



Chairman: Mrs. Helvi SIPILÄ (Finland).

AGENDA ITEM 58

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/8403, chap. XVIII, sect. B; A/8412 and Add.1, A/C.3/L.1883)

1. Prince Sadruddin KHAN (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) introduced his report (A/8412 and Add.1) and said that despite the constant increase in the number of refugees in Africa, the action of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had continued to evolve favourably and a permanent solution was being found to the problem of refugees. The very great majority of refugees belonging to earlier groups had in fact been definitely integrated and only the new arrivals or the handicapped still needed occasional assistance in Europe or in Latin America. UNHCR gave them such assistance in various forms having no routine or permanent character, with a view to supplementing and attracting the aid which Governments and voluntary agencies granted them from other sources.

2. The role of UNHCR was to ensure that no obstacle was placed in the way of voluntary repatriation and to facilitate such repatriation if need be; to take care that refugees were in no case sent back forcibly to a country where they feared persecution; and to ensure that they were not subjected to any discrimination by comparison with other foreigners or by comparison with nationals, in particular with regard to the exercise of fundamental freedoms or economic and social rights. That protective function required vigilant attention, combined where necessary with temporary and limited assistance.

3. The situation in Africa was marked by the continuous arrival of new refugees generally coming from the colonial Territories. Where their number was limited, the new arrivals did not experience too much difficulty in joining up with their compatriots with a view to integration, and a few arrangements made by the Government or with the help of UNHCR were sufficient to facilitate the process of establishing a group. But when the saturation point was reached in a rural settlement centre, a new centre had to be established rapidly, in an area which was often close to the place of arrival but which geographical or political considerations might lead the Government concerned to place at a point further away from the place of settlement of the original group. It was such considerations, based on a legitimate concern for security or good neighbourliness with the country of origin, which sometimes led Governments to consider transferring a group of refugees which was already established from one point of their territory to

another. There was no need to point out what that involved in terms of work and additional costs, without mentioning the resulting consequences for planning or the risks attached to such an operation.

4. In addition to the general increase in prices, those were, for the most part, the reasons why the financial target for the assistance programme for 1972 had had to be increased from \$7 million to almost \$8 million, most of which was allocated to Africa.

5. From the quantitative point of view, the situation in Africa was therefore still a matter of concern. It imposed on the Governments of the host countries a considerable burden which made the generosity of their welcome and their contribution all the more striking.

6. On the question of integration, it was important to emphasize the progress which had been made in inter-agency co-operation. It must be admitted that, in the face of the complexity of rural settlement, action often lost in effectiveness what it gained in speed. It was sometimes very tempting to improvise without having carried out prior geological, ecological or other studies which did not always seem to be very important at first sight and which took time. Although they might not always be adequately equipped in the field and their procedures might be ill adapted to specific situations which UNHCR had to face, the United Nations specialized agencies had made remarkable efforts in that area.

7. Another important innovation which should be mentioned was that, at the request of various African Governments and in full agreement with the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, the representatives of the High Commissioner in the countries concerned would in future be called upon to participate in the country programming process instituted under General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV). In order to encourage Governments to give the regions where refugees were settled the attention they deserved and in order to take account of the specific costs which might result in some cases, the Executive Committee at its twenty-second session held from 4 to 12 October 1971, had authorized the High Commissioner to seek ways and means whereby appropriate financial aid might be provided to the Governments concerned. That represented an important step forward towards much closer co-ordination within the United Nations system and a global approach to the problem of development.

8. There was another cause for concern, namely the influx to certain African towns such as Addis Ababa, Dakar and Nairobi, of refugees who could not find employment; that posed a problem for the authorities which was in the first

place a human and social problem, but also a political and security one. Guided by the experience gained in the matter of social assistance, UNHCR, with the help of Governments and voluntary agencies, had established a modest, but it was to be hoped effective, network of skilled social services. On the basis of the studies thus carried out, the Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees of the Organization for African Unity (OAU) would then be able to intervene effectively with the Governments concerned.

9. The integration of some refugees posed a problem. There were, for example, some students seeking employment who could not be resettled in agriculture. For those who wished to continue their studies and were in a position to do so, therefore, UNHCR, in concert with the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa and in liaison with the OAU Bureau, was endeavouring to obtain scholarships. The greatest importance should be attached to the question of education and the training at all levels of the élites for which the developing countries had a continuing need. In that connexion, mention should be made of the problem posed by young African refugees who, after having obtained scholarships for a country outside the African continent, subsequently found difficulty in obtaining either a permit to stay in that country if they wished to remain there after having completed their studies, or a return visa for their country of origin. In general, African students owed it to themselves to return to Africa, where their experience and their knowledge could be used to the best advantage; that was the solution which UNHCR proposed to those concerned who appealed to it. If those countries which granted scholarships to such students were not prepared to authorize them to remain in their territory if they wished to do so, they should grant them a visa only after having been assured that the students concerned had indeed the possibility of returning to their host country in Africa.

10. The problem of orientation was of more crucial importance in the developing countries than elsewhere; UNHCR, together with UNESCO, was concerned with that question, and in the past year it had devoted a total of approximately \$900,000 to education out of the funds under or outside the programme and out of the education account.

11. With regard to the problem of repatriation, he was happy to announce that many African refugees had chosen to return to their countries. That movement had continued, and at an even faster rate. It went without saying that UNHCR obviously did not fail to help them as much as possible whenever it was asked to do so. Although that movement had not yet acquired the desired scope, it was significant and sufficiently important to serve as a valuable example.

12. He was happy to announce, moreover, that more States had acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, which brought the number of accessions to 61 and 48 respectively. It was to be hoped that the accession and ratification procedures now in progress would enable the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness also to enter into force soon.

13. Only the full and correct application of the norms established under those two instruments, as well as under the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee problems in Africa, would give asylum its full value and full meaning. States attached great importance to questions of sovereignty or considerations of security but, when the fate and sometimes even the life of refugees was involved, UNHCR should be adamant. That was an extremely important aspect of UNHCR's activities and often constituted the delicate point in its relations with States for which, for example, the principle of *non-refoulement* did not always have the absolutely imperative character which it should have. Whenever legitimate but contradictory considerations and interests concerning refugees were involved, a compromise had to be found; it was that which the High Commissioner's Office sought to do constantly, in a spirit of co-operation that was only equalled by that which it encountered so constantly from OAU, the Council of Europe and the Organization of American States.

14. On the question of the financing of the assistance programme, he wished to make it clear that there were in fact 82 Governments—and not 80 as he had estimated—which had made contributions, sometimes representing a considerable increase compared with that of previous years. There was every reason to hope that the number would be even higher.

15. Those figures showed the growing interest of the international community in a multilateral humanitarian work which was always urgently needed, whether for the victims of political upheavals or for the victims of natural disasters. That required assistance of all kinds which should be concerted. UNHCR was infinitely indebted to those Governments whose support had enabled it so far to discharge its task in a proper manner and to those non-governmental organizations whose support at the level of daily action, particularly in individual cases or in relation to certain groups of refugees in Africa, was invaluable.

16. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran) noted that 1971 was the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and of the signing of the 1951 Convention. It was also the fiftieth anniversary of the appointment of the great humanist Nansen as first High Commissioner for Refugees by the League of Nations in 1921. The international community had thus been concerned with the problem of refugees for almost 50 years. In other words, their problem, which had originally been considered a temporary one, had gradually assumed a permanent nature. The relatively limited structure devised at that time had been progressively transformed into an organization with resources totalling more than \$6.5 million and exerting, thanks to the world-wide support which it enjoyed, a catalytic effect enabling it to stimulate and mobilize the goodwill of Governments and of the private institutions most directly concerned. A glance through the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/8412 and Add.1) sufficed, however, to bring home the fact that the basic problem had become no less serious at the world level. On the contrary, new situations had arisen and the total number of refugees had increased rather than decreased. The range and complexity of aid requirements had grown to proportions far beyond the capacity of the means at the international community's

disposal. Nor could it be otherwise, inasmuch as the bodies which provided assistance for the refugees, including the Office of the High Commissioner, were designed for relief purposes, rather than prevention. Since the work could only begin to act once the harm had already been done, they could hardly be held responsible for the rising flood of refugees nor could they reduce its volume. That was a point which should therefore be taken into account when permanent solutions to the problem were being sought. Seen from that angle, the High Commissioner's report brought out the outstanding work that had been done during the two decades of the programme's operation. What made that work all the more effective was that it was based on humanitarian and operational principles which had been tested in practice.

17. The first of those principles was that international action should always be directed towards helping refugees to help themselves, instead of merely distributing aid which would only prolong their situation. The second was the need to consolidate and extend the legal basis of the work of international protection so as to cover most parts of the world. The third principle was that of voluntary repatriation, since it provided the most desirable solution and the one increasingly favoured by the Office. It was clearly understood, however, that every refugee was free to choose other solutions, such as migration, or local integration, or the acquisition of the nationality of the host country.

18. With regard to the financing of aid operations, his delegation was glad that the High Commissioner had attached particular importance to what he described as the programme's catalytic effect. The latter's significance was all the greater in that participation by interested Governments, other members of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, made it possible to offset, and more than offset, the Office's financial limitations and transform assistance to refugees into a concerted international effort.

19. His delegation also wished to stress the principle that assistance to refugees should not place them in a privileged position in relation to the local inhabitants.

20. With regard to the good offices concept, his delegation welcomed the fact that its application had enabled the High Commissioner to undertake a series of large-scale programmes and intensify its long-term work.

21. Consideration of the work of the High Commissioner in the context of the political and constitutional limitations of his mandate showed that he had done his best to carry out the difficult task entrusted to him, and that the problem of refugees was far beyond the scope of a body like the Office of the High Commissioner. The refugee problem was primarily conditioned by national policies and the extent to which countries respected the basic principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or, on the contrary, departed from them.

22. The violation of those rights seemed, indeed, to be leading towards new and more subtle forms of the displacement of persons. For example, there was the systematic attempt by the Government of Iraq to turn Iranian nationals who had been living in Iraq for many

years into displaced persons. Having elected to live in Iraq for reasons of religious or cultural affinity, they were now being arrested and dumped over the frontier. Fortunately his Government was in a position to take all the necessary steps to facilitate their resettlement in the best possible conditions, but it was clear that the situation presented delicate problems at both the human and the economic levels. Even though they were not, properly speaking, refugees, they had nevertheless been uprooted and driven out and were uncertain of their future; they were the victims of a political situation which had arisen from a most disquieting lack of respect for the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

23. It was therefore by scrupulously respecting the principles of the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that every country could truly help the High Commissioner to fulfil his mandate. The basic task of the High Commissioner was indeed an integral part of the protection and promotion of human rights which was one of the fundamental objectives of the Charter. Material aid itself should, in the last analysis, have no other object than that of enabling the refugees to enjoy the basic rights of the individual. It was therefore to be hoped that, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner, States would unite their efforts at both the national and the international levels to eradicate the causes of that evil, in particular by reducing tension of any kind, racial, economic or political, which was the basic cause of the refugee problem.

24. Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt) said that the tireless efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees during the 20 years of its existence had made a real contribution to the promotion of peace and justice at the international level. It was encouraging to note that the problem of European refugees had to a considerable extent been solved and that the legal basis on which the international activities for the protection of refugees were founded had been extended to cover most of the world. Moreover, an increasing number of Governments had become parties to legal instruments regulating the status of refugees.

25. The number of refugees too, however, had continued to increase. In Africa, for example, the number of refugees coming under the mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner was still approximately a million. It was encouraging to see the growing co-operation with the Organization of African Unity, in particular with its Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees.

26. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was endeavouring to solve the problems of refugees in an extremely rational way by means of voluntary repatriation, resettlement by migration, local settlement and education and vocational training. It was to be hoped that more Governments would give financial support to the Office of the High Commissioner.

27. In Egypt the number of African refugees had risen sharply in recent times and his Government was doing all it could, in close co-operation with the Office of the High Commissioner, to assist them. As was pointed out in the

report (see A/8412, para. 190), however, the prevailing economic uncertainty in the area had prevented the implementation of long-term projects.

28. His delegation welcomed the fruitful co-operation which had been established between the Office of the High Commissioner and the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations such as the Red Cross or Red Crescent. In that connexion, attention should be drawn to certain non-governmental organizations which, behind a façade of humanitarian work, sowed confusion and disorder among the refugees for certain political ends. It should be recognized that so far the Office of the High Commissioner had been judicious in its choice of voluntary organizations.

29. His delegation, which had co-sponsored draft resolution A/C.3/L.1883, urged States to give that draft resolution favourable consideration and to respond to the appeal made to them in operative paragraph 3.

30. Mr. ROSENSTAND HANSEN (Denmark) said that, although its subject was human tragedy, the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was encouraging in that it described concrete humanitarian efforts to bring help to people who were suffering. The cornerstone of the work of the Office of the High Commissioner was to establish legal protection of refugees; it was therefore encouraging to learn that more States had acceded to the main international instruments relating to refugees. It was to be hoped that Governments would, if necessary, adjust their legislation to bring it into line with the provisions of the instruments to which they were party and that the principles of asylum and *non-refoulement* would gradually gain universal acceptance. In Denmark refugees enjoyed the same rights as Danish nationals and received special assistance during the first part of their stay in the country. That attitude was in accordance with the humanitarian traditions which were deeply entrenched in the Nordic countries.

31. The best permanent solution to the refugee problem was through voluntary repatriation and, where that was not possible, through economic integration in the country of reception. For that, the High Commissioner needed the whole-hearted co-operation of the Governments concerned. The countries of reception could not, however, be expected to shoulder by themselves the burden of integrating large numbers of refugees, and an appeal should therefore be addressed to all Members of the United Nations and to non-governmental organizations and voluntary agencies. He noted with satisfaction the decision of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme approving the High Commissioner's participation in the new country programming system adopted by UNDP. Having himself had the opportunity of seeing at first hand the implementation of a UNHCR programme in the field, he had been able to observe the catalytic role of the system, which made it possible to co-ordinate sizable financial and human resources.

32. In recent times, the growing number of refugees in Africa had imposed a heavy burden on the Office of the High Commissioner. It was encouraging, therefore, to note the progress made through the concerted efforts of the

High Commissioner and of the OAU Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees.

33. After 20 years of existence, the High Commissioner's Office had by no means completed its task, but, on the contrary, had increasing problems to cope with. The responsibility for refugees should be shared by the whole of the international community, as should the cost of the High Commissioner's Programme. It was therefore gratifying to learn that more than 80 Governments were now contributing to the programme. His own Government would, subject to the approval of its financial authorities, make a contribution of \$373,000 to the 1972/1973 budget. Furthermore, the Danish International Development Agency had approved a contribution of \$290,000, which the High Commissioner's Office might use as it saw fit to finance technical assistance activities.

34. On behalf of his own delegation and the other sponsors, he introduced draft resolution A/C.3/L.1883; it was a non-controversial text, and he therefore hoped that it would be adopted unanimously.

35. Mr. WILSON (Liberia) said that the work performed by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees was very commendable. In Africa, in particular, where there were about one million refugees, the High Commissioner had endeavoured to find a permanent solution by advocating voluntary repatriation. It was encouraging to note that some African countries, despite their low level of development, were making a significant contribution to the resolution of the problem. His delegation welcomed the humanitarian role being played by the Organization of African Unity, particularly through its Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees, and the fact that more States had now acceded to the Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, adopted at the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in September 1969.

36. His delegation supported without reservation draft resolution A/C.3/L.1883, and requested that its name should be added to the list of sponsors.

37. Mr. DAS (India) said that the report of the High Commissioner's Office brought out the very useful role it had played in improving the situation of refugees. The balance-sheet of its activities in the year of its twentieth anniversary showed two highly creditable achievements, namely that the problem of the European refugees and the problem of the Algerian refugees had both been satisfactorily solved.

38. The High Commissioner's Office was now focusing its attention on the plight of refugees in Africa, where it was utilizing not only the experience it had acquired but also new techniques and a pragmatic approach. Thus, while the refugees were assured of immediate relief, they were also encouraged to become self-supporting. The generous response made by various countries, international organizations and specialized agencies, had enabled the High Commissioner to discharge his humanitarian and legal functions with maximum effectiveness.

39. His delegation noted with appreciation the High Commissioner's factual report, which emphasized the difficulties confronting him and the steps taken to bring relief to the refugees in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas.

40. Mr. ARIM (Turkey) said that the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was a fine example of constructive international co-operation for humanitarian ends.

41. An assessment of the achievements registered by UNHCR during its first 20 years of existence showed, together with some spectacular successes, other more modest efforts which had also borne fruit. The UNHCR report showed that special attention had been accorded to Africa, where there were some one million refugees. It would be ungrateful, in that regard, to overlook the generosity and sacrifices of the States which had received refugees. The efforts made to settle them on the land and ensure that they were productive were highly commendable and should be intensified.

42. At the world level, General Assembly resolution 2650 (XXV) had been warmly welcomed by the international community, and many States had acceded to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, although the number of accessions was still too small. The States parties should also enact legislation with a view to ensuring that the provisions of the two instruments would be implemented; a questionnaire relating to that question had been forwarded to Governments, and Turkey was one of the 18 States which had replied (see A/8412, para. 20).

43. His country welcomed the encouragement given by the High Commissioner to the movement for voluntary repatriation, particularly in Africa, where a special initiative had been undertaken. In that connexion, the UNHCR representatives in every country had, by their attitude, helped to enlist support.

44. Another welcome development was the strengthening of co-operation and co-ordination between UNHCR and the United Nations specialized agencies, which, wherever they could, were providing assistance on matters within their competence. It was to be hoped that that co-operation and co-ordination would be strengthened still further in the future.

45. In another sphere, effective assistance in cases of natural disaster required plans for concerted action and the co-ordination and strengthening of United Nations capacity to respond to emergencies. His delegation hoped soon to introduce a draft resolution concerning assistance in cases of natural disaster and designed to ensure that countries suffering such catastrophes would be afforded aid.

46. His country considered that the target of \$8 million for the UNHCR regular budget for 1972 was by no means too large in view of the scope of its work programme.

47. Miss MAKOLO (Zaire) said that there were some 489,000 refugees living in Zaire and that her Government was therefore particularly appreciative of the assistance given by UNHCR. During recent years, UNHCR had rightly

focused its attention on Africa, where approximately one million refugees were living. Of these nearly one half had found asylum in her country. Table 2 of Annex II of the report of the High Commissioner (A/8412) showed that the Angolans were the biggest group, numbering some 400,000. The refugee problem in Zaire was thus closely connected with Portuguese colonialism; Portugal bore considerable responsibility for that problem, as did those Powers which were giving Portugal economic and military support, thus enabling it to carry on its colonial war. Every year new cases diluted UNHCR efforts to alleviate the sufferings of the displaced peoples. The Powers friendly to Portugal should end their support of that country, which nullified the effects of their aid to UNHCR, since only by ending the colonial war could the problem of the Angolan refugees be settled once and for all. It seemed that Portugal would not end the war and grant independence to all its African colonies until it was driven to the wall. Her delegation reserved the right to speak at greater length on that question if necessary. In all fairness, it should be stated that there was also another class of refugees, those who had left their own countries because of internal problems. Her country was at present endeavouring to normalize its relations with neighbouring States, in order to bring about a definitive solution regarding that type of refugee. Some of them, with UNHCR assistance, had been satisfactorily settled in agriculture; projects for rural settlement had been in operation in her country since 1969.

48. It could also be seen from table 2 of Annex II (*ibid.*) that 52,000 Zairians had left their country in the darkest hours of its history. The amnesty announced in November 1970 had encouraged some of them to seek repatriation, in accordance with the trend to voluntary repatriation referred to by the High Commissioner in his report to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session.

49. With regard to international law, her country would continue to assist in the preparation of international instruments on the protection of refugees and in the implementation and reinforcement of their provisions. It had acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and was one of the 18 countries which had replied to the UNHCR questionnaire on the implementation of the Convention. Legislative bills relating to the status of refugees were being prepared in her country; in the meanwhile, refugees had free access to educational facilities and to occupations and professions for which they were qualified.

50. In conclusion, she expressed the hope that draft resolution A/C.3/L.1883, of which her delegation was a sponsor, would receive unanimous support.

51. Lord GOWRIE (United Kingdom) said that he wished to add his congratulations to those which had been addressed to the High Commissioner on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the creation of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees but nevertheless felt obliged to express regret that after 20 years its services should still be as much in demand as ever. There were, however, a number of encouraging developments. The number of countries which had acceded to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol had increased, and more than 1,000 refugees had been able to return to their own

countries. The search for permanent solutions was being promoted, and some progress had been made in the case of refugees wishing to remain in the country to which they had migrated. There were also indications that interagency co-operation was giving useful results.

52. That however was not sufficient. His delegation deeply regretted that only three States had acceded to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, a Convention which could contribute substantially to avoiding the perpetuation of refugee status. Furthermore, the number of countries which had acceded to the 1951 Convention was still less than half the total membership of the United Nations. His delegation believed it to be of the utmost importance that the existing international instruments should be widely adhered to and that national legislation conforming fully to those instruments was the only way to ensure their practical application.

53. He was glad to be able to announce that the United Kingdom contribution to the regular budget of UNHCR for 1972 would be increased by \$72,000 to \$432,000.

54. His delegation fully supported draft resolution A/C.3/L.1883, of which it was a sponsor.

55. Mr. EL-SHIBIB (Iraq) said that he wished to reply to the accusation by the Iranian representative that Iraq was systematically expelling Iranian nationals resident in its territory. He pointed out that between Iran and Iraq there stretched a frontier more than 1,500 kilometres long. The Iranian Government did not co-operate as it should in supervising that frontier, and as a result a large number of the nationals of that country entered Iraqi territory and resided there illegally. For a developing country like Iraq, that raised considerable problems, particularly where such matters as health, education and employment were concerned. No State, however liberal it might be, could tolerate such a situation and while it understood the motives of those who sought refuge in Iraq, the Iraqi Government found itself obliged to enforce the law. The law provided for fines, prison sentences or immediate expulsion. The Iraqi Government had restricted itself to expelling the persons in question but had nevertheless taken special cases into account. It was true that Iraq was a hospitable country, but its Government required that those entering its territory should hold valid documents and should respect the law. The accusations of the representative of Iran constituted interference in what was essentially an internal matter.

56. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that interference in the internal affairs of other States was contrary to the principles of the Iranian Government. His statement had borne only on the humanitarian aspect of the question, as he had, moreover, emphasized.

57. Iranian nationals resident in Iraq had certainly not gone there to seek refuge, as the representative of Iraq had asserted, for the Iranian economy was sufficiently strong to ensure them a livelihood. It was more a question, as he had pointed out in his previous statement, of cultural or religious affinities.

58. The representative of Iraq had also said that those Iranian nationals had entered Iraqi territory illegally and did not hold valid documents. Some of them, however, had been living in Iraq for years and others had even been born there. Sometimes their papers had been seized the day before they were expelled and had never been returned to them.

59. Such occurrences were not new. The previous year there had been a spate of expulsions of Iranian nationals who had been living in Iraq for decades, and the two countries had entered into communication on the matter. He wished, however, to stress the humanitarian aspect of the problem: in violation of the most fundamental human rights, those persons had been packed into lorries and dumped far from any frontier post. The case of those Iranian nationals revealed a more subtle aspect of the concept of refugee.

60. Mr. EL-SHIBIB (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that any persons residing illegally in Iraq had to leave the territory, regardless of their nationality. Iraq had tried to check the influx of illegal entries but it had not enjoyed the co-operation of the Iranian Government and felt obliged, at all events, to enforce the law. He was glad to hear that the Iranian economy was so strong that the arrival of those nationals placed no burden on it; the same was not true in the case of Iraq.

61. The CHAIRMAN said that the delegations of Belgium, Dahomey, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Morocco, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Uganda had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/L.1883.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*