

2081st meeting

Wednesday, 27 July 1977, at 11 a.m.

President: Mr. L. ŠMÍD (Czechoslovakia)

E/SR.2081

AGENDA ITEM 6

Assistance to Mozambique (A/32/96, E/L.1773)

AGENDA ITEM 28

Assistance to Botswana (E/L.1772)

AGENDA ITEM 29

Assistance to Lesotho (E/L.1772)

AGENDA ITEM 5

Assistance in emergency situations (E/5939 and Corr.1)

1. Mr. FARAH (Assistant Secretary-General for Special Political Questions) said that there were certain factors common to Mozambique, Botswana and Lesotho: they had recently achieved independence, with all the resulting economic and social consequences, and needed assistance all the more for having suffered from the political disturbances in southern Africa.

2. With regard to assistance to Mozambique and to the report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/32/96), he said that the budget deficit for 1976 was now officially \$40 million instead of \$25 million. The figures in the report should therefore be modified accordingly, in particular in paragraphs 13, 14 and 90 and table 2.

3. Like Zambia, Mozambique was experiencing great difficulties owing to the fact that it had decided to participate fully in the application of the sanctions against Southern Rhodesia and was the victim of aggressive acts by that country which had caused it heavy losses. The Secretary-General of the United Nations had dispatched a mission to evaluate the extent of damage and to determine the needs resulting from those attacks. Pending the circulation of the mission's report, members would find in the report of the Secretary-General on the question the conclusions of the second mission which had visited Mozambique in April 1977 in compliance with a request made by the General Assembly in 1976. In August 1976, the Secretary-General had despatched a first mission, whose report^{4 5} had been considered by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

4. All those reports showed that the country was facing a critical situation. There was a growing deficit in the public sector, giving rise to an urgent need for grants of food and raw materials. It was expected that there would be a deficit in the balance of payments for 1977, a decline in earnings from traffic handled by ports and railways and, in 1978, a still worse shortage of foreign exchange. The assistance provided by the international community fell far short of the country's requirements, which were estimated at about \$200 million a year. In response to the latest appeal by the Secretary-General, UNDP had increased the indicative planning figure for Mozambique by \$1 million.

5. Apart from the problems arising from the application of the sanctions decreed by the United Nations, the

^{4 5} A/31/266.

situation in Mozambique had been adversely affected by a number of special factors, such as flooding in 1976 and 1977. The assistance received following an international appeal had enabled the Government to cope with the immediate problems, but further assistance would be necessary for relief and resettlement. In addition, there was the problem of refugees who had been coming from Southern Rhodesia over the past two years. As a result of the attacks by the Rhodesian régime, which had been increasing for some time, the President of Mozambique had requested a meeting of the Security Council which on 30 June 1977 had adopted resolution 411 (1977) requesting all States and international organizations to provide financial, technical and material assistance to Mozambique. In particular, the Council had requested the Secretary-General to co-ordinate the efforts of the United Nations system and to organize a programme of international assistance to Mozambique. A mission had been dispatched to the country in July 1977 and the Secretary-General would bring its report to the attention of the international community for appropriate action.

6. In Botswana, the economic problems were due to acts of aggression committed by the Rhodesian régime, which obliged the country to strengthen its defences to the detriment of an already fragile economy. In addition, Botswana had had to take in many refugees from southern Africa. The Security Council had adopted on 14 January 1977 a resolution on Botswana—resolution 403 (1977)—and at the request of the Government of Botswana the Secretary-General had sent a mission to organize a programme of assistance, and that Mission had submitted a report.⁴⁶ To compensate for the diversion of resources which would normally have been devoted to development, the Mission had recommended general programme assistance, or, if such assistance was not available, aid on a project-by-project basis; it had identified 11 projects of vital importance, of which 9 were entirely new and 2 were already in the national development plan. The total additional assistance required for normal development by Botswana over the next three years would be \$53.5 million.

7. Lesotho had the dual disadvantage of being a landlocked country and an enclave in the territory of South Africa. In addition to the vulnerability arising from its geographical situation and the pressures exerted by its neighbour, it had had to deal with an influx of refugees. On 22 December 1976, the Security Council had adopted resolution 402 (1976) appealing to States to provide emergency assistance, in particular to enable Lesotho to implement the United Nations resolutions on *apartheid*. The Secretary-General, who had been requested in the same resolution to organize a programme of assistance, had sent a mission to the country early in 1977. The report of the Mission to Lesotho⁴⁷ emphasized the fragile nature of Lesotho's economy and its dependence on external sources

for many vital goods. The mission recommended two programmes of aid, an emergency programme to cope with the immediate consequences of certain hostile acts by South Africa and with the poor harvest of 1977, and an accelerated development programme consisting of several projects which were designed to strengthen the country's economy and were suitable for rapid implementation.

8. In order to facilitate aid to Mozambique, Botswana and Lesotho, the United Nations had established a special account for each country to which all donors could channel their contributions; he had been entrusted with the task of co-ordinating the international programmes of assistance to the three countries. The Governments of those countries would welcome any assistance, whether multilateral or bilateral, which would help them to pursue their development during the current difficult period.

9. On the question of assistance in emergency situations, the Council would recall that for Angola the General Assembly had adopted resolution 31/188 at its thirty-first session, requesting the Secretary-General to mobilize an international programme of assistance and to establish an international fund for Angola in order to enable it to recover from its long struggle for independence and from the South African aggression, which had caused it widespread damage. The Assembly had also requested that Angola should be included in the list of the least developed countries and of the most seriously affected countries and be considered for assistance by the United Nations Special Fund. The Committee for Development Planning had made recommendations in that connexion, which were reproduced in chapter III of the report on its thirteenth session (E/5939 and Corr.1). The Secretary-General intended to send a mission to Angola to evaluate the country's reconstruction needs.

10. With regard to the situation in the Comoros, at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly the representative of that country had described some serious economic problems, including the lack of mineral resources, exclusive dependence on agriculture, high unemployment and a growing trade deficit. Since the colonial era, the country's economy had depended on a few export crops at the expense of subsistence agriculture, and it had suffered seriously as the result of the ending of technical and financial assistance by France. In resolution 31/42, the General Assembly had called on the international community to assist the Government of the Comoros in dealing with the country's economic situation and had requested the Secretary-General to mobilize, particularly from the developed countries and the appropriate organizations within the United Nations system, the assistance necessary to meet the short-term and long-term development needs of the country. The Secretary-General had drawn the attention of Member States to that appeal and had dispatched a mission to the Comoros to determine the essential needs and priority areas for urgent action. That mission, which was currently finalizing its report, had confirmed the gravity of the economic difficulties facing the country, on which the international community should take rapid action. The situation had been further aggravated by the unexpected return in January 1977 of 17,000 Comorians from Madagascar and by a volcanic eruption in April, which

⁴⁶ See the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Assistance to Botswana", transmitting to the Security Council the report of the Mission to Botswana (S/12307).

⁴⁷ See the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Assistance to Lesotho" (S/123015 and Corr.1) transmitting to the Security Council the report of the Mission on economic assistance to Lesotho.

had caused considerable damage and left some 10,000 persons homeless. The report of the mission would be transmitted to all Governments and international organizations, which the Secretary-General intended to ask for generous assistance to deal promptly with the specific needs of the Comoros.

11. Prince Sadruddin AGA KHAN (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that recent developments in southern Africa had led to a new influx of refugees—particularly from South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe—into the front-line States (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia), placing severe economic strains in particular on Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. A United Nations mission had therefore been dispatched to assess the situation and make specific recommendations. It emerged from its report and the evaluation made later by UNHCR that the requirements of the refugees from southern Africa amounted to some \$16 million.

12. There were currently 3,500 refugees in Botswana, including some 2,000 from Zimbabwe, 900 from South Africa and 600 from Namibia. The most urgent task was to improve the existing reception centres and build new ones. A centre for 1,000 persons, the capacity of which the Government was proposing to double, had just been built at Salebi Pikwe, at a cost of \$400,000. Pending the completion of transit centres, UNHCR had provided relief assistance to the refugees amounting to over \$100,000, together with clothing, medical care, etc. The United Nations Mission on Emergency assistance for South African Student Refugees had also recommended the construction of secondary schools and educational facilities and scholarships for South African students at the University of Botswana and Swaziland.⁴⁸

13. Certain essential projects still required to be financed: a reception centre for South African student refugees, at a cost of \$766,000, medical care and maintenance until the end of 1977, scholarships for and transport of students resuming studies in the autumn of 1977.

14. In Lesotho, there were between 800 and 1,000 South African refugees. The United Nations Mission had recommended, in particular, additional hostel accommodation for 60 students at the National University of Lesotho and scholarships and educational facilities in existing secondary and technical schools for 730 South African students. UNDP was contributing \$102,000 to help to finance that project, and the Federal Republic of Germany was allocating \$200,000 on a bilateral basis.

15. In Swaziland, where there were some 100 South African student refugees, it was proposed to construct a reception and transit centre with some educational facilities at the secondary level, at a cost of approximately \$430,000. The Government was aiding those refugees with funds from UNHCR, and some 40 students were taking correspondence courses financed from trust funds. Finally,

286 refugees who could not obtain education in Swaziland had been able to move to the United Republic of Tanzania.

16. As the United Nations Mission had emphasized the importance of strengthening existing counselling services (in Botswana and Lesotho) and establishing such services (in Swaziland), a UNHCR mission had been sent to the three countries to make appropriate arrangements.

17. In Angola, there were an estimated 5,000 refugees from Namibia, whose needs had been estimated at \$400,000. In Huila province, a hospital run by the SWAPO was being renovated and equipped at a cost of \$100,000.

18. In Mozambique, there were an estimated 35,100 refugees, of whom 100 were South African and 35,000 Zimbabwean; they could well number 50,000 by 1978. At present, 32,000 refugees were living in three organized settlements, under the supervision of the Mozambican Government, the remainder being in the border areas, many in transit camps awaiting transportation. The majority were children and adolescents, particularly vulnerable groups which required special assistance (nutrition, health and education). It was becoming increasingly difficult for the Mozambican Government to continue to provide the Zimbabwean refugees within its borders with the considerable assistance they required, particularly on account of the serious economic impact of the sanctions imposed on Southern Rhodesia and of food shortages. In the past two months, UNHCR had had food, medicines and milk, together with clothing and blankets for the cold season, transported by air to Mozambique. Several voluntary agencies had generously responded to his appeal of 8 June 1977.

19. The United Republic of Tanzania, where there were some 500 student refugees, had received relief assistance, and funds had been provided for the transport of South African and Zimbabwean students to Nigeria, to resume their secondary studies.

20. Zambia had some 10,800 southern African refugees, of whom 3,400 were Namibian, 400 South African and 7,000 Zimbabwean, for whom UNHCR had provided, as emergency assistance, \$700,000 worth of clothing, health care, accommodation and school facilities. A reception centre near Lusaka was being renovated and expanded at a cost of \$125,000, drawn from trust funds.

21. The number of southern African refugees in need of scholarships was estimated at some 800. UNHCR was negotiating 400 places with the Government of Ghana. The Algerian Government had offered 13 university places with scholarships; the Governments of Egypt, the Niger, Mauritius and Madagascar had expressed their willingness to assist refugee students.

22. Although the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Mission on Emergency Assistance for South African Student Refugees⁴⁹ and in the report of the Mission to Botswana⁵⁰ was fairly

⁴⁸ See A/32/65, chap. V, sect. D.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, annex, chap. V.

⁵⁰ See S/12307, para. 18.

satisfactory, UNHCR did not have adequate funds to finance all the projects envisaged; in order to do so, it would need a further \$16 million. To date, in response to his appeal of 8 June 1977, the Governments of Denmark, France, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Switzerland had made pledges amounting to some \$2.4 million. In addition, the United States of America had pledged a contribution of some \$6 million earmarked for Botswana. Bilateral aid amounted to some \$2 million, including \$850,000 from the Federal Republic of Germany.

23. He renewed his appeal to Governments of Member States to enable the target of \$16 million to be met and hoped that they would respond generously and speedily, without making restrictions as to the use of their contributions.

24. Two countries had received assistance to meet emergency situations. Angola, which, in addition to Namibian refugees, had had to take in groups of exiles from Zaire and Angolans repatriated from Portugal, had received aid from the United Nations Programme of Humanitarian Assistance to Angola (for which he had been appointed as Co-ordinator) \$32,5 million in cash and 38,000 tons of foodstuffs, of which \$25 million and 21,000 tons of foodstuffs had already been received. The Comoros had received people forced to leave Madagascar and had requested international contributions (\$670,000 in June) through UNHCR in order to relieve the situation.

25. Sir Robert JACKSON (Under-Secretary-General, Co-ordinator of United Nations Assistance to Cape Verde, Indochina and Zambia) said that, in view of the serious economic and social situation in Sao Tome and Principe, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General, in its resolution 31/187, to mobilize financial, technical and economic assistance from the international community with a view to meeting the country's short-term and long-term development needs. He had therefore visited Sao Tome and Principe in June 1977 for the purpose of reviewing the situation with the Government. It had been estimated that \$13 million would cover needs with regard to the training of national personnel, communications, a telecommunication satellite ground station and sundry equipment, and he hoped that some Member States willing to help Sao Tome and Principe might furnish some of that equipment, even though they themselves had limited resources. The United Nations, some of the specialized agencies and WFP were already giving help, and the Governing Council of UNDP had just increased the indicative planning figure for Sao Tome and Principe, whose Government was determined to overcome its difficulties. Sao Tome and Principe had become independent under adverse circumstances and was desperately short of trained administrators and managers, but if that problem was resolved the rich natural resources it possessed would permit it to develop at an impressive rate. The sooner assistance was forthcoming, the sooner self-sufficiency would be achieved.

26. The economic situation in Cape Verde had been made very difficult by eight successive years of drought followed by floods, together with the return of large numbers of refugees and the total lack of infrastructure for

development. General Assembly resolution 31/17 had asked the Secretary-General to mobilize assistance from the international community. On the strength of the satisfactory response to an earlier appeal made before the country had become independent, the Secretary-General had subsequently issued another appeal asking for \$31.4 million for the purchase and transport of foodstuffs. Thanks to the generosity shown by certain Member States and action by the United Nations, the food situation for 1977 could now be regarded as secure, and the Government of Cape Verde had not found it necessary to draw on funds earmarked for development in order to pay for food imports, with the result that it had been able to concentrate on soil conservation and the development and conservation of its water resources. It would be many years before Cape Verde would be able to produce enough food, and the Secretary-General would therefore probably launch a new appeal at the end of 1977. He wished to emphasize in conclusion that the people of Cape Verde were displaying great determination in the face of adversity, particularly the women, since a large number of their menfolk were working abroad, thus providing a source of foreign exchange. He hoped that Member States and the United Nations system would continue to give support for Cape Verde.

27. Mr. LEROTHOLI (Lesotho) said that by closing certain key border entry points, South Africa had brought pressure to bear on Lesotho with the aim of forcing it to recognize the bogus independence of the Transkei. In its resolution 402 (1976), the Security Council had asked the Secretary-General of the United Nations to translate the political support given to Lesotho by the international community into economic assistance. He wished to thank those Governments which had undertaken to grant bilateral aid or to contribute to the special fund opened for the purpose. That aid had enabled Lesotho to carry out a number of projects, particularly for road construction, to which reference was made in the report of the United Nations Mission to Lesotho.

28. The Council's consideration of agenda item 29 (Assistance to Lesotho) provided an opportunity to draw attention to certain features of that process of assistance. Lesotho was still short of \$8 million to finance all its road construction projects, but for agricultural projects the Government needed over \$31 million. The total shortfall amounted to \$74.9 million, \$41.1 million of which was needed for emergency programmes and \$33.8 million for the accelerated development programme.

29. The situation in Lesotho stemmed from the political situation in the southern part of Africa, particularly South Africa, where *apartheid*, condemned both by the international community and by the Government of Lesotho, was flouting human dignity and basic rights. When his country had become independent, its resolve to oppose racism and *apartheid* had not been taken seriously on account of its geographical location. But whatever consequences its attitude might have, his country was nevertheless determined to comply strictly with General Assembly resolution 31/6 A condemning the so-called independence of the Transkei and other bantustans, despite the outrageous treatment which South African officials and

private citizens continued to inflict on his country. Lesotho would not yield, no matter what pressures were brought to bear.

30. Lesotho was grateful to all the countries assisting it in its struggle and was prepared to make its contribution to eradicating colonialism and racism throughout southern Africa, in the knowledge that support could be counted on from the international community. The future of southern Africa depended on the solidarity shown by the peoples of the region, and he therefore welcomed the stand taken by neighbouring independent countries. The fact that the question of assistance to Lesotho was being considered in connexion with assistance to Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia would help to put the whole issue into better perspective. If the entire world resolutely opposed South Africa's *apartheid* policy, a major step would have been taken towards solving most of the problems.

31. Mr. TLOU (Botswana) said that by putting the matter of assistance to Botswana on its agenda, in compliance with Security Council resolutions 403 (1977) and 406 (1977), and also the items relating to aid for Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique and Zambia, the Economic and Social Council was demonstrating that it viewed with concern the plight of those States in the face of harassment by racist régimes in southern Africa. There might not have been any delegation from Botswana at the Council session at all had it not been for the swift and positive reaction from the Security Council to the aggression committed by the illegal racist minority régime in Southern Rhodesia and the speed with which the United Nations Secretary-General had dispatched a mission to Botswana to assess the situation and make recommendations. That mission had carried out its task energetically, producing a lucid and objective report.

32. The risk of war in southern Africa was growing with each passing day and the independent peace-loving States of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique and Zambia had all been subjected within a short space of time to aggressive treatment and armed intervention. The tension thus caused threatened not only the stability of the region but international peace and security as well, and the oppression of indigenous populations in States under minority rule continued unabated, with the result that the whole region was entering a very critical and decisive phase. In Southern Rhodesia, the rebel Ian Smith had once again rejected a negotiated settlement, declaring his intention to intensify the colonial war.

33. Notwithstanding Security Council resolutions, the Southern Rhodesian régime was increasing its attacks on Botswana, and that state of affairs was bound to continue as long as Zimbabwe, where the armed struggle was intensifying, was not free. In its search for scapegoats, Southern Rhodesia had recently unleashed premeditated and well co-ordinated attacks aimed at the social and economic infrastructure in Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia, with the intent of forcing those countries to abandon their help for the people of Zimbabwe. But nothing would deter Botswana from coming to the assistance of Zimbabwe, and his country asked the international community to provide it with help, so that it could firstly

maintain normal economic development while allocating the funds needed for its security, secondly defend its territorial integrity and independence, and thirdly give assistance to thousands of refugees.

34. The report of the Mission to Botswana and the report of the Mission on Emergency Assistance for South African Student Refugees, already referred to, were a true reflection of the situation in Botswana at the time the mission had visited the country, but certain figures in the report were already out of date, particularly those for the number of refugees. According to the latest information, between 300 and 500 refugees were arriving in Botswana every week, mainly from Zimbabwe, and although some were being evacuated by air to Zambia the situation was growing rapidly worse.

35. The needs of Botswana were clearly detailed in those two reports, but a few recommendations needed to be highlighted. Firstly, Botswana would require about \$28 million over a three-year period to meet both the capital and the recurrent costs of its security needs. His Government had already diverted domestic funds to the recently established defence force at the expense of other activities, and it was impossible to over-emphasize the urgent need for external compensatory financial assistance, i.e., as stated in paragraph 129 of the report of the Mission to Botswana, assistance for projects included in the National Development Plan 1976-1981 for which financing had not yet been arranged. He would prefer to place emphasis on general programme assistance to match the diversion of funds from normal development, because that would make it easier to maintain a balance between the development programme and national economic objectives.

36. There were also other emergency projects costing \$25.6 million for veterinary medicine and stock-breeding, rail and air transport and the establishment of a grain reserve. WFP would provide 6,000 tons of grain, but funds were still needed for storage tanks. One of the most important projects was the maintenance of essential railway services; the Botswana railway line, which was owned by Rhodesia, not only carried passenger traffic but conveyed vital goods (agricultural and mining products) which Botswana imported or exported. That railway line had already been a target for sabotage, and his country's economy would be paralysed if it were disrupted. That was why the Government of Botswana urgently needed funds to keep essential rail services going until such time as it could take over the full control of the line.

37. Experience had shown that external aid must be well co-ordinated by both the donor and recipient countries if it was to be effective. Such co-ordination existed between the United Nations machinery, headed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning in Botswana. His country would do everything possible to see that efforts by the international community in that regard were not held up. Most of the emergency projects still had to be financed or re-financed, and to date only partial financing had been pledged for the essential railway services and the strategic grain reserve. UNHCR had provided assistance for refugees from Zimbabwe, and aid for schools for South African refugees had also been promised.

38. The Government of Botswana was especially grateful for the aid received from Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and also from UNDP, WFP, UNHCR, the European Economic Community, the American Friends Service Committee and the Lutheran World Federation. His Government was also receiving bilateral assistance from many friendly countries and was aware that other Governments and organizations were intending to announce contributions. Botswana also knew that it could count upon international assistance at the time

of its greatest need. Its people were ready to make sacrifices in the cause of Zimbabwe, but their task would be extremely difficult without the international assistance envisaged in the reports of the Assistant Secretary-General for Special Political Questions. In conclusion, he wished to express the hope that the Council would approve the programme of assistance presented by the Assistant Secretary-General and UNHCR and that it would decide to keep Botswana's case under review.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.
