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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Thirty-fifth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 376th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 12 October 1984 at 8.30 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. MEBAZAA (Tunisia)

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UNHCR assistance activities (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 8.50 p.m.

UNHCR ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES (agenda item 8) (continued) (A/AC.96/639 and Add.2)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited comments on document A/AC.96/639, which would be considered section by section.

SECTION I - AFRICA

Algeria

2. Mr. SKALLI (Morocco) said his delegation had serious reservations regarding the contents and wording of the paragraphs relating to UNHCR assistance to people living in the Tindouf region. The report referred specifically to "Sahrawi refugees"; that was a departure from the prudent wording used in previous reports. UNHCR could have employed the formulation used in the General Assembly's report to ICARA II, which referred to a "group identified by Algerian authorities as Sahrawi refugees". It was not in UNHCR's interest to appear to be taking sides on any issue.

3. It was well known that the Algerian authorities, while describing those people as refugees, did not respect the instruments normally regulating refugee status, as for example, the 1969 OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa, which provided that countries of asylum should give refugees the texts of appeals inviting them to return home, that they should settle them at a reasonable distance from the frontier of their country of origin and that they should prohibit them from attacking any State member of OAU by any activity. However, so far the two appeals by the Moroccan Government, in July 1976 and November 1983, inviting the few thousands of persons from the former Spanish Sahara living in the camps to return freely and safely to their homes had been ignored; the so-called refugee camps had been established near the Moroccan border and men, women and even young children living in them had been subjected to military training, the camps serving as bases for indoctrination and armed aggression against Morocco. Furthermore, the number of those living in the Tindouf camps had gone on expanding over the years. At first estimated by the authorities of the neighbouring country at 20,000, their numbers were currently reported to be 165,000 - an implausible figure in view of the fact that the 1974 census by the former administering Power, Spain, had put the population of the Sahara at 73,487. In fact, the vast majority of those living in the camps were victims of the drought which had prevailed throughout the Sahel since 1973. In 1977, the Secretary-General of the United Nations had informed UNHCR of an agreement between the two Governments to conduct an investigative census of the people in the Tindouf camps on the basis of the 1974 census, but that census was still awaited.

4. His delegation wondered whether, in view of the disappointing results of UNHCR action, assistance should be continued from year to year without doing anything to seek a durable solution to the problem, in particular by voluntary repatriation. Morocco had given repeated proof of its goodwill. For humanitarian reasons, it had in the early days agreed to assistance being provided to the inhabitants of the Tindouf camps under the special programmes and subsequently under the general programmes as a means of finding a durable solution, to which such assistance had always been linked in the decisions of the Executive Committee.

5. However, the assistance appeared to have become institutionalized and was yearly increasing, without any justification. Nor did it appear that much could be expected by way of durable solutions from the recent agreement to establish a UNHCR branch office in Algeria. Therefore, his delegation considered that there were two alternatives: either the natives of the Sahara in the camps should be regarded as refugees in accordance with the relevant texts of UNHCR, all of whose provisions should in that case be applied to them, in particular the option of repatriation or they should be regarded as a highly politicized group engaged in activities outside any humanitarian context, in which case UNHCR should withdraw assistance so that it did not underwrite what was clearly an exclusively political operation.
6. For nine years, Morocco had shown understanding and flexibility in the hope that UNHCR would take the real measure of the problem in order to fulfil its mandate. In performing it only partially, UNHCR was involving donor countries against their will in a regional conflict. A recent French television documentary on the situation in the Sahara and at Tindouf had provided irrefutable evidence about the militarization of the camps and the number of the so-called refugees, which showed that the way in which the problem was being treated by the Executive Committee was merely a parody of "humanitarian action".
7. Accordingly, his delegation regretted to announce its formal opposition to the inclusion in the 1985 budget of the funds requested for assistance to those living in the Tindouf camps. Morocco could not approve an action which was not in the interests of those it purported to assist. However, his delegation did not oppose the allocation of the necessary credits to open and staff the UNHCR branch office in Algeria, provided that the office devoted its efforts to promoting either voluntary repatriation or permanent resettlement in a locality other than the frontier region and in conformity with the Statute and habitual procedures of UNHCR. In opposing the request for a credit of \$US 3,632,000, his delegation wished to renew Morocco's undertaking to contribute to the promotion of truly humanitarian solutions which would relieve the UNHCR budget of a burden that had weighed on it for nine years. He hoped that the members of the Executive Committee would understand that his delegation could no longer underwrite an operation which was in fact barely disguised assistance to those who were financing armed aggression against his country.
8. Mr. OULD-ROUIS (Algeria), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that throughout the session, his delegation had adopted a responsible attitude to the work of the Executive Committee which was, in accordance with the UNHCR Statute, apolitical and wholly humanitarian. He would not therefore comment on the way in which the Moroccan representative had questioned the objective attitude of UNHCR or challenged that of all the States members of the Committee on the subject under consideration. He merely wished to deplore the fact that the Moroccan representative, under cover of mildly critical observations addressed to the High Commissioner, had endeavoured to cast doubt on the credibility of the Algerian Government with regard to the status and origin of Sahrawi refugees who had found asylum in Algeria, thus distracting attention from the real reasons which had led to their flight by manoeuvres whose sole effect was to hold up the Committee's work. The problem underlying the situation of the Sahrawi refugees appeared on the agendas of the competent political bodies of the United Nations and OAU, which had set the framework for settling the issue. If there were obstacles to the implementation of decisions designed to promote durable solutions, that was not the fault of the

Algerian Government. Algeria had consistently favoured the promotion of such solutions and had constantly repeated its commitment to work to that end. Voluntary repatriation was one such solution, but it required certain preconditions. The Moroccan representative wished UNHCR to undertake the repatriation of the Sahrawi refugees on the basis of guarantees, amnesties and the like proposed by his Government. That was indeed a novel method of disregarding the will of a people and ignoring the relevant decisions of international bodies. His delegation saw no new factor which would enable UNHCR to respond to the request of the Moroccan Government, still less satisfy the provisions of chapter II, paragraph 6, section A, subparagraph (e) of the UNHCR Statute.

9. With regard to the status and origin of the Sahrawi refugees in Algeria, he would refer the Moroccan representative to the summary records of numerous previous sessions of the Executive Committee. It was regrettable that at each session, when assistance to those refugees was under discussion, it was the representative of the country that had brought about the situation who questioned the validity of UNHCR's action on their behalf. The numerous countries and international organizations contributing to the assistance programme were perfectly well acquainted with the situation and, as far as he was aware, none of them had expressed any doubts as to the humanitarian nature of such assistance. The delaying tactics employed by the Moroccan representative did not provide a constructive response to the relevant decisions of international bodies or replace practical action dictated by a sincere wish to solve the problem of Western Sahara in accordance with the wishes of its people.

10. Mr. CHRAÏBI (Morocco), speaking in exercise of his right of reply, said it was well known that his Government had given formal guarantees in respect of the voluntary repatriation of Sahrawis in the Tindouf camps. Those among the inhabitants of the camps who originally came from the so-called Western Sahara must be made aware of his Government's proposals and given the opportunity to opt for voluntary repatriation. No one was authorized to speak in their name or to attribute to them wishes which they had never expressed. They must be allowed to tell UNHCR representatives directly, without witnesses, whether they wished to remain in the camps or return home freely and safely. A claim that voluntary repatriation could only be realized within the framework of an over-all solution of the political problem was completely alien to UNHCR's humanitarian aims. The organization should reflect on the consequences which would flow from such an attitude. The High Commissioner himself had warned against his office becoming involved in political bargaining.

11. With regard to the decisions of the United Nations and OAU, he would recall that it was on the proposal of the King of Morocco that the decision to organize a referendum in the former Spanish Sahara had been adopted by the African Heads of States in 1981. The offer to conduct a fair referendum and to abide by its results had subsequently been repeated on two occasions to the United Nations General Assembly. It had not yet taken place because those who apparently advocated it were constantly putting obstacles in the way. As for the reason for the refugee problem, it would be recalled that the Algerian regular army, which had already been in the Western Sahara when the Spanish troops had withdrawn, had on its return to Algeria forcibly taken with it the few thousands of Sahrawis living on its route.

12. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that it had always acted by consensus and appealed to the delegations of Algeria and Morocco to attempt to reconcile their viewpoints. It was the aim of the Executive Committee to depoliticize its discussions as much as possible.

13. UNHCR had done what it had to do and an agreement had now been signed to establish a branch office in Algiers. It was certainly one of the aims of UNHCR to promote durable solutions, but it was faced with an intractable political situation.

14. He suggested that the meeting should be suspended for consultations in an attempt to find common ground between the two delegations and UNHCR.

15. It was so agreed.

The meeting was suspended at 9.25 p.m. and resumed at 10.20 p.m.

16. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should continue its review of document A/AC.96/639 but defer the adoption of decisions until a later meeting.

17. It was so agreed.

Somalia

18. Mr. KEBEDE (Observer for Ethiopia) recalled that at a previous meeting both the Somali and his own delegation had made it clear that owing to the social background of the refugees in the region, an assessment of their numbers by neutral and objective bodies was required. A counting of refugees had already been imposed as a pre-condition for assistance in Ethiopia. In view of the fact that all member States of UNHCR enjoyed equal rights, he hoped that the Executive Committee would instruct the Secretariat to make such an objective assessment of the numbers of refugees in all countries of the region.

19. Mr. ABDULKARIM (Observer for Somalia) said he wished to remind the international community that Somalia had the largest number of refugees of any country in Africa. It was not fair to question Somalia's efforts or the provision of assistance to them. Somalia's action was purely humanitarian. He wished to reserve his delegation's position on the proposed programme for Ethiopia when it came up for adoption. It was difficult to attribute any humanitarian sentiment to a country which at an early stage in the exodus of refugees from Ethiopia to Somalia had denied their existence in such large numbers and opposed the provision of assistance to them.

20. Mr. KEBEDE (Observer for Ethiopia), speaking in exercise of his right of reply, said that in his understanding the Ethiopian programme had already been considered and adopted. On previous occasions, his delegation had pointed out to the Executive Committee that the region of Ethiopia from which ethnic Somalis claimed to have come had never had a population of more than 500,000 people, according to an assessment made by an independent non-governmental organization at the time. The Somali Government had claimed that there were 700,000 ethnic Somalis from Ethiopia in Somalia. It was difficult to see how the number of refugees could exceed the population of the localities from which they came. The figures had been, and continued to be, fabricated. The truth was that no less than 380,000 refugees had recently returned from Somalia and were badly in need

of assistance. They had been visited by a UNHCR delegation. An independent non-governmental organization was engaged in counting them and 260,000 had already been registered. How then could the number of refugees in Somalia continue to grow? The problems in his region of Africa required practical solutions and not rhetoric. The practical solution was to count the refugees and he could not see why the Somali Government should oppose it. There must be no double standards, and assistance should be proportional to the size of the humanitarian problem.

Sudan

21. Mr. EL AHMADI (Sudan) thanked the Director of the Assistance Division for his detailed and clear statement concerning the assistance programmes. He also thanked the High Commissioner, the Deputy High Commissioner and the secretariat for their endeavours to ensure relief and a life of dignity for the refugees with a view to helping them to reach the stage of self-sufficiency and self-reliance. The Sudan, which was pursuing an open-door policy with regard to the admission of refugees, was also endeavouring to provide them with a life of dignity in its territory and, to that end, had established agricultural and semi-urban settlements and residential areas in irrigation projects. Seventy agricultural settlements had been established, of which 24 were in eastern Sudan and 46 in the equatorial region of southern Sudan. Those settlements were accommodating about one third of the total number of refugees in Sudan, the others being housed in makeshift accommodation although the Sudanese Government, in collaboration with UNHCR, was endeavouring to relocate them to better organized residential areas in which it would be easier to cater for their welfare.

22. Most of the assistance was being channelled towards refugees living in organized settlements and those living in makeshift accommodation in urban areas were receiving only small amounts of assistance which were being allocated mainly to the support of intermediate schools and hospitals. Consequently, the refugees living in urban areas were placing a tremendous burden on the existing social services which were in need of further support. In view of the constant influx of refugees and their crowded living conditions in eastern Sudan, the Sudanese Government had been forced to establish transit centres during the current year at Wad el Hileiwu, Um Rakuba and Wad Sharifee to accommodate 15,000 refugees. However, those centres were currently accommodating more than 25,000 persons and consideration was therefore being given to the possibility of opening a new centre in order to safeguard the health and security of the refugees. He expressed appreciation for the rapid and positive manner in which the High Commissioner and the UNHCR office at Khartoum had responded to the need for the establishment of those centres. However, in view of the high cost of their establishment, the Sudanese Government was continuing its policy of accommodating the refugees in agricultural settlements in other parts of the country, particularly in the central region to which a large number of refugees had been relocated. The Office of the Commissioner for Refugees, which had been established in 1967, was currently implementing refugee projects on behalf of the Sudanese Government and in full collaboration with UNHCR. In spite of various problems that had been encountered, 80 per cent of the programmes for 1984 had been completed with assistance gratefully received from voluntary agencies.

23. He indicated that, notwithstanding the efforts made by UNHCR to assist in the implementation of projects, there were still some aspects in which further improvements could be made in the functioning of the Procurement Unit. It had been noticed that some purchases had been made without reference to the competent governmental authorities in order to ascertain the proper specifications appropriate to the nature and circumstances of the country. In the case of spare parts, for example, failure to ascertain the correct specifications could result in delays in the programmes. Consequently, it was essential to obtain prior governmental approval for any purchases to be made through the Procurement Unit of UNHCR in order to ensure that programmes were implemented within their budgetary limits.

24. He emphasized his country's full support for the contents of document A/AC.96/639, which gave a clear and comprehensive picture of the situation in the Sudan, notwithstanding various developments in 1985 that might have a positive or negative effect on the budget.

Uganda

25. Mr. AWUYO (Uganda) observed that no matter how generously refugees were assisted, no asylum seeker could consider life meaningful as long as he had no country to which he owed allegiance. Unfortunately, States and organizations concerned with refugee welfare were increasingly prone to think that it was easier for the country of asylum to naturalize refugees than for the country of origin to accept them back. States which had received refugees and accommodated them for long periods felt that they were expected to shoulder an unfair share of the burden in that way. Apart from the fact that refugees had the right of choice in the matter, their countries of origin had a moral duty to their own people and should make a gesture of goodwill to those who really wanted to return home, thus providing a durable solution by way of repatriation.

26. Uganda was grateful for the allocation of funds for programmes in two areas, one for refugees and the other for returnees. It hoped that every effort would be made to expedite projects relating to rural settlements. His delegation had noted with satisfaction the strong support given for the resettlement of returnees in the West Nile region. It appreciated the recent visit of the Director of the Assistance Division to inspect the work of the UNHCR office and of non-governmental organizations in that area. Uganda strongly believed that voluntary repatriation was the best solution to the refugee problem and abided by its commitment in that regard. It urged UNHCR and the countries of asylum to take the necessary steps to implement the wishes of Ugandans who wanted to return home.

United Republic of Tanzania

27. Mr. NG'ONGONO (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the United Republic of Tanzania had about 200,000 refugees, the great majority of whom lived in six organized refugee settlements. It was his Government's policy to assist such settlements to achieve self-sufficiency by extending social and economic facilities to them on the same basis as to the local population. Thus, there were day-care centres and schools for refugee children and community centres, health centres and dispensaries primarily serving refugees. The annual cost of running such services was about 18 million Tanzanian shillings from his country's limited resources, in addition to the grant of sizeable plots of arable land. The United Republic of Tanzania had been successful in achieving local integration. All the refugee settlements were more than self-sufficient in food. The international community should realize that when refugees were given opportunities

and the requisite basic assistance and protection, they would cease to be a burden not only to their country of asylum but also to the local community.

28. Turning to the report on his country's programmes, he said that while his Government agreed in principle to handing over the Mishamo refugee settlement (A/AC.96/639, para. 327), it wished, after a thorough analysis of the financial implications, to discuss with all the parties concerned the detailed modalities, including subsequent administrative and running costs. With regard to the Zairian refugees spontaneously settled in the west of Tanzania (paragraph 329), his Government proposed to tackle the issue in two stages: the first stage would be the repatriation of those Zairians who wished to return home, in conjunction with the parties concerned and UNHCR. The second stage would be to resettle those who opted to remain in Tanzania in organized refugee settlements. The latter stage would require careful preparation, and he hoped that UNHCR would provide the necessary assistance as his Government hoped to embark on that exercise in 1985. With regard paragraph 341, he said that, in collaboration with UNHCR, the Tanzanian Government was endeavouring to see how refugees whose country of first asylum had been Uganda and who had crossed into Tanzania could be assisted by returning there or through some other appropriate alternative. His Government appreciated UNHCR's quick response in the matter and also the excellent co-operation it enjoyed generally with the organization. Finally, he thanked the non-governmental organizations, the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service, the Christian Council of Tanzania and Caritas Tanzania, and the World Food Programme for their assistance with refugee programmes in his country and the Commonwealth Secretariat for its efforts to establish a distant education unit for South African refugees.

Zambia

29. Mr. SIMUMBA (Observer for Zambia) said that Zambia had over 100,000 refugees, the majority spontaneously settled along the western and north-western frontiers. They had lived in Zambia for many years and were the beneficiaries of assistance programmes implemented by the Zambian Catholic Secretariat in the north-western province and the Zambian Christian Refugee Service in the western province. The number of refugees had made it necessary to register them and issue them with refugee identity cards, and his Government was grateful to UNHCR for its assistance in that matter. The registration of refugees in the designated camps had been completed and the registration of spontaneously settled refugees was also progressing well.

30. The assistance project in the north-western province, which was continuing during 1984, had concentrated on increasing food supplies by strengthening extension services for fish-farming and agriculture. In 1985, further assistance in the sectors of agriculture, fisheries, health and education was proposed to benefit some 16,000 spontaneously settled refugees in that province. There had been a serious drought in the western province and UNHCR had provided emergency assistance as well as agricultural aid. A recent survey had stressed that continued assistance would be needed in the agricultural sector. The proposed appropriation of \$US 500,000 to assist 60,000 Angolans in the western province would be most welcome.

31. Zambia had assisted many Namibians at the Nyango centre and many South Africans through the ANC farm in Lusaka (A/AC.96/639, para. 396). He appealed to the international community to assist the national liberation movements, which, as recent developments in South Africa had shown, needed continued support.

SECTION II - AMERICAS AND EUROPE

A. Americas

32. Mrs. RUESTA de FURTER (Venezuela) said she wished to raise a minor matter of presentation: it would be more consistent if the North American section was divided into the United States and Canada. She wished to take the opportunity to pay public tribute to the work of the UNHCR secretariat staff dealing with Latin America and to that of the voluntary agencies working in the region, particularly the International Social Service, which represented UNHCR in Venezuela.

B. Europe

Austria

33. Mr. KRIZEK (Austria) said that the flow of asylum seekers was increasing: during the first nine months of 1984, 5,800 persons had asked for asylum in Austria, as compared with about 4,000 over the same period in 1983. The people reached Austria in a variety of ways, some of them dramatic. The Federal Ministry of the Interior was currently taking care of nearly 5,200 asylum seekers and, since the capacity of the refugee camps was just under 2,000, it had been necessary for the remainder to be lodged at Government expense in various inns and hotels throughout Austria. Many asylum seekers, being unable to return to their country of origin, wished to be admitted to one of the traditional countries of immigration. Accordingly, there was a continuing need for international solidarity, as demonstrated by co-ordinated efforts between the receiving countries, UNHCR, IOM and voluntary agencies. In particular, he wished to refer to the importance to countries of first asylum of finding solutions for disabled refugees, as stressed in the report on the resettlement of refugees (A/AC.96/640, paras. 34 and 35). The support of UNHCR in that connection was very valuable.

34. Asylum seekers stayed in Austria if that was their first choice or if they were given no opportunity to emigrate to third countries. The Federal Ministry of the Interior and the United Nations' Fund for Refugees in Vienna provided them with financial assistance to buy accommodation and household equipment and attend language educational training courses, when they started life outside the camps. To date in 1984, 564 cases, representing some 1,086 people, had received assistance from the Fund. He wished to express his Government's satisfaction at the efficient work of the Board of the Fund on which the UNHCR branch office in Vienna served. In 1983, Austria had spent nearly \$20 million on refugees and the same amount would be required in 1984. In conclusion, he assured the High Commissioner that the Austrian authorities would continue their efforts to increase their financial support, particularly by participating in the special programmes.

SECTION III - EAST AND SOUTH ASIA AND OCEANIA

Hong Kong

35. Mr. WOO (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of Hong Kong, said that since Hong Kong was one of the most densely populated places on earth, it had been necessary to impose severe restrictions on entry for residence, even by those who had close relatives in the Territory. Nevertheless, since 1978 Hong Kong had given temporary asylum to over 100,000 "boat people" from Viet Nam. Despite the valiant efforts of UNHCR, nearly 13,000 such refugees still remained in

seven refugee centres spread across the Territory. The burden for Hong Kong was greatly increased by the fact that over 8,000 of the refugees had been in transit centres for over two years and 2,300 for over five years. Their natural frustration at an indefinite wait without any prospect of a permanent solution had erupted earlier in 1984 in a hunger strike by 2,500 refugees in one of the centres. Hong Kong could not on its own relieve such frustrations. It had already absorbed over 14,000 refugees from Indo-China since 1975 and it would continue to absorb the few who met the severe criteria for residence. But large-scale settlement was not feasible. Hong Kong would continue to provide first asylum for the "boat people" but it must look to the international community to provide a durable solution. It was to be hoped that conditions would allow larger numbers to return home in safety. But resettlement must also play a part. Hong Kong was very grateful to those countries, particularly Australia, Canada and the United States, which took refugees on a regular basis and to those other countries which did so from time to time. If Hong Kong was to cope with its grave problems in acting as a place of first asylum, a durable solution must be found for those now stranded in Hong Kong camps without hope. He asked the representatives present to convey to their Governments Hong Kong's urgent appeal for help in alleviating the situation.

SECTION IV - MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH-WEST ASIA

Islamic Republic of Iran

36. Mr. MAHALLATI (Islamic Republic of Iran) observed that the preservation of the special features of UNHCR, one of the few international organizations which afforded practical services to the world community, depended on the ability of its directors to protect it from political manipulation. Similarly, no political or economic motivation should guide donor countries to give priority to any particular group of refugees to the detriment of others.

37. For five years, under difficult post-revolutionary conditions, the Islamic Republic had catered for the needs of nearly 2 million Afghan refugees, discreetly and without propaganda. If the aggravating factor of the imposed war was also taken into consideration, it would be apparent that the economic burden had been enormous, while the social burden, more difficult to quantify, could be appreciated by those countries which had experienced similar problems, albeit to a lesser degree. However, the Islamic Republic had provided assistance to the Afghan refugees within the framework of Islamic and humanitarian duties and did not view the issue from an economic angle.

38. Iran had settled the Afghans in quarantine camps on arrival, subsequently in temporary housing centres and finally in the cities and villages according to their preferences. It had employed the refugees, especially heads of families, through employment centres, the creation of handicraft workshops and assistance to refugee herdsmen with livestock fodder. It had provided health services, drinking water and access roads to refugee centres. During 1984, the Afghan refugees had been issued with identity cards which enabled them to travel to any part of the country and engage in any profession they chose. Another major service had been the admission of thousands of Afghan students at different levels of education and the establishment of adult education classes. Plans for their education at university level would shortly be implemented.

39. The fact that his Government had not accepted aid from international organizations, especially UNHCR, which had a clear duty in that respect, justified its claim that assistance to the refugees was totally void of propaganda overtones. The reason why his Government had recently established co-operation with UNHCR was that the extensive new programmes for the construction of camps and hospitals required considerable external aid in addition to the allocation from the national budget. He was confident that members of the Executive Committee would agree that UNHCR might be expected to show appreciation of Iran's services to the Afghan refugees without hitherto requiring financial assistance. But the allocation proposed in document A/AC.96/639/Add.2, for projects inspected and approved by UNHCR representatives, would cover only a small part of their cost in 1985. The real cost of implementing the projects would exceed \$US 100 million. His Government would be disappointed if UNHCR was unable to provide at least one third of that amount. He would not dilate upon the continuing influx of Afghan refugees, amounting to hundreds daily, or the fact that Iran had hosted over 100,000 Iraqi refugees since the beginning of the imposed war. He would merely state that the amount his Government had requested was really the minimum that UNHCR should allocate if the burden-sharing was to be genuine and not symbolic. He therefore proposed the addition of the following amendment to paragraph 2 of document A/AC.96/839/Add.2:

"The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has informed the High Commissioner that, on the basis of a thorough assessment of the needs of Afghan refugees and taking into account the resources mobilized by the Government itself, it estimated that international assistance at a level of some \$30 million was required during 1985. It is therefore expected that the High Commissioner will provide his good offices in mobilizing or making available the additional international resources required during the revision of the programme in the middle of 1985."

40. Mr. ZOLLNER (Director, Assistance Division) expressed his appreciation of the Iranian representative's reference to the fact that concrete co-operation with UNHCR had been initiated. He suggested that the text which the Iranian representative had proposed as an amendment to document A/AC.96/639/Add.2 might more appropriately be noted in the report of the Executive Committee.

41. Mr. MAHALLATI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that having regard to the allocation to a neighbouring country which was in a similar position to his own, he believed that the amount requested by his Government was a minimum. He was not clear what weight a note in the report of the Executive Committee would have when the allocations were revised.

42. Mr. ZOLLNER (Director, Assistance Division) pointed out that such an amendment to document A/AC.96/639/Add.2 would not constitute a formal guarantee. The comment by the Iranian Government would carry the same weight if it was noted in the report. The essential point was that the text should appear in UNHCR documents. There was a procedure to revise UNHCR programmes in the course of the year and the staff of the UNHCR branch office shortly to be established in Teheran could evaluate the situation on the spot and duly inform the Executive Committee when the programme required revision.

SECTION V - OVER-ALL ALLOCATIONS

43. Noting that there were no comments on Section V, the CHAIRMAN said that the Committee's review of document A/AC.96/639 had been completed.

The meeting rose at 11.40 p.m.

41. M. MAHALLATI (République islamique d'Iran) dit que, eu égard à l'allocation attribuée à un pays voisin se trouvant dans une situation analogue à celle de l'Iran, il pense que le montant demandé par son gouvernement est un minimum. Il ne sait pas quel poids une note insérée dans le rapport du Comité exécutif aura lorsque les allocations seront révisées.

42. M. ZOLLNER (Directeur de la Division de l'assistance) fait observer qu'un amendement, dans le sens proposé par l'Iran, apporté au document A/AC.96/639/Add.2 n'offrira pas de garantie formelle. L'observation du Gouvernement iranien aura le même poids si elle figure dans le rapport. Le point essentiel est que le texte figure dans les documents du HCR. Il existe une procédure qui permet de réviser les programmes du HCR au cours de l'année et le personnel de la délégation du HCR qui va s'installer bientôt à Téhéran pourra évaluer la situation sur place et informer dûment le Comité exécutif lorsque le programme devra être révisé.

SECTION V - ALLOCATIONS GLOBALES

43. Notant qu'il n'y a pas d'observations concernant la section V, le PRESIDENT dit que l'examen par le Comité du document A/AC.96/639 est achevé.

La séance est levée à 23 h 40.