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REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR REFUGEES

Report of the Third Committee

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1. The General Assembly, at its 478th plenary meeting held on 25 September 1954, decided to allocate to the Third Committee the item "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees".
2. The Committee considered the item at its 545th to 548th and 550th to 556th meetings held between 1 and 18 October 1954. The Committee had before it the report of the High Commissioner^{1/} and chapter IV, section V of the report of the Economic and Social Council.^{2/}
3. At the 545th meeting, the High Commissioner made a statement in which he gave information about the activities of his Office during the past year. He said that ~~these activities were fourfold~~; the protection of the refugees under its mandate; the search for permanent solutions for the problem of refugees; the co-ordination of the activities of the voluntary agencies working for refugees; and, under General Assembly resolution 538 B (VI), emergency aid to the most needy groups. He gave detailed information about camp population and stressed the fact that the camp adoption scheme initiated by his Office had been further developed during the past year. He pointed out that the so-called difficult

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Ninth Session, Supplement No. 1, documents A/2648 and Add.2. A/2648/Add.1 (Supplement 13 A) has been placed on the agenda of the Fifth Committee under item 36(e) of the agenda of the session.

2/ Ibid., Supplement No. 3, document A/2686.

cases among refugees presented the hardest problem, as there was little hope that these refugees would ever be integrated in the economy of the countries of residence or of any other country. Under the statute of his Office, he was called upon to help Governments to find permanent solutions and reduce the number of refugees requiring protection. His Office had taken active steps to refer to the appropriate authorities any request for repatriation which had been received from individual refugees. The experience of the past year had shown that the refugee problem with which the High Commissioner was concerned was far from solved, and if his Office continued activities on the lines which had been followed till then, it would not be solved. The work which had been undertaken by his Office under the Ford Foundation grant had shown the lines on which a programme for permanent solutions could be developed. Such a programme would require about \$12 million from international sources which should be matched with contributions from the countries of residence. At the 550th and 551st meetings, the High Commissioner gave additional information in reply to the questions of various delegations.

4. The Secretary-General, in the course of a statement at the 545th meeting, urged the Committee to help the United Nations to make an effective contribution to the High Commissioner's work, bearing in mind the long-term character of his task.
5. In the discussion the majority of the representatives expressed the appreciation of their Governments for the work of the Office of the High Commissioner and generally supported his programme for promoting permanent solutions. A few representatives, however, expressed criticism of international action undertaken on behalf of refugees since the end of the Second World War through various international organizations and the Office of the High Commissioner. They considered that the Office tended to perpetuate the refugee problem which could have been solved a long time ago through the repatriation of the refugees in accordance with General Assembly resolution 8 (I) of 12 February 1946.
6. Many representatives emphasized the international character of the refugee problem and the responsibility which the international community should continue to bear in this connexion.

7. Some delegations favoured the merging of the fund for emergency aid with that proposed for permanent solutions. They felt that a time-limit for international assistance for permanent solutions should be set. It was generally felt that a new executive committee representing the Governments primarily concerned with this problem should be established.
8. Doubts were expressed that a fund of \$12 million would be sufficient either to provide a solution for the problem of refugees or to decrease their number. It was suggested that the overseas resettlement of refugees would be facilitated if international assistance for the economic development of countries of immigration were forthcoming.
9. Some delegations believed that the system of voluntary contributions to the fund for permanent solutions was inadequate and therefore stressed the necessity for the General Assembly to appropriate directly the required funds.
10. It was the strong belief of some delegations that the countries of residence of refugees should not be asked to bear the full financial responsibility for the refugees.
11. A draft resolution was submitted by Sweden (A/C.3/L.402) according to which the funds necessary to enable the High Commissioner to implement his programme would be appropriated directly by the General Assembly.
12. A second draft resolution was submitted by Australia, Belgium, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, the Netherlands, Turkey and the United States of America (A/C.3/L.403 and Add.1) requesting the Negotiating Committee for Extra-Budgetary Funds, in co-operation with the High Commissioner, to negotiate with the Governments of Member and non-Member States for voluntary contributions towards a fund to be devoted to the promotion of permanent solutions and to permit emergency aid to be given to the most needy cases of refugees.
13. An amendment to the joint draft resolution was submitted by Uruguay (A/C.3/L.404) which stressed the problems of certain family groups of refugees; this amendment was accepted by the sponsors.
14. Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen submitted amendments (A/C.3/L.405) to various paragraphs of the joint draft resolution (A/C.3/L.403) drawing attention to the fact that certain of the countries of residence were not

in a position to assume after a certain period the full financial responsibility for refugees; they suggested that the countries of residence should be requested only to provide all the assistance within their power for the refugees.

15. At the 556th meeting, a final revision of the text of the joint draft resolution (A/C.3/L.403/Rev.3) was circulated. At the same meeting, the six-Power amendments (A/C.3/L.405) were withdrawn.

16. The Swedish draft resolution (A/C.3/L.402) was rejected by 27 votes to 9, with 21 abstentions.

17. The Committee voted as follows on the joint draft resolution (A/C.3/L.403/Rev.3):

(a) Fourth paragraph of the preamble: on a separate vote, taken at the request of the representatives of Greece and Lebanon, the Committee decided by 33 votes to 11, with 6 abstentions, to maintain the following phrase: "Considering that while the ultimate responsibility for the refugees within the mandate of the High Commissioner falls in fact upon the countries of residence";

(b) Operative paragraph 5: on a separate vote, taken at the request of the representative of Iraq, this paragraph was adopted by 36 votes to 7, with 10 abstentions;

(c) Operative paragraph 6: on a separate vote, taken at the request of the representative of Saudi Arabia, this paragraph was adopted by 32 votes to 10, with 11 abstentions;

(d) The joint draft resolution as a whole was approved by 40 votes to 5, with 10 abstentions.

18. The Third Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The General Assembly,

Having considered the problems of refugees within the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the light of his report to the General Assembly at its ninth session,

Having noted with satisfaction the work accomplished for refugees,

Noting that in spite of the efforts made there is little hope that - at the present rate of repatriation, resettlement, or integration - a satisfactory solution to these problems will be reached within a reasonable period of time,

Considering that while the ultimate responsibility for the refugees within the mandate of the High Commissioner falls in fact upon the countries of residence, certain of these countries have to face particularly heavy burdens as a result of their geographical situation, and some complementary aid has been shown to be necessary to accelerate the implementation of a programme for permanent solutions.

Recalling resolution 728 (VIII) of the General Assembly and resolution 549 (XVIII) of the Economic and Social Council,

Considering that the programme outlined in the report of the High Commissioner contains a number of constructive elements for an effective attempt at achieving a permanent solution to the problems of certain groups of the refugees who are the concern of the High Commissioner, having special regard to family groups,

1. Authorizes the High Commissioner, in accordance with his Statute, to undertake a programme designed to achieve permanent solutions within the period of his current mandate for the refugees included within the proposals in his report to the General Assembly at its ninth session (A/2648, chapter IV, section 4, and A/2648/Add.2, paragraphs 1 to 11);

2. Requests the Negotiating Committee for Extra-Budgetary Funds, in co-operation with the High Commissioner, to negotiate with the Governments of Member and non-Member States for voluntary contributions towards a fund based on the proposals of the High Commissioner (the amount to be determined by the High Commissioner's Advisory Committee at its next session), to be devoted principally to the promotion of permanent solutions, and also to permit emergency assistance to the most needy cases, such fund to incorporate the fund authorized by the General Assembly in resolution 538 B (VI);

3. Authorizes the High Commissioner to make appeals for funds for the purposes set forth in paragraph 2 above;

4. Requests the Economic and Social Council, not later than its nineteenth session and in the light of proposals to be submitted to it by the High Commissioner upon the advice of his Advisory Committee, either to establish an Executive Committee responsible for giving directives to the

High Commissioner in carrying out his programme and for exercising the necessary controls in the use of funds allotted to the Office of the High Commissioner or to revise the terms of reference and composition of the Advisory Committee in order to enable it to carry out the same duties;

5. Requests the High Commissioner to prepare, for presentation to the inter-governmental body mentioned in paragraph 4 above, detailed proposals for projects designed to achieve permanent solutions, including plans for adequate financial or other contributions from sources within the countries of residence;

6. Requests the Governments concerned, in the negotiation of agreements with the High Commissioner for the projects for permanent solutions under this programme, to give assurances that they will assume full financial responsibility should any of the refugees within the scope of the programme still require assistance at the end of the stipulated period;

7. Urges Member and non-Member States to co-operate with the High Commissioner to the fullest extent in this programme;

8. Requests the High Commissioner to include in his annual report a statement on the measures which he has taken under the terms of the present resolution.
