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**Chairman:** Mr. Salvador P. LOPEZ (Philippines).

**AGENDA ITEMS 34 AND 82**

**Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/4771/Rev.1 and Add.1, A/4820 and Corr.2, chapter VI, section IV, A/C.3/593, A/C.3/L.961/Rev.1, A/C.3/L.962 and Corr.1) (concluded)**

**Problem raised by the situation of Angolan refugees in the Congo (A/4846 and Add.1-2, A/C.3/L.960 and Add.1-2) (concluded)**

**GENERAL DEBATE (concluded)**

1. Mr. ARVESEN (Norway) noted that several delegations, including the delegation of Saudi Arabia, had asserted that the last preambular paragraph in the draft resolution of the three Scandinavian Powers (A/C.3/L.962 and Corr.1) introduced a completely new concept, which had not been embodied in previous resolutions on the subject. He believed that assertion to be inexact and would refer representatives to the fourth preambular paragraph of General Assembly resolution 832 (IX). Nevertheless, since the principle in question had already been approved in a General Assembly resolution and was furthermore generally recognized in international law, the sponsors of the present draft resolution had decided that the last preambular paragraph of their text need not be retained. He hoped that the draft resolution, with the deletion of that provision, would receive the Committee's unanimous support.

2. Mr. SCHWELB (Secretary of the Committee) recalled that the question of financial implications of draft resolutions had been raised and stated that the draft resolution of the three African Powers on Angolan refugees (A/C.3/L.960 and Add.1-2) had no financial implications either for the regular United Nations budget or for the budget of the United Nations in the Congo (ONUC). The contemplated assistance would be financed from voluntary funds available to the High Commissioner and from such additional voluntary contributions as might be made. The other two draft resolutions before the Committee also had no financial implications.

3. Miss WARREN (Australia) expressed her delegation's appreciation of the High Commissioner's

clear and interesting statement (1112th meeting) on the vast amount of work accomplished by his Office during the past year. Australia had maintained a continuing interest in the problem of refugees ever since it had opened its doors to displaced persons after the Second World War. From October 1945 to June 1961 Australia had taken in over 261,000 refugees, a figure representing 15.2 per cent of its total long-term and permanent arrivals and an even higher proportion of actual immigrants. Special consideration had been given to refugees in that the usual immigration selection criteria had been changed in their favour. Australia had also taken an active part in many projects for refugees in the post-war period; for example, it continued to be the principal country of resettlement for White Russian refugees in the Far East.

4. Her Government had taken a deep interest in World Refugee Year and had made a contribution of some \$112,000, while the Australian public had generously contributed \$1.9 million. As a further gesture to World Refugee Year, the Government had agreed to take in 500 families, each having a handicapped member.

5. Her delegation was pleased to learn from the report and statement of the High Commissioner that a solution to the general problem of refugees in Europe was in sight. She was also glad that it had been decided to consider various refugee questions as essentially humanitarian rather than political problems. Her delegation appreciated the efforts being made by host countries and voluntary organizations to alleviate the plight of refugees in Africa. Her delegation was cognizant of the commendable work of the High Commissioner and his staff in extending his good offices to assist in the care of those people. Her delegation would support the draft resolutions before the Committee.

6. Mr. ITURRIAGA (Mexico) commended the High Commissioner's report (A/4771/Rev.1), which demonstrated both the enormity of the world refugee problem and the increasing interest of States in ensuring its solution. Everything done to resolve or mitigate the serious legal, social and economic difficulties, faced by countries as a result of the presence of refugees, met with the deepest sympathy of his country, not only for abstract humanitarian reasons but also because Mexico itself had abundant experience in the matter. Mexico had always been a place of sanctuary for freedom-loving persons forced to abandon their homeland for political reasons, and its hospitality was open not only to citizens of Latin America but to others as well. Following the civil war in Spain and the Second World War, Mexico had received about 70,000 refugees, most of whom had found highly satisfying and remunerative employment in their new homeland. His delegation, anxious to support all endeavours

on behalf of refugees, would vote for the draft resolutions before the Committee.

*Miss Imru (Ethiopia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

7. Mr. TEKLE (Ethiopia) thanked the High Commissioner for the enlightening statement he had made.

8. It was often said that the problem of refugees was, historically, only one aspect of the larger problem created by the existence of groups of individuals who differed in some way or other from the numerically larger group. In modern times, however, the reverse situation was occurring with ever-increasing frequency. As a result of the methods certain ruling minorities used against the majority, thousands of people were forced to flee their homeland. The refugees in that new type of situation were the victims of political persecution, economic exclusiveness and arrogant nationalism, and it would be wrong to assume that their problems would disappear before the necessary changes in the political and economic environment in their home countries were effected.

9. The history of the action undertaken by the League of Nations and the United Nations with respect to refugees should help the Committee to understand and sympathize with the appeals made today by certain Governments, which found themselves overwhelmed by the task of meeting the needs of large refugee populations at a time when they faced many difficulties of their own. He therefore urged Governments that were in a more fortunate position to lend their most generous assistance in that eminently humanitarian task. He wished also to thank those countries which made it a policy to accept refugees, and he would urge them to continue to do so to the greatest extent possible; the refugee could, in turn, be helpful to his new homeland and could, as history had repeatedly shown, make lasting contributions to world culture as a whole.

10. His delegation greatly appreciated the work of the High Commissioner and his staff, but he would appeal to them to redouble their efforts so that the present measures of relief and charity would be replaced entirely by assistance aimed at enabling refugees to become self-supporting. He also hoped that the High Commissioner would look further into the question of refugees from Ruanda and would take whatever action was possible.

11. The Ethiopian Government had in the past, notwithstanding its limited resources, made substantial contributions to refugee programmes, and it would support the draft resolutions on which the Committee was shortly to vote.

12. Mrs. MARTIN (Guinea) congratulated the High Commissioner on his constructive report and particularly on the humanitarian work on behalf of refugees in which he was engaged. Her delegation had been pleased to note that the European refugee problem was all but solved, but its satisfaction in that regard was mixed with consternation at the picture of increasingly frequent refugee situations arising in parts of the world where colonial repression or the consequences of the cold war still prevailed. Thousands of men, women and children in Asia and Africa were forced to flee their country and lead a miserable existence far from their homes. She was fully aware that the Third Committee dealt

only with the social and humanitarian aspects of such situations, but it nevertheless seemed impossible to discuss the matter without referring, if only briefly, to the deeper causes involved.

13. Behind every refugee problem lay a tragic political situation and the effective solution of the former depended on a drastic change in the latter. In the case of African refugees, whether Algerians, Angolans, Ruandese, Rhodesians or the many Guineans expelled by Portugal, such a solution could be brought about only by the complete liberation of the continent from colonialism. Hence it was clear that in order to do away with such refugee problems, implementation must be given to the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)). Other endeavours could bring only partial and inadequate remedies to alleviate the sufferings of millions of Africans expelled from their native land.

14. Her delegation duly appreciated the work accomplished by the High Commissioner on behalf of the Algerians who had fled the repression and concentration camps they faced at home and had sought refuge in Morocco and Tunisia. Hoping that assistance in that matter would be continued, her delegation had joined with others in sponsoring the nineteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.3/L.961/Rev.1), which expressed regret that no solution had yet been found for the basic problem and requested a continuation of the present action on behalf of Algerian refugees.

15. In the same spirit, her delegation would support the draft resolution of the three African Powers on Angolan refugees, which was intended to aid the thousands of persons who had fled the rule of terror in Angola. Her delegation felt that in spite of its numerous other responsibilities, ONUC should continue to give its valuable assistance to those refugees, in close co-operation with the High Commissioner, the Red Cross and other voluntary agencies.

16. It was regrettable that the thousands of refugees from Ruanda-Urundi had not yet benefited from the assistance of the High Commissioner's Office and the other competent international organizations. She hoped that the early independence of Ruanda-Urundi would enable those refugees to regain their homes soon but, if that did not come to pass, it seemed clear that the High Commissioner's activities should be extended to include them.

17. Turning to the question of refugees in Togo, she pointed out that one of the basic features of West Africa was its artificial division by the colonialists, an arrangement which, unfortunately for the region, still persisted. Homogeneous ethnic and social groups which had been arbitrarily separated under the colonial régime now found themselves living in different States. That did not mean, however, that those peoples were now to be considered as alien to each other, and hence to raise the question of refugees in their regard might have the unhappy consequence of disrupting the basis on which social relations in that part of Africa rested. For that reason her delegation believed that the High Commissioner should make a very careful examination of the situation in that region before undertaking any action.

18. She appealed at the same time to the Togolese delegation to do all it could to have the question of Ghanaian refugees in Togo taken up directly with

the Ghanaian Government. She believed that differences between those two States, with which her country had particularly close ties, could be solved without serious conflict, and, knowing only too well which forces in the world would profit by a clash between African States, she appealed to Ghana and Togo to resolve their difficulties at the African level in any manner they judged most appropriate in the circumstances.

*Mr. López (Philippines) resumed the Chair.*

19. Mrs. ROSSIDES (Cyprus) expressed her delegation's warm appreciation of the constructive work done by the High Commissioner and his staff. It had been a particular source of satisfaction to her to learn of the excellent results of World Refugee Year, one of the consequences of which had been a great acceleration of the camp clearance programme. It was also heartening to know that the League of Red Cross Societies would continue to assist in the operation in Morocco and Tunisia, an operation designed to relieve an extremely grave situation. Pending the return of those refugees to their homes, adequate aid should be ensured not only to meet immediate material needs but also to help the refugees to lead normal lives. In the case of refugees from Angola, efforts to enable them to become self-supporting would clearly be of moral as well as material value.

20. It was deeply disturbing to her delegation that, in the present age, the Committee should have to deal with the tragic problems now before it. She hoped that the day was not far off when, through a reorientation of thinking, such problems would be resolved immediately and without difficulty. Her delegation would support the draft resolutions submitted to the Committee.

21. Mr. SILVA (Portugal) said that some unwarranted remarks had been made about his country in the course of the debate but, in the spirit of the appeal made by the Chairman at the beginning of the discussion, he would refrain from answering them. He could not help observing, however, that a certain delegation had declared its inability to support the draft resolution of the three African Powers, giving as its reason that the draft resolution did not condemn Portugal; but since that view had been expressed by a country which was universally regarded as lacking in authority to ask for a condemnation of other countries, he would abstain from making any comments.

22. His delegation considered the High Commissioner's report to be a very important document giving clear insight into the various refugee problems which came under the High Commissioner's mandate. Portugal had considerable experience in dealing with such problems, as it had a long-established tradition of receiving all unfortunate persons who, for some reason, had been obliged to leave their countries. Such situations had been especially acute during the Second World War, when Portugal had received and for many years sheltered several thousand refugees. The problem did not now exist in continental Portugal, for those who had chosen to remain in the country had been completely integrated.

23. Among the overseas territories, Macao had had the worst refugee problem, having aided and sheltered about half a million Chinese during the Second World War. Fortunately, most of them had

left after the War, but about 1950 the influx of Chinese refugees had resumed and was still continuing. Despite the financial assistance given by the Portuguese Government, local and other voluntary agencies and the National Government of the Republic of China, the problem was not completely solved. The Portuguese Government was soon to discuss the matter with the Office of the High Commissioner at Geneva.

24. His delegation would support all the draft resolutions before the Committee. It fully understood the difficulties of the Government of the Congo (Leopoldville) regarding the more than 100,000 Portuguese nationals from Angola now living in its territory. He agreed with the general terms of the draft resolution of the three African Powers on the subject, but, with regard to the term "refugees", he reiterated his view that all those persons could return whenever they wished, as the reasons for their departure no longer existed. Despite his position that the term "displaced persons" was technically more appropriate in the present context, he would vote for the draft resolution in the hope that it would help to bring about a fair and early solution to that humanitarian issue. He assured the High Commissioner of the goodwill and active co-operation of the Portuguese authorities in the implementation of the measures he had suggested (1112th meeting).

25. Mr. GORIS (Belgium), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Malian representative's accusation (1115th meeting), to the effect that the Administering Authority of Ruanda-Urundi was entirely unconcerned with the problem of Ruandese refugees, was not in keeping with the facts. The Belgian authorities had never failed in their humanitarian duty and it was paradoxical to hold them responsible for a problem which was not of their making. Sustained and very useful contacts had been maintained with neighbouring territories and with the League of Red Cross Societies; the Malian representative had not mentioned that there were also refugees in Ruanda-Urundi. Whereas the figures quoted by the Malian representative appeared to be greatly exaggerated, the problem of the thousands of refugees inside the country had been practically solved, at a cost to the Belgian Government of some 45 million Belgian francs, and with assistance from the "Food for Peace" programme. Belgium had not requested aid from the United Nations or the High Commissioner because it was dealing directly with the problem; it had recently appointed its own High Commissioner for Refugees, who would leave shortly for Ruanda-Urundi. In the District of Kibunga, all refugees had returned home; in the District of Kigali only 2,000 refugees remained out of 12,000, and in the District of Nianza more than half the 12,000 refugees had been resettled. The Belgian Government was also in contact with the autonomous Government of Burundi with a view to the return of Ruandese refugees now in Burundi. In short, as confirmed in a statement made by the head of the League of Red Cross Societies who had visited Ruanda, things seemed to be well in hand. The representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees would shortly be visiting Ruanda, where he would receive the full co-operation of the Administering Authority.

26. Mrs. ROUSSEAU (Mali) said that she did not want to enter into an argument with the Belgian representative on the substance of the question, but

she noted that he had acknowledged the existence of a refugee problem. His statement that her figures were exaggerated did not mean that he had disproved them and could be ascribed to his desire to minimize the seriousness of the political situation; moreover, any figures that he himself could give would have to be based on the records of persons passing through frontier posts, whereas naturally, most refugees crossed the frontier secretly. Contrary to what the Belgian representative had stated, she had also referred to the refugees in Ruanda. The resettlements to which he had referred had not been carried out without difficulty; for example, force had been used in making refugees at Kigali return home and, when they had resisted, troops of the territorial guard had fired on them, killing six and wounding thirteen. Furthermore, The New York Times had reported those incidents. She hoped that the High Commissioner would be able to give as idyllic a picture of the situation as that presented by the Belgian representative.

27. Mrs. DELLA GHERARDESCA (Italy) remarked that her delegation had not intervened earlier in the debate because any disagreement on the humanitarian and social issue under discussion had seemed impossible. The Malian representative had however referred to the question as a political one (1114th meeting), and had said that some refugees fled for sordid reasons, and others for highly idealistic ones. She reminded those delegates who had expressed themselves with such hatred and contempt that, if only those who fled from colonialism were to be regarded as refugees, the same definition might apply to European refugees and others; however, any such consideration had no place in the debate. The common denominator of a refugee was that he had fled his country in fear of danger and was destitute, and the United Nations, which was striving to liberate men from fear, tried to help countries which could not cope with too great an influx of refugees.

28. Italy, as a country of first asylum, had integrated some 10,000 refugees since the war, the remainder having been resettled elsewhere. No one was competent to say whether such people had been right to leave their homes, and the countries which had taken them in, far from squandering their generosity, had done their duty to themselves and to mankind. Nor could she follow the Saudi Arabian representative in his suggestion (1116th meeting) that the draft resolution submitted by the three Scandinavian Powers might create refugees, and that the great Powers had an interest in buying refugees out of other countries in order to train them and send them back as infiltrating commandos. She would gladly vote in favour of the three draft resolutions before the Committee.

29. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) thanked the Norwegian representative and his co-sponsors for agreeing to delete the sixth preambular paragraph of their draft resolution. The phraseology used in General Assembly resolution 832 (IX), cited by the Norwegian representative as a precedent, had given rise to turbulent debate and disagreement in the Third Committee at the time. It was in order to avoid a similar situation that he had asked the co-sponsors to consider the deletion of the paragraph.

30. The representative of Italy had misunderstood his remarks, when he had said that it was the policy

of certain States to send volunteers into other territories to engage in guerilla warfare, subversion and sabotage activities, which created refugees. He had not suggested that refugees themselves were sent back to fight in their countries of origin.

31. Mr. BAHNEV (Bulgaria) asked for a separate vote on operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution submitted by the three Scandinavian Powers, because he could not support that paragraph. In requesting the High Commissioner to pursue his activities, the paragraph set no time-limit on his mandate although, as the Bulgarian delegation had stated at previous sessions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, the necessary conditions existed for terminating the work of his Office. The fact that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1165 (XII), a decision on that point would be taken at the seventeenth session of the General Assembly, was a further reason for not giving an open mandate to the High Commissioner.

32. Mr. SCHNYDER (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that the views expressed during the present discussion were most valuable to him as they offered a more precise idea of the manner in which Member States expected the High Commissioner's Office to discharge the task entrusted to it by the General Assembly. Mutual understanding was all the more necessary as his Office must confront constantly developing situations, and the ways it dealt with them should conform exactly to the wishes of the world community it served.

33. Turning to some of the questions put to him by representatives, he recalled the remarks he had made in connexion with refugees from Ruanda-Urundi (1112th meeting), to whom reference had been made by the representative of Mali. The member of his Office who was to examine the situation on the spot had in fact already left Geneva; it was possible that he would visit Ruanda-Urundi as well as Tanganyika and Uganda. In addition, his "chargé de mission" in the Congo (Leopoldville) was to proceed to Kivu, where some refugees from Ruanda-Urundi were also residing.

34. The Netherlands representative had asked for clarification regarding certain figures (1114th meeting). First, the figure of 20,000 naturalized refugees mentioned in the report (A/4771/Rev.1, annex I, table II) referred exclusively to refugees who, by virtue of being naturalized, ceased to come within his Office's mandate. Secondly, the figure of 11,000 refugees classified as "Emigrated", related solely to refugees residing in the five European countries in which a programme of material assistance had been put into effect. Thus that figure did not conflict with the figure of 30,000 mentioned elsewhere (A/4771/Rev.1, para. 34), the latter being the approximate total of refugees who had emigrated in the course of 1960. Lastly, the approximately 8,000 refugees still in camps, mentioned in his opening statement (1112th meeting), had not yet been evacuated for technical reasons beyond his Office's control. Certain operations on which camp clearance depended, the construction of housing, for example, required a certain amount of time. Other technical problems also had to be faced, but he assured the Committee that everything was being done to carry the programme to completion as soon as was humanly possible. He believed that the progress made during the first half of the current year testified to that fact.

35. The continuation of the activities of the High Commissioner's Office would depend, as the Committee was aware, on the decision which the General Assembly would take at its seventeenth session. While he would not venture to anticipate the decision, he considered it his duty to give the Assembly as complete a picture as possible both of what had been accomplished so far and of the tasks which his Office might still discharge purely on the basis of the policies followed hitherto.

36. It was primarily to enable the Assembly to express its opinion in full awareness of the facts that he intended to submit to the Executive Committee, at its seventh session, in April 1962, a comprehensive plan designed to bring to an end the substantial programmes of material assistance to former refugees and to define the tasks which his Office would be required to meet if its mandate was extended. No definite plan for dealing with new refugee problems could be envisaged since it was impossible to predict the new situations the future would bring; in that regard, his Office was at the disposal of the world community to give whatever aid might be needed. Those activities, he believed, would relate essentially to the sphere of "good offices".

37. It seemed clear, at all events, that some limits must be placed on his Office's action, both in the matter of assessing situations in which it might eventually intervene and in deciding the nature of such intervention. Indeed, experience had shown that such limits were imposed by the countries themselves, for they had made it clear that they intended to retain complete freedom of action in terms both of their requests for aid and of the support they would give to activities undertaken. Obviously, the High Commissioner's Office must act only when the nature and scope of the problem warranted it and, in particular, when they represented a burden the country of asylum could not shoulder without help from the world community.

38. He wished to stress once again the somewhat marginal character of his Office's action, owing both to its mandate and to its limited resources. His Office's basic role was to elicit the necessary support of Governments and private institutions and to help to co-ordinate the assistance offered, not to take charge of operations which were the responsibility of other agencies. It hoped to keep permanently awake the spirit of international co-operation so vital to the solution of refugee problems, the spirit which Fridtjof Nansen, the first High Commissioner for Refugees in the days of the League of Nations, had succeeded in making a living and practical reality.

39. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the draft resolutions before it. He first put to the vote the draft resolution of the three African Powers on Angolan refugees (A/C.3/L.960 and Add.1-2).

*The draft resolution was adopted by 64 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.*

40. Mrs. LEFLEROVA (Czechoslovakia), after recalling the views expressed by her delegation with regard to World Refugee Year, requested a separate vote on the third preambular paragraph of the nineteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.3/L.961/Rev.1).

*The third preambular paragraph of the draft resolution was adopted by 55 votes to none, with 13 abstentions.*

*The draft resolution, as a whole, was adopted by 74 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.*

41. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the sixth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution of the three Scandinavian Powers (A/C.3/L.962 and Corr.1) had been withdrawn by the sponsors and that a separate vote had been requested on operative paragraph 1.

*Operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution was adopted by 57 votes to 10, with 7 abstentions.*

*The draft resolution, as a whole, as amended by the sponsors, was adopted by 61 votes to none, with 14 abstentions.*

42. Mr. BOUQUIN (France) said that his delegation had been obliged to abstain from voting on the nineteen-Power draft resolution, because the persons whom he had in mind were legally French nationals, as the representative of Saudi Arabia had mentioned earlier. That did not mean, however, that the French Government took no interest in the matter. On the contrary, it had already during the current year contributed the sum of \$500,000 to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in addition to its normal contribution and it was grateful to the High Commissioner, as well as to Governments for the efforts made to alleviate the sufferings of those who had found refuge in Morocco and Tunisia.

43. Mr. GORBAL (United Arab Republic) explained that his delegation was glad to support the draft resolution of the three Scandinavian Powers and to vote for it. While welcoming the withdrawal of the sixth preambular paragraph—which enabled him to vote for the draft resolution—he could not agree with the reasons given for that withdrawal by the representative of Norway. There was no rule of international law, as the representative of Norway seemed to suggest, which placed primary responsibility for refugees on the country of asylum. In that connexion, he had been glad to hear the representative of Italy speak of Italy as a country of first asylum, which indicated that there were countries of subsequent asylum.

44. All refugee problems resulted from some action taken by a Government, or even from an international action, and the ultimate responsibility for the refugees should therefore lie not with the immediate host country but with those who had taken such action. Was it fair, for instance, that the Congo (Leopoldville), which was not responsible for the situation in Angola but had taken in 150,000 Angolan refugees, should pay for bad deeds in a neighbouring land? That was a principle which should be remembered in future discussions of the problem.

45. Mr. CHAKCHOUK (Tunisia) and Mr. BOUMAHDHI (Morocco) protested against the use by the French representative of the term French nationals to describe the refugees from Algeria and pointed out that their countries had recognized the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic.

46. Mrs. AFNAN (Iraq) expressed her gratitude to the three Scandinavian Powers for withdrawing the sixth preambular paragraph of their draft resolution, as otherwise her delegation would have been unable to vote for the resolution.



47. She fully agreed with the remarks of the representative of the United Arab Republic and would like to see them very fully reflected in the record; she would however like to note that the representative of Norway, when withdrawing the sixth preambular paragraph, had said that the principle was already contained in General Assembly resolution 832 (IX). She believed, however, that that resolution placed primary responsibility for the well-being of refugees upon the countries where they resided, and not upon those on whose territory they had found asylum—a very different matter.

48. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia), replying to the representative of France, said that he had not referred to the refugees from Algeria as French nationals. What he had said was that when the question first arose the international community had decided to regard them as French nationals, so that they could be taken care of by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, whose mandate at that time had extended only to European refugees.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.