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## REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

### Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Yahya MAHMASSANI (Lebanon)

1. At its 1676th plenary meeting, on 27 September 1968, the General Assembly allocated to the Third Committee item 51 of its agenda entitled "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees". The Committee considered this item at its 1611th to 1613th meetings, on 18 and 19 November.
2. At the 1611th meeting the High Commissioner made a statement,<sup>1/</sup> supplementing the written report which he had submitted to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council.<sup>2/</sup> He summarized the present state of refugee problems and spoke of the new and main aspects of his work.

### I. GENERAL DISCUSSION

3. Delegations expressed their profound appreciation of the work of the High Commissioner's Office, commending him personally for his constructive approach in handling the problems of refugees. Congratulations were also conveyed to the High Commissioner for his election by the General Assembly, at its 1720th plenary meeting, on 15 November 1968, for a further term of five years, beginning on 1 January 1969.

<sup>1/</sup> For a summary of the High Commissioner's statement see A/C.3/SR.1611.

<sup>2/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Supplement No. 11 (A/7211) and Supplement No. 11 A (A/7211/Add.1).

4. Several delegations noted with satisfaction the striking progress achieved in the rural integration of refugees in Africa, where the High Commissioner's major efforts were concentrated. Specific reference was made to the increasingly close co-operation between the High Commissioner's Office and the specialized agencies.
5. Nevertheless, many delegations noted that the number of new refugees was increasing. Tribute was paid to those African countries serving as countries of asylum. Some delegations expressed the view that the increasing number of refugees in Africa was linked to the continuation of colonial and minority régimes on that continent.
6. A number of delegations outlined measures which their countries have taken regarding refugees as a result of recent events in Europe and they expressed the hope that the human aspect of that problem could be solved speedily.
7. Speaking of the situation in Asia, some delegations commended the High Commissioner's efforts to assist Tibetan refugees.
8. Commenting on the important function of international protection, delegations noted with approval the growing number of accessions to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol on this subject and urged further accessions to them. They also requested the High Commissioner's Office to continue to explore the possibilities of voluntary repatriation.
9. As regards the education of refugees, a number of delegations expressed appreciation of the steps which have been taken. Some delegations emphasized the need to co-ordinate the High Commissioner's activities very closely with those of other United Nations agencies.
10. Special references were made to the increasing complexity of the task facing the High Commissioner and the minimum needs of the refugees which his Office must cover through the 1969 programme. In noting that governmental contributions had increased in comparison to preceding years, concern was expressed at the continuing financial difficulties facing the Office.

## II. DRAFT RESOLUTION

11. In the course of the discussion, a draft resolution (A/C.3/L.1622) was introduced by Norway on behalf of Austria, Colombia, Ecuador, Finland, France, Iran, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, the Sudan, Tunisia and Yugoslavia. This draft was subsequently revised (A/C.3/L.1622/Rev.1) with Senegal joining as a sponsor. Following an intervention by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, the representative of Norway, on behalf of the sponsors, introduced oral revisions to the third preambular paragraph and to operative paragraph 1.

12. At the 1613th meeting, on 19 November, the revised draft resolution, as orally revised by the sponsors, was adopted without objection.

## III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE

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

### Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees<sup>3/</sup> and having heard his statement,<sup>4/</sup>

Taking note of the progress achieved in the field of international protection of refugees who are the High Commissioner's concern and in the search for permanent solutions of their problems through voluntary repatriation, integration in countries of asylum or resettlement in other countries,

Recognizing the positive effects of the High Commissioner's work on economic and social conditions of the refugees in the countries concerned,

Commending the encouraging results achieved in the field of inter-agency co-operation with the support of the Governments concerned and the other members of the United Nations system and noting with appreciation the untiring activities of the non-governmental organizations working on behalf of refugees,

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<sup>3/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Supplement No. 11 (A/7211) and Supplement No. 11 A (A/7211/Add.1).

<sup>4/</sup> See A/C.3/SR.1611.

Noting that the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme has approved an increased programme to cover additional needs of refugees, particularly in Africa,

Noting with appreciation the sizable increase in contributions from certain countries, and also the increase in the number of contributing countries,

Expressing concern, however, at the difficulties still facing the High Commissioner in financing his programme,

1. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to continue to provide international protection and assistance to refugees who are his concern, while giving special attention to new groups of refugees, in particular in Africa, in conformity with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and the directives of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme;

2. Urges States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies to continue to lend their support to the High Commissioner's humanitarian task by:

(a) Facilitating the voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement of refugees who are the High Commissioner's concern;

(b) Improving the legal status of refugees residing in their territory, inter alia, by acceding to the international instruments relating to refugees and by treating new refugee situations in accordance with the principles and spirit of the United Nations Declaration on Territorial Asylum and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(c) Providing the High Commissioner with the necessary means for the accomplishment of the task incumbent upon him and, in particular, by enabling him to reach the financial targets established with the approval of the Executive Committee;

(d) Drawing the attention of the governing bodies of other organs in the United Nations system to the need of supporting the High Commissioner in his efforts to ensure that the requirements of refugees, including education and training, are taken into full account.

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