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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Assistance to student refugees in southern Africa

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 38/95 of 16 December 1983, inter alia, requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in co-operation with the Secretary-General, to keep the situation of student refugees in southern Africa under review, and to report to the Assembly at its thirty-ninth session. The present report is submitted in response to that request and covers the period from 1 July 1983 to 30 June 1984.

II. BOTSWANA

A. General situation

2. During the period under review, the Botswana authorities recorded an average monthly arrival of 20 South African and Namibian refugee students.

3. A total of 25 South African and seven Namibian students are enrolled in institutions of higher education in Botswana. They follow various courses at the University of Botswana, the Polytechnic, the National Health Institute, Botswana Agricultural College and teacher-training colleges. A total of 15 South African and 17 Namibian students follow regular courses at secondary school level while 31 South Africans and 5 Namibians are assisted by UNHCR at the Dukwe Educational Resource Centre. Twenty-three South Africans and 18 Namibians graduated from educational institutions during the period under review.

4. Also during the reporting period, 37 South African students who were OBS ("Otto Benecke Stiftung") scholars returned from the Federal Republic of Germany and Kenya after successfully completing various vocational training courses. All of these students are gainfully employed. Another 56 South African and seven Namibian students returned from courses in various other countries. A total of 40 South African students were sponsored by OBS to begin vocational and technical training courses in the Federal Republic of Germany and Kenya.

5. The student refugees' prospects for resettlement or educational placement abroad are limited. Since the last report (A/38/429 and Corr.1), one Namibian and seven South African student refugees have been accepted for resettlement in the United States of America and four have left for resettlement in Canada; a further 10 are awaiting resettlement to Canada and 120 resettlement cases have been submitted for consideration by the United States. Arrangements were also made for the departure of 65 South African refugee students to various countries, notably the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, for resettlement and to pursue educational opportunities under the auspices of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa.

B. Progress in project implementation

Project 1: Utilization of educational facilities at the University of Botswana and in secondary schools

6. Against the quota of 50 places reserved for student refugees at the university, 38 South African refugees are currently pursuing courses and 16 are scheduled to be admitted for the next academic year.

7. As reported last year, the Government of Botswana has continued to administer and finance the junior secondary school at Moshupa and the senior secondary school at Palapye for the benefit of nationals and refugees alike.

Project 2: Dukwe settlement

8. This multi-purpose settlement for refugees of various nationalities and diverse backgrounds continues to provide, inter alia, primary education, remedial education and opportunities for self-reliance for those South African and Namibian student refugees who are preparing for study or resettlement abroad.

C. Other student-related matters

9. Identity cards are now automatically issued to all refugees by the Botswana authorities.

III. LESOTHO

A. General situation

10. With the enactment of the Refugee Act in 1983, the Government has renewed its commitment to honour its obligations under the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol.

11. The achievement of durable solutions has remained the objective of UNHCR's assistance activities in Lesotho. In this connection, the Refugee Counselling Service operated from the UNHCR branch office at Maseru is considered to be the basic catalyst for the successful implementation of other assistance measures.

12. There are no Namibian refugees in Lesotho, but the Government estimates that there are some 11,500 refugees, mainly South Africans, of school age in the country. Some 1,300 of them are registered with UNHCR and received various forms of assistance in the period under review. Most of the beneficiaries, products of the Bantu education system, have poor educational backgrounds. The objective of educational assistance to these refugees is, therefore, to improve their academic knowledge and equip them with vocational or technical skills which will allow them to compete effectively for jobs in the urban market or to become potential entrepreneurs.

13. There are currently 35 refugee pupils in primary schools while 39 are enrolled in secondary and vocational/technical schools; 42 refugee students are pursuing courses at the National University of Lesotho, 25 of whom are continuing students and 17 of whom are new. A total of 209 South African refugee students benefit from scholarship assistance provided by the following organizations:

World University Service	88
United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa	79
African American Institute	11
Ecumenical Scholarship Programme	7
Christian Council of Lesotho	18
Luthuli Cultural and Welfare Service, London	5
United Nations Commission for Namibia	1

14. During the reporting period, 156 South Africans of school age arrived and registered as asylum-seekers in Lesotho.

15. In the course of the same year, 25 student refugees were resettled in Mozambique and seven in the United Republic of Tanzania; three others were accepted for resettlement in Canada and one was admitted to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In addition, a total of 75 student refugees went to the United Republic of Tanzania to pursue further educational opportunities while three others were admitted to Canada for higher studies under the sponsorship of the World University Service (WUS).

16. Five of the eight refugees who successfully completed vocational and technical training courses in the Federal Republic of Germany are now employed; the other three have been accepted for resettlement in Canada. Eleven other refugees who successfully completed technical training programmes in Nigeria and the United Republic of Tanzania are now self-employed in Lesotho.

E. Progress in project implementation

Project 1: Additional residential and related facilities for southern African student refugees at the National University of Lesotho

17. These facilities, which continue to benefit refugees and nationals alike, were officially handed over to the Government of Lesotho in September 1983. The Government, through the National University of Lesotho, has assumed full responsibility for their recurrent costs.

Project 2: Refugee reception centre

18. UNHCR continues to cover the recurrent costs for the operation of the centre, which is located at Maseru and provides temporary accommodation for approximately 150 refugees per annum.

Project 3: Counselling of urban refugees in Lesotho

19. To complement the activities of the refugee reception centre, UNHCR also continues to provide educational, legal and social counselling, including career guidance, to all needy refugees.

Project 4: Establishment of a mathematics/science "crash" programme

20. The establishment, administration and funding of this programme, which aims to bring students up to the admission standards of the National University of Lesotho, continues to be handled on a bilateral basis between the Government of Lesotho and the European Economic Community. The National University of Lesotho, in partnership with the Free University of Amsterdam, has continued to admit refugees into the programme.

C. Other student-related matters

21. As part of efforts to promote the local integration and self-reliance of all refugees in Lesotho, many of whom are young people, UNHCR, in co-operation with the Government of Lesotho, has funded implementation by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) of a programme of income-generation through self-employment and the establishment of small businesses. Full implementation of this scheme is dependent on a thorough study of the viability of the refugee businesses proposed and on the establishment of the necessary managerial and follow-up systems.

IV. SWAZILAND

A. General situation

22. According to current government estimates, there are some 7,000 refugees in the country of whom some 95 per cent are South Africans residing in the Ndzevane rural refugee settlement in south-eastern Swaziland; the remaining 5 per cent, who live mainly in the urban districts of Mbabane, Manzini and Siteki, come from various other African States.

23. While UNHCR still continues to focus its assistance activities on local integration of refugees, primarily through formal education and, where possible, employment, there have recently been an increased number of applications for resettlement owing to restrictions on the granting of asylum. During the reporting period, 29 South African refugees were resettled in third countries in Africa and elsewhere.

24. The population of refugee students in Swaziland is based on Government records and on cases registered with UNHCR. At 30 June 1984 the refugee student population comprised 210 South Africans and 2 Namibians.

25. Most refugee students at the secondary level are boarders, but a few reside in rented accommodation. Those studying at university level live on the campus. All

expenses related to accommodation of refugee students throughout the year are borne by UNHCR or the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa (UNETPSA).

26. During the reporting period, a total of 114 South African children were provided with nursery and primary education and 96 South African refugee students who are enrolled in secondary schools were provided with tuition fees, books, uniforms, personal allowances and other basic amenities. A total of 210 South African students attending educational institutions in Swaziland were sponsored by the following scholarship-awarding agencies:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Number of students</u>
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	193
United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa	2
African American Institute	5
World University Service	1
Ephesus House Bursary (EHB)	9

B. Progress in project implementation

27. The expansion and improvement of the facilities at the University of Swaziland have now been completed. These facilities have enabled the university to continue its policy of reserving 10 to 15 per cent of its places for refugee students.

C. Other student-related matters

28. As in previous years, student refugees residing in Swaziland continue to find it difficult to take advantage of educational placement opportunities abroad because the Government is still reluctant to endorse the return clause on their Convention Travel Documents, which would permit them to return to Swaziland after their studies.

V. ZAMBIA

A. General situation

29. During the period under review, 5,008 Namibians and 272 South Africans received various forms of educational assistance from UNHCR. There are 22 South African refugee students sponsored by UNHCR at primary and secondary schools. Their scholarships cover tuition, books, uniforms and vacation allowances. UNHCR also sponsors eight Namibian students at lower secondary level in addition to the 500 Namibian refugees who benefit from various forms of assistance at the Nyango Health and Education Centre.

B. Other student-related matters

30. Some 250 South African refugee students who are awaiting educational placement in Zambia or abroad also receive supplementary assistance from UNHCR.

VI. ZIMBABWE

31. During the reporting period, the Government of Zimbabwe recorded the arrival of 152 South African refugees, all of whom were seeking educational opportunities. The total number of South African refugees in Zimbabwe is 335, the majority of whom have declared a firm interest in pursuing further education or vocational training. So far, 11 refugees have been resettled while three have been accepted for higher education abroad.

32. There are 99 South African refugee students enrolled in educational institutions in Zimbabwe:

University	20
Higher secondary institutions	30
Business colleges	29
Lower secondary institutions	15
Technical institutions	5

Financial sponsorship of their studies is borne by UNHCR for all those at the lower secondary and technical levels. UNETPSA provides scholarships for seven students and WUS for two students; the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Zimbabwe Christian Council, British Council of Churches and AAI provide scholarship assistance to the rest.

33. Because of the acute shortage of places in educational institutions, particularly at the tertiary level, in Zimbabwe, some eligible students cannot gain admission. The University of Zimbabwe, while willing to offer concessionary admission to refugee students, requires financial support from the international community to equip its teaching and research facilities.

VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

34. All of the projects originally proposed to alleviate the burden imposed on asylum countries by the presence of student refugees have been successfully completed and the material needs of student refugees continue to be met through the generosity of the international community.

ANNEX I

Summary of projects being financed by UNHCR or in co-operation
with UNHCR in 1983/1984 as at 30 June 1984

(United States dollars)

	<u>Amount allocated</u>
A. <u>Botswana</u>	
1. Provision of scholarships in Botswana at the junior secondary or vocational training levels	75 000.00
2. Recurrent expenditures in 1984	
(a) Care and maintenance of southern African refugees	70 000.00
(b) Transport of South African and Namibian student refugees for further studies	17 391.30
(c) Counselling services	45 000.00
(d) Resettlement	4 000.00
(e) New multinational settlement at Dukwe	700 000.00
(f) Local settlement	10 000.00
3. United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa	<u>20 000.00</u>
Total	941 391.30
B. <u>Lesotho</u>	
1. Recurrent expenditure in 1983	
(a) Care and maintenance	100 000.00
(b) Counselling services	60 700.00
(c) Resettlement	30 000.00
(d) Recurrent costs for Transit Centre at Maseru	15 573.77
(e) Local settlement (including self-employment)	452 426.23
2. United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa	<u>50 000.00</u>
Total	708 700.00

Amount allocated

C. Swaziland

1. Recurrent expenditures in 1984	
(a) Scholarships at lower secondary level	120 000.00
(b) Care and maintenance of southern African refugees	80 000.00
(c) Counselling services	48 000.00
(d) Local settlement	48 520.00
(e) Resettlement	10 000.00
(f) Rural refugee settlement at Nizevane	553 000.00
2. United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa	30 000.00
3. Construction of Reception Centre at Malindza	<u>67 491.80</u>
Total	956 811.80

D. Zambia

1. United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa	Nil
2. Supplementary assistance project for South African refugees	180 000.00
3. Assistance project for Namibian refugees at Nyango Centre	70 000.00
4. Multi-purpose assistance	<u>234 756.00</u>
Total	484 756.00

E. Education of South Africans and Namibians in other countries

Education in lower secondary, vocational and technical training schools in African countries (including costs relating to selection, transport and scholarships for 659 South African and Namibian student refugees)

Total	<u>1 119 866.00</u>
GRAND TOTAL	<u>4 211 525.10</u>