americas

87. Mr. RITTER (Honduras) said his Government much appreciated the work done by UNHCR in his country, without which it would have been virtually impossible to cater for the needs of the ever-increasing numbers of refugees. For its part, the Government was doing all that it could to assist them and to enable them to live in dignity and safety; it was also taking steps to complete resettlement activities as rapidly as possible, despite the difficult situation in Central America, but economic co-operation was needed to achieve those goals.

88. Mr. VARGAS (Nicaragua) reiterated his Government's resolve to continue its efforts to integrate all the refugees in his country and expressed its appreciation of UNHCR's assistance.

89. Mrs. RUESTA DE FURTER (Venezuela), having congratulated the Secretariat on the excellent report submitted to the Executive Committee and suggested that the classification of countries in the Section under consideration should be amended so as to include Mexico in the chapter on North America, said that the number of refugees in her country, as indicated in the relevant chapter, was well below the actual figure. One reason was that refugees in Venezuela provided the perfect example of durable solutions; they either became integrated or were voluntarily repatriated. Her Government had not yet completed the process of accession to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol on account of a legal problem concerning the deposit of the instruments. However that might be, the country's domestic legislation was perfectly in keeping with those instruments.

90. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Executive Committee wished to approve the whole of Section II A.

91. It was so decided.

### B. Europe

92. Mr. KRIZEK (Austria) said he wished to stress his country's role as a country of first asylum. In 1982, 22,000 persons who had been granted asylum in Austria were resettled in third countries, to which countries his Government was very grateful. It was, indeed, vital that countries particularly burdened with a massive influx of refugees as a result of their geographic situation should not feel unsupported by the world community. However, many persons continued to seek asylum in his country, the capacity of the refugee camps was fully exhausted, and board and lodging had to be arranged for many asylum-seekers at Government expense. Many of those asylum-seekers wanted to settle in a third country, and further international support was therefore required. In particular, the support of UNHCR in finding permanent solutions for handicapped refugees was of immense value.

93. With regard to the paragraph on local settlement, it should be emphasized that his Government was doing all that it could to promote the integration of refugees who wished to remain in the country or who had no chance of resettling in a third country. However, its capacity for local integration was small in comparison with the large numbers of refugees, assistance to whom was very costly. The Austrian United Nations Refugee Fund, of which the branch office of UNHCR at Vienna formed part, had been most helpful and had taken care of many persons. After four years'

uninterrupted stay in Austria, a recognized refugee could acquire Austrian citizenship and, in 1982, nearly 400 refugees had done so.

94. In addition to the large sums spent for refugee purposes within the country, his Government intended to increase by 10 per cent its contribution to UNHCR general programmes for 1984, subject to parliamentary approval. The possibility of increasing support for special projects was also under consideration. His country would continue to do its utmost to assist the High Commissioner in the fulfilment of his humanitarian tasks.

95. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Executive Committee wished to approve the chapter on Austria.

96. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.