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OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Miss Ana RICHTER (Argentina)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: report of the High Commissioner" was included in the provisional agenda of the thirty-third session of the General Assembly in accordance with paragraph 11 of the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Assembly resolution 428 (V), annex).
2. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 22 September 1978, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the Third Committee.
3. The Committee considered the item at its 43rd to 46th meetings, from 13 to 14 November. The summary records of those meetings (A/C.3/33/SR.43-46) contain the views expressed by the representatives of Member States on this item.
4. In connexion with item 85, the Committee had before it the following documents:
 - (a) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/33/12 and Add.1);
 - (b) Resolutions of the Ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Dakar from 24 to 28 April 1978 (A/33/151).
5. At the 43rd meeting, on 13 November, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees introduced the item (see A/C.3/33/SR.43, paras. 1-13).

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II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

A. Draft resolution A/C.3/33/L.19

6. At the 46th meeting, on 14 November, the Committee adopted without a vote the draft resolution entitled "Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees", recommended in Economic and Social Council resolution 1978/36 of 21 July 1978 (A/C.3/33/L.19) (see para. 9 below, draft resolution I).

B. Draft resolution A/C.3/33/L.27

7. At the 44th meeting, on 13 November, the representative of Sweden introduced a draft resolution (A/C.3/33/L.27) entitled "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees", sponsored by Argentina, Botswana, Cyprus, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Italy, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Senegal, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Tunisia, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, which were subsequently joined by Belgium, Congo, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Spain, Thailand, Upper Volta and Zaire.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote (see para. 9 below, draft resolution II).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

9. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 1166 (XII) of 26 November 1957, which provided for the establishment of an Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, as well as its resolutions 1958 (XVIII) of 12 December 1963 and 2294 (XXII) of 11 December 1967, which provided for subsequent increases in the membership of the Executive Committee,

Bearing in mind the interest in the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the range of refugee problems confronting the Office,

Noting that the Executive Committee has at present a membership of 31 States Members of the United Nations or members of any of the specialized agencies,

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1. Decides to increase the membership of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme by up to nine additional members;
2. Requests the Economic and Social Council, at its first regular session, 1979, to elect, in consultation with the regional groups, up to nine additional members of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme from those States with a demonstrated interest in, and devotion to, the solution of the refugee problem.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the activities of his Office 1/ and having heard his statement, 2/

Recalling its resolutions 32/67 and 32/70 of 8 December 1977 and noting the gravity of the problems continuing to face the High Commissioner in his efforts to assist refugees and displaced persons in many parts of the world,

Reaffirming that the activities of the High Commissioner are eminently humanitarian in character and that there is need to assist, on as wide a basis as possible, his efforts to promote permanent solutions through voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement in other countries,

Commending Governments for the humanitarian spirit in which they have received refugees and for the generous manner in which they have contributed to alleviate suffering,

Deploring the fact that refugees often face the threat of refoulement, arbitrary detention and the denial of asylum and noting that it is necessary to ensure their basic human rights, protection and safety, inter alia, through further accessions to and more effective implementation of international instruments, notably the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees 3/ and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, 4/

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 12 (A/33/12) and Supplement No. 12A (A/33/12/Add.1).

2/ A/C.3/33/SR.43, paras. 1-13.

3/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, No. 2545, p. 137.

4/ Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791, p. 267.

Noting that the increased needs of the refugees and displaced persons of concern to the Office require the widening of financial and other support from Governments, and the closest co-operation of United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations,

1. Commends the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and his staff for the efficient manner in which they continue to discharge their many responsibilities in assisting refugees and displaced persons;
2. Requests the High Commissioner to intensify his efforts to assist refugees and displaced persons of concern to his Office, especially with a view to providing urgent humanitarian assistance to the large and increasing numbers in need in Africa, Asia and Latin America;
3. Further requests the High Commissioner to continue to promote permanent and speedy solutions, in close co-operation with Governments, United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations;
4. Commends Governments that are actively encouraging voluntary repatriation or return as a solution to the problems in their area and requests the High Commissioner to render all possible assistance in such situations in lending help in the rehabilitation of the returnees;
5. Urges Governments to continue to co-operate closely with the High Commissioner in efforts to achieve the self-sufficiency and, where possible, the integration of refugees in countries of asylum, and to accept for resettlement, on the widest possible basis, refugees from countries of first asylum;
6. Further urges Governments to continue to facilitate the work of the High Commissioner in the field of international protection by considering accessions to relevant instruments for the benefit of refugees, the effective implementation of these instruments and the scrupulous observance of humanitarian principles with respect to the granting of asylum and the non-refoulement of refugees;
7. Commends the increasing number of contributors to the High Commissioner's programmes and, emphasizing the need for a wider sharing of the financial burden, calls upon Governments to provide him with necessary funds to attain the objectives of his humanitarian programme.
