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President: Mr. M. MIR KHAN (Pakistan).

Present:

The representatives of the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Greece, Indonesia, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Yugoslavia.

Observers from the following countries: Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

AGENDA ITEM 13

Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/3015 and Add.1 and 2, E/L.760)

1. The PRESIDENT welcomed the new United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on his first appearance before the Council in that capacity, and invited him to introduce his annual report to the General Assembly (A/3585), which had been communicated to the Council under cover of document E/3015.
2. Mr. LINDT (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) paid a tribute to his predecessor, the late Dr. van Heuven Goedhart, who by his untiring efforts had succeeded in resuscitating and maintaining general interest in a problem which, at the time when he had assumed office, had been well-nigh forgotten, and by his creative imagination had opened up new ways of approaching the refugee problem — ways which he (Mr. Lindt), as his successor, was seeking to follow.
3. He also paid a tribute to his staff, and especially to the Deputy High Commissioner, who had been called upon to hold the fort during a period in which the Office had been faced, in the form of the Hungarian refugees, with the greatest emergency in its life, over and above its continuing preoccupations with those who had come to be known as the "old" refugees.
4. He wished to begin by stressing the point that, without article 2 of its Statute, which laid down that its

work should be entirely non-political and humanitarian and social in character, it would be well-nigh impossible for his Office to discharge its responsibilities. One aspect of those responsibilities was the provision of international protection for refugees; another was the facilitation of permanent solutions to their problems. In that connexion it must constantly be borne in mind that refugees should enjoy the greatest possible freedom of choice amongst the three forms of permanent solution envisaged in article 1 of the Statute of his Office — namely, repatriation, emigration and integration. It was also vital that every refugee problem should be solved as speedily as possible; refugee camps should be no more than reception and transit centres; for the longer a refugee remained in a camp, the more he deteriorated, physically and psychologically, and the more difficult and expensive the process of helping him to start a new life became. The provision of care and maintenance for refugees in camps was a humanitarian duty, but it did not solve their problem, and to speed up the permanent solutions programme would mean a real saving.

5. A clear indication of the way in which permanent solutions could be found more rapidly was provided by the case of the Hungarian refugees, with regard to whom his Office had acted on the basis of General Assembly resolutions 1006 (ES-II), 1039 (XI) and 1129 (XI). By the middle of July 1957, the influx of Hungarian refugees had exceeded 193,000, of whom some 174,000 had entered Austria, and 19,000 Yugoslavia. The problem of those refugees had at once been recognized by the General Assembly as being an international responsibility. International action had taken two forms: the provision of facilities for emigration, and financial assistance. With, in most cases, the rapid and efficient help of the Inter-governmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM), 36 countries had so far received 142,700 Hungarian immigrants from Austria, and 7,800 from Yugoslavia. To make that possible, many of the receiving countries had relaxed their immigration regulations, and many had dispensed almost completely with formalities. It must be said, however, that it had taken considerably longer to organize mass emigration from Yugoslavia than from Austria. With regard to financial assistance, the principle that the country of first asylum should not be left to shoulder the entire financial burden, but that that burden should be shared by the international community, had been put into practice. In addition to the assistance given to the refugees by the League of Red Cross Societies — by assuming responsibility for care and maintenance in camps in Austria and providing food in camps in Yugoslavia through the Yugoslav Red Cross — as a result of joint appeals by the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner himself a total of more than \$20 million would have been made available for assis-

tance to Hungarian refugees in Austria and Yugoslavia up to the end of 1957; half that sum had been paid or promised to his Office, either direct or through the United Nations Secretariat, the remainder having taken the form of bilateral assistance to the Austrian Government. As a result, the expenses incurred by the Austrian Government in respect of Hungarian refugees up to the end of 1957 would have been substantially covered. Yugoslavia, however, was still faced with uncovered expenses totalling more than \$5 million, and the financial situation in that country was now critical, since the Government had exhausted the credits it had been granted by the National Bank of Yugoslavia. It seemed, in fact, that international solidarity had not been so manifest towards Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia as towards those in Austria, and he hoped that that disparity would be redressed.

6. The question of repatriation arose in connexion with every refugee problem. His Office had made every effort to ensure that those Hungarian refugees who wished to return to their country were enabled to do so. It had also been represented on the Hungarian repatriation missions which had been allowed to visit the camps in Austria and Yugoslavia in order to ensure that individual refugees were not subjected to pressure of any kind. So far, 5,000 Hungarian refugees had been repatriated from Austria, 2,500 from Yugoslavia and 3,200 from countries of second reception.

7. Thus, within eight months, vigorous and successful international co-operation had reduced the Hungarian refugee problem to manageable proportions. However, there were still 26,000 Hungarian refugees in Austria, of whom 13,000 were in camps, and, allowing for 600 who had been integrated locally, 8,600 in Yugoslavia, all in camps. Many thousands of them still wished to emigrate and, as he had already indicated, the wishes of the individual refugee should be the determining factor. Certain immigration quotas were not yet entirely exhausted, but his Office estimated that an additional 12,000 to 14,000 visas would be required to give all those who wished to emigrate the possibility of doing so. It would be a magnificent achievement if all the Hungarian refugee camps in Austria and Yugoslavia could be closed by the end of the year, each of their inmates having been helped to solve his individual problem in the way he preferred, whether it be emigration, repatriation or integration. Compared with what had been achieved, a relatively small effort was required, but it was often the small efforts that were most difficult to engineer.

8. Turning to the problem of the "old" refugees — temporarily overshadowed by that of the Hungarian refugees — he pointed out that the United Nations Refugee Fund (UNREF) was now in its third year. At the time of its establishment there had been 84,750 refugees in camps in Europe. By 1 January 1956 the figure had fallen to 68,430, and by 1 January 1957 to 50,330. The UNREF programme had undoubtedly largely contributed to bringing about that reduction. Its implementation, however, was at present approximately one year behind schedule. That delay was partly due to the fact that the establishment of the UNREF Executive Committee had had to be awaited, partly to technical difficulties inherent in the carrying out of

this kind of programme, and partly to the belated payment of contributions. A shortfall of \$2,700,000 had now accumulated on the target \$16,000,000 for government contributions which had been established for implementation of the UNREF programme over the years 1955 to 1958 inclusive.

9. The "old" refugees could be divided into two groups, those within the camps and those outside them. The number and age-structure of the former category were known, and, taking births and new arrivals into account, it was estimated that by the end of 1958, when UNREF was due to be wound up, there would still be 30,000 refugees in camps in Europe. As to the refugees outside camps, his Office had certain estimates, but the Executive Committee had authorized it to make a survey to put it in a better position to assess the scope of the problem and the best means of dealing with it. But for the reason he had already given — that a camp was a demoralizing and debilitating place in which to live — the prime objective must, in his view, still be to clear the camps. The late High Commissioner had shown the way by initiating a camp closure plan which the voluntary agencies were helping to put into effect.

10. Many of the refugees in camps still wanted to emigrate. Many of them had already been rejected by selection missions. Some of those thus rejected had at the time been suffering from tuberculosis, but were now completely cured; sometimes their families had remained behind with them, sometimes they had gone on ahead. The action taken by the international community in the case of the Hungarian refugees showed what could be achieved, given the will. If the countries of immigration would take another look at the camps, and perhaps relax their immigration restrictions a little, bearing in mind that even if a family included one difficult case it was still an economic asset on balance, he was convinced that the present camp population could be greatly reduced.

11. For the remainder — apart from those who were willing to accept repatriation — the only solution was integration, and that required money. It was now almost certain that, quite apart from the shortfall in contributions which he had already mentioned, an additional \$4,800,000 would be required fully to implement the UNREF programme.

12. In considering how the additional funds could be raised, two courses could be envisaged. The programme could be spread over a longer period, but in that case he very much feared delays in implementation of the same kind as had already arisen. Alternatively, it could be intensified and the additional funds asked for by the end of 1958, although implementation would necessarily go on until 1960. The Executive Committee had considered the matter at its sixth (special) session held in Geneva earlier in July, and had adopted the resolution (No. 6) annexed to its report (E/3015/Add.2, annex), in which it requested him "to intensify to the fullest extent possible his programme of permanent solutions in order to benefit the maximum number of refugees remaining in camps, without losing sight of the need to continue to seek solutions for the problems of refugees outside camps".

13. The refugees outside camps included one further sub-category which had always been recognized as of special importance — namely, those who were most in need of emergency assistance. Prominent in that group were the European refugees in the Far East and the difficult cases.

14. As to the Far East generally, he drew attention to paragraph (xi) of the introduction to his report, which referred to the Executive Committee's recommendation that "the General Assembly should take into account the problem of the Chinese refugees in Hong Kong when considering the future arrangements for this Office".

15. Finally, with regard to future arrangements, he thought it desirable to distinguish between the question of continuing his Office for a further period and that of authorizing him to give special assistance in cases of particular refugee problems. The former question related mainly to his Office's long-term responsibilities for the legal protection of refugees. The continuing need in that sphere was not, he thought, contested. His Office had to supervise the implementation of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, of 28 July 1951, which it had helped to negotiate; and a visit to any of its branch offices would suffice to show the importance of that side of its work. It was estimated that there were one million refugees in Europe alone who still came under his mandate — in other words, who had not been naturalized or repatriated; it was, of course, true that the need for protection varied from group to group and might also vary from country to country. In 1956, some 55,000 refugees had received naturalization papers, no mean achievement when it was realized that the authorities had to handle each case separately. It was, however, clear that there would still be a large body of refugees in need of international protection for several years to come, and that consideration had undoubtedly been in the forefront of the Executive Committee's mind when it had unanimously recommended the continuation of his Office for a further period (E/3015/Add.1, paragraph 79). Some members of the Executive Committee, possibly the majority, had favoured a fixed-term extension, whereas others had been in favour of an indefinite term.

16. Mr. CHENG PAONAN (China) paid a tribute to the new High Commissioner, and expressed the Chinese delegation's satisfaction at the smooth way in which the Office had operated under the Deputy High Commissioner in the interregnum between the late High Commissioner's death and Mr. Lindt's appointment.

17. The reduction of the problem of Hungarian refugees to manageable size, mentioned in chapter I of the High Commissioner's excellent report, was due to the combined efforts of governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The Chinese delegation hoped that the High Commissioner would enjoy continued and sustained support in his further efforts on behalf of Hungarian refugees.

18. He was glad to note from chapter II that the High Commissioner had assumed responsibility for Jewish refugees expelled from Egypt at the beginning of the year. It was indeed the High Commissioner's responsibility under his mandate to help all refugees without distinction of race, religion, nationality or colour.

19. Chapter III gave the distinct impression that the system of legal protection had been strengthened during the past year. The Chinese Government, which had ratified the Convention on the Declaration of Death of Missing Persons, intended to accede to the protocol extending the period of validity of that Convention.

20. With regard to chapter IV, he welcomed the considerable increase in the rate of resettlement of refugees, including a number of difficult cases. Repatriation must continue to be on an impeccably voluntary basis, and he trusted that the High Commissioner would make every effort, as in the past, to ensure full safeguards for the individual refugee in that respect.

21. It was a matter of some satisfaction that more than \$6 million had already been spent under the UNREF programme (dealt with in chapter V), from which some 30,000 refugees had so far benefited. Many projects had, however, been postponed owing to shortage of funds, and it was now clear that it would be impossible to complete the programme by the date fixed for the termination of the High Commissioner's mandate. The Chinese delegation took due note of the UNREF Executive Committee's unanimous recommendation that the mandate be prolonged.

22. Chapter VI referred to the close working relationships which had been established between the High Commissioner's Office and many non-governmental and intergovernmental agencies. Those relationships had successfully withstood the strain imposed on them by the Hungarian refugees' emergency, and he hoped they would continue to yield equally good results.

23. Turning to the question of Chinese refugees in Hong Kong, dealt with in paragraphs 104 to 113 of the report on the fourth session of the UNREF Executive Committee (annexed to the High Commissioner's report), he pointed out that that group, numbering 700,000, was the largest single group of refugees in the world today. Dr. Hambro's report, "The problem of the Chinese Refugees in Hong Kong", first issued on 17 November 1954, made it clear (paragraph 87) that they were divided into two categories: those who had left the mainland because of a "well-founded fear of persecution", and those who were unwilling to return to the mainland "because of such fear", even if it was not the reason why they had left it. In case it was thought that conditions had changed, he pointed out that it was stated in part I of the Hong Kong Government's annual report for 1956 that there had been a net influx of 56,000 permanent immigrants from the mainland in the course of seven months during which immigration restrictions had been relaxed as an experiment.

24. Despite the help they received from the Hong Kong authorities and many voluntary agencies, the Chinese refugees in Hong Kong were the most neglected body of refugees in any part of the world. There was, he thought, a general feeling that the United Nations should do something to relieve their plight. He sincerely hoped there would be general acceptance of Dr. Hambro's view (paragraph 156 of the report) that, even if there were legal obstacles to bringing the Chinese refugees in Hong Kong within the High Commissioner's mandate, "from a broader and humanitarian point of view... a

factual situation cannot be without influence on the legal position", and that it was moreover "inconsistent with the large measure of international interest in other groups of political refugees that this important group should fail to receive international assistance on account of a legal technicality" (paragraph 488). That view had been accepted by the UNREF Executive Committee. In his view, the question of the Chinese refugees in Hong Kong had now reached a crucial stage. At its twelfth session the General Assembly would have the chance of manifesting its sympathy for them in the same way as it had manifested its sympathy for European refugees in Europe and elsewhere. It was unthinkable that the Chinese refugees in Hong Kong should be asked to go on suffering without help from the international community and be deprived of all hope of a new life.

25. The Chinese delegation supported the draft resolution submitted jointly by Brazil, Canada, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America (E/L.760). As long ago as 1953, the Chinese delegation had expressed the view that the problem of refugees would continue for some time after the High Commissioner's present mandate expired, and that the mandate should therefore be prolonged for at least another five years. He had therefore no difficulty in supporting section B of the draft resolution. He was also fully in agreement with section C, seeing that, unless the camp problem was solved soon, it would never be solved at all.

26. Mr. SCHURMANN (Netherlands) had been deeply impressed by the High Commissioner's clear and factual statement. The refugee problem was, or ought to be, temporary; its solution should not be beyond the wits of the international community, or out of its financial reach.

27. But as a result of the frightful events in Hungary, the international community was faced with yet another refugee problem. He had nothing but praise for the way in which the High Commissioner's Office and other organizations had moved to meet what was undoubtedly the biggest emergency that had arisen since the war, one which had taxed the resources of Austria and Yugoslavia to — and even beyond — the utmost. Public sympathy and the help they had received from the whole free world had made it possible for the voluntary agencies concerned to bring prompt assistance to the Hungarian refugees. The fact that of the 174,000 who had crossed into Austria only some 16,000 would be left in camps by the end of 1957 showed what could be done when the public imagination was fired, and when the machinery to hand could be sent into action unhampered by lack of funds or by restrictive immigration regulations. But further action was still called for if the problem was to be entirely solved, and he therefore supported the Executive Committee's recommendation that governments should be asked to continue and intensify their support, financial and other, with a view to liquidating the problem by the end of 1957 (E/3015/Add.1, paragraph 71).

28. The Council must not, however, forget the fate of those earlier refugees, many of whom had spent ten years or more in camps, only to see the "new" refugees from Hungary escape from the camps in months, weeks

or even days, frontiers being opened up to them and jobs found for them as if by magic. It seemed legitimate to hope that the Hungarian tragedy might have made so strong an impression on the public conscience that help to the "old" refugees too would be speeded up. The High Commissioner's report showed that his Office, for one, was not overlooking the "old" refugees. It was still true that by the end of 1958, when the High Commissioner's present mandate expired, there would still probably be some 30,000 "old" refugees in camps in Europe, of whom it might be hoped that 12,500 would be taken care of under the United States Escapee Program and that a further 3,500 would manage without international assistance. That still left 14,500 who would require help from the United Nations.

29. When the UNREF programme had first been launched in 1954, the late High Commissioner had estimated that government contributions to a total of \$16,000,000 would be needed to implement it. At the present rate at which contributions were coming in, there would be a shortfall of \$2,700,000 on that target. Moreover, as the programme neared completion, the proportion of difficult cases, each requiring greater expenditure, would increase; there had also been 51,000 new arrivals and, as members of the Council were all aware, there had been a general rise in costs. For all those reasons an additional \$4,800,000 was now required to enable the programme to be implemented in full. In other words, \$10,500,000 would have to be raised during the seventeen months before the end of 1958.

30. The High Commissioner had pointed out that in those circumstances the effort could either be spread over a longer period, or intensified. Many members of the UNREF Executive Committee had been in favour of the latter course, but unfortunately the Committee's resolution (No. 6) gave no clear indication that such intensification should be based on the revised estimate. It thus failed to give the High Commissioner the full support he required. The sum of \$10,500,000 might seem a very large one, but he (Mr. Schurmann) refused to believe that it was beyond the international community's reach. In his view, an urgent appeal should be addressed to governments, and an effort made to enlist the support of public opinion, particularly in the light of the fact that even if the necessary funds had all been raised by the end of 1958, it would take another two years before all the camps could be closed.

31. In view of the fact that on 1 January 1959 an estimated one million refugees would still be entitled to the High Commissioner's legal protection, quite apart from the responsibility that devolved on him in emergency situations, prolongation of his mandate was clearly necessary, and the Netherlands delegation welcomed the UNREF Executive Committee's unanimous recommendation on the subject.

32. In his view, the Council should begin at once to think about the task that would still remain once the UNREF programme had been completed. A considerable number of "old" refugees would still not have been settled, and there might well be some Hungarian refugees in need of assistance. As the two categories would then be almost indistinguishable, his delegation felt that their needs should be met out of the same fund.

33. Above all, the Council must always remember that refugees were human beings. The international community had already taxed their patience to the utmost, and it was now its urgent duty to be generous, prompt and fair. It was that spirit which illuminated the joint draft resolution before the Council (E/L.760), section B of which recognized the clear need for continuing the High Commissioner's mandate for at least another five years. The draft resolution then went on to recommend "that the General Assembly review, not later than at its seventeenth regular session, the arrangements for the Office of the High Commissioner with a view to determining whether the Office should be further continued". The purpose of section C was to endorse the request made to the High Commissioner by the UNREF Executive Committee in its resolution No. 6 that he intensify his programme to the fullest extent possible; in other words, it came down frankly on the side of intensifying the effort to close the refugee camps, in preference to attenuating it.

34. Mr. MACKAY (Canada) recalled that at its twenty-third session the Council had decided that the membership of the UNREF Executive Committee should be increased to twenty-one, and that Canada should be one of the new members (resolution 639 (XXIII)). Canada had been one of the founder countries of the International Refugee Organization (IRO), and in the years immediately following the Second World War when IRO had been active, had accepted more than 123,000 refugees. Since the establishment of the High Commissioner's Office, Canada had co-operated with it by providing financial support and accepting a large number of refugees within the High Commissioner's mandate. It had contributed \$125,000 to UNREF in 1955, and a like sum in 1956, and had now decided to raise its contribution to \$200,000 for 1957. Canada had helped to cope with the grave emergency resulting from the influx of nearly 200,000 Hungarian refugees into Austria and Yugoslavia by accepting about 33,000 of them. That, he thought, was the highest figure for any receiving country, with the possible exception of the United States of America.

35. He congratulated the High Commissioner and his staff on their energy and enthusiasm in dealing not only with the many refugee problems with which Europe had been beset as a result of the two world wars, but also with the equally serious difficulties confronting refugees in other parts of the world. The reason why the High Commissioner's Office had not been able to do more was simply that adequate funds had not been forthcoming either from governmental or from non-governmental sources. UNREF was a case in point. The High Commissioner had recently undertaken to re-examine its programme in order to determine whether its present scope would be sufficient not only to liquidate the refugee camps in Europe once and for all, but also to bring about the permanent resettlement of refugees outside the camps, and had come to the conclusion that the \$16 million target for the years 1955-1958 inclusive would not be sufficient for both purposes. The Canadian Government had very carefully examined the High Commissioner's arguments, and studied the documents he had submitted. It earnestly hoped that it would be

possible to make good the present shortfall in contributions by a renewed and vigorous effort on the part not only of those countries which had already contributed to UNREF, but also of other States Members of the United Nations. Basically, the UNREF programme was intended to bring about permanent solutions, and he thought all would agree that, in the long run, it would be much cheaper, not only financially but also in terms of human suffering, if such solutions could be swiftly achieved.

36. The question of the High Commissioner's mandate was entirely separate from that of the UNREF programme itself, for while the latter could not be implemented without a High Commissioner, it did not follow that the High Commissioner's Office could not continue without UNREF, which had been designed specifically to deal with European refugees from the Second World War. The Canadian delegation was of the opinion that it was essential that the High Commissioner's mandate be extended, preferably for a limited period. A five-year prolongation would be quite reasonable, since the General Assembly would be able in due course to review the further needs of the international community in that field.

37. One reason why his delegation thought that the High Commissioner's mandate should be renewed was that one of the most important functions of his Office was to provide legal protection for a host of refugees throughout the world. He understood that there were still more than a million people within the High Commissioner's mandate who, though not in most cases requiring immediate assistance, might well need the High Commissioner's help at some future date before they became full citizens of their countries of adoption.

38. He hoped that the draft resolution (E/L.760) on the High Commissioner's annual report, of which his delegation was one of the six sponsors, would command the Council's support, because it would be of considerable assistance to the General Assembly later in the year. In particular, it recommended that the mandate of the High Commissioner be extended for a period of five years from 1 January 1959. It confirmed the conclusions regarding the UNREF programme reached by the UNREF Executive Committee at its sixth (special) session, and endorsed the Executive Committee's request in its resolution No. 6 (operative paragraph 2) that the High Commissioner should make appropriate efforts to intensify the programme to ensure that the greatest possible number of refugees, both inside and outside the camps, were assisted. It was the Council's duty to support the High Commissioner's endeavours to assist the refugees falling under his mandate.

39. Mr. SCOTT FOX (United Kingdom) observed that much had happened since the Council had last met to discuss the annual report of the High Commissioner at its twenty-second session. The tremendous events in Hungary in the autumn of 1956 had had their inevitable impact on the day-to-day work of the High Commissioner's Office, and it was greatly to the credit of the Office as a whole that they had caused so little dislocation, and that the staff had managed to shoulder its new and pressing problems without neglecting its more

routine duties. The crisis had coincided with the appointment of the new High Commissioner, who had thus had to start work in particularly difficult circumstances. He would like to pay a tribute both to the High Commissioner himself and to the Deputy High Commissioner for the manner in which they had done their duty at that time.

40. It was clear from the High Commissioner's report that much remained to be done in Austria and Germany, and, while commending the local and central authorities of those countries for their excellent co-operation with the High Commissioner's Office, he would express the hope that they would make a very special effort to help during the remaining lifetime of UNREF. He fully realized their difficulties, but believed that it would be in their own interests, as well as in those of the refugees themselves and of the international community as a whole, to speed up the process of assimilation as much as possible, with the High Commissioner's assistance. It was the foreign refugees, as distinct from those of the same ethnic origin as the people in whose country they were living, who required and deserved the greater degree of assistance, and who should therefore have priority wherever possible.

41. He was glad to note the progress which, with the help of many governments and international and non-governmental organizations, had been made in dealing with the Hungarian refugees. The spirit in which the Governments of Austria and Yugoslavia had accepted and cared for the thousands of refugees who had crossed their frontiers within the space of a few weeks was particularly commendable. During the past nine months, many countries had allowed a considerable number of those refugees to settle within their borders; he would mention in particular the Commonwealth countries, Australia and Canada, which were to receive an additional 7,500 Hungarian refugees from Austria. He was also glad to learn that the flow of refugees from Yugoslavia to countries of permanent resettlement was likely to increase considerably in the next few months. There were still several thousand left in Yugoslavia, but he thought the major crisis could be said to have passed. That so much success had been achieved in dealing with the problem was due in no small measure to the High Commissioner's Office. To help to solve the outstanding problem, the United Kingdom Government was prepared to consider receiving further refugees from Austria or Yugoslavia to replace any who might move on from the United Kingdom to other countries under arrangements similar to those by which 5,000 refugees had been enabled to leave the United Kingdom for Canada. His Government had already incurred expenditure totalling £338,000 in respect of Hungarian refugees, both in the United Kingdom and abroad, and expenditure within the United Kingdom itself would be much increased with the exhaustion of the large voluntary funds at present being used for resettlement. The number of Hungarian refugees hitherto admitted to the United Kingdom exceeded 20,000, which was the highest number received by any country except the United States of America and Canada.

42. But the need to help the Hungarian refugees did not make it any the less necessary to assist the earlier refugees. A final and decisive effort should now be

made to solve the problem of the hard core of refugees who, despite the High Commissioner's exertions, still remained unsettled, an unhappy monument to man's inhumanity to man. The UNREF Executive Committee had agreed that it was desirable that the High Commissioner's mandate should be prolonged beyond its present term — namely, 31 December 1958 (E/3015/Add.1, paragraph 79). The United Kingdom Government for its part was prepared to see the legal and protective functions of the High Commissioner's Office extended for a further five years. It was not in favour of an indefinite extension, because, although it was clear that refugees would continue to exist — and possibly for a long time to come — as a special category of human beings requiring some form of international protection, it was also true that the problem might not always take the same form. A five-year extension would meet the immediate need, and some arrangement should be provided for reviewing the mandate before it was further prolonged. Such a review could reasonably be carried out in 1962, the year before the extended mandate expired, as suggested in section B of the joint draft resolution (E/L.760), of which his delegation was one of the sponsors.

43. The future of the UNREF programme was a much more intractable problem, and the United Kingdom delegation was glad to have the recommendations on the subject agreed upon by the Executive Committee at its special session on 11 July 1957, and supported the resolution (No. 6) adopted on that occasion. It hoped that it would be possible to wind up UNREF at the earliest possible moment. To do so, it would inevitably be necessary to make the programme increasingly selective in its final stages, and the proposals which the High Commissioner had submitted to the Executive Committee recognized that need by suggesting that efforts should be concentrated on emptying the camps. That, indeed, was the crux of the problem. The elimination of those institutions, with their depressing environment, their atmosphere of despair and apathy, and their tendency to engender a "camp psychosis" which led refugees to drift back into any camps that might remain, would be the first and major step towards restoring their unhappy inmates to normal society. Once the camps had been cleared, the welfare services of the countries concerned would, he hoped, be able to give the refugees the same assistance as had been rendered to the more than 200,000 refugees who had been resettled in the United Kingdom in recent years.

44. For all those reasons, the United Kingdom Government was prepared in principle to make a special financial contribution towards the final emptying of the camps, although it was not yet in a position to state the exact amount it could give. Though several other representatives had also announced in the UNREF Executive Committee their governments' readiness in principle to make a special contribution, it was unfortunately by no means clear how far all that would go towards raising the total of \$10,500,000 which would seem to be required by the end of 1958. Though he hoped the picture would become a little clearer during the present discussion, he doubted whether any final decisions on the fundamental problem of intensifying the UNREF

programme could be taken until the General Assembly discussed the matter at its twelfth session. Not only had governments had very little time in which to consider the UNREF Executive Committee's new ideas, but, in his own Government's opinion, any increase in the UNREF budget of the magnitude which the High Commissioner had stated to be necessary should be voted by all States Members of the United Nations, and not simply by those represented on the UNREF Executive Committee or the Council. That view gained force from the statement in operative paragraph 3 of the Executive Committee's resolution (No. 6) that appropriate efforts should be made to obtain the necessary funds, especially from those governments which had not yet contributed to the UNREF programme. Most of those governments were not represented on the Executive Committee, and an appeal to them would naturally carry more weight if issued by the General Assembly itself. All the same, he thought the Council should endorse the Executive Committee's request to the High Commissioner, in operative paragraph 2 of the resolution, "to intensify to the fullest extent possible his programme of permanent solutions in order to benefit the maximum number of refugees remaining in camps".

45. It was his Government's constant aim to bring about the termination of international governmental assistance for refugees at the earliest practicable date. That could only be done by making a very special effort at the present time. Consequently, his delegation had joined with others in sponsoring section C of the draft resolution (E/L.760), which it hoped would be supported unanimously.

46. The problem of the Chinese refugees in Hong Kong, to which the representative of China had referred, was of direct concern to the Government of the United Kingdom. The Hong Kong authorities had already done a great deal to relieve the plight of those refugees, and he was grateful to the Chinese representative for his recognition of that help, but it would be disingenuous to pretend that the problem was solved. It was an unusually complex problem, both from the legal and from the practical point of view. In document A/AC.79/47 (paragraph 22), submitted to the UNREF Executive Committee at its fourth session, his delegation had drawn attention to the serious housing shortage in Hong Kong, of which the refugees were the chief cause and equally the victims; but it had gone on to say that, for the purposes of rendering assistance, those refugees could not in practice be separated from other desperately poor people, for the two categories of homeless were inextricably mixed, and set a single problem. Quite apart from the legal issue, therefore, the problem of the Chinese refugees in Hong Kong might not be susceptible of solution through the usual procedures of the High Commissioner's Office. His delegation therefore believed that, as recommended by the UNREF Executive Committee, it would be most appropriate to leave the entire question for discussion by the General Assembly at its twelfth session.

47. Mr. SAFWAT (Egypt) said that he must first of all pay a tribute to the High Commissioner for his tireless activity on behalf of the thousands of refugees within his mandate.

48. The Egyptian delegation was deeply interested in the programme for permanent solutions; as an attempt to enable the refugees to regain their self-confidence, to find work, and to find a place in society, it was deserving of praise. The Egyptian Government would be very happy to contribute to UNREF were it not already bearing the burden of the Arab refugees from Palestine, who had been expelled from a territory which they had occupied for centuries. More than 200,000 refugees in the Gaza strip were a charge on Egypt, which was spending \$3,500,000 a year on their maintenance. That being so, the Egyptian Government could not contribute to help for the refugees in Europe. He would add that the Political Committee of the League of Arab States, after a thorough study of the question, had concluded that no other course was possible.

49. Noting that paragraph 97 of the High Commissioner's report (E/3015) suggested that there had been an increase in the number of requests for repatriation, he expressed his satisfaction because, in his view, the ideal solution to the refugee problem lay in giving refugees the opportunity of returning home; he would like the High Commissioner's Office to continue its efforts in that direction. The principle of repatriation had been recognized by the United Nations in General Assembly resolution 8 (I); and it could not be considered that the Statute of the High Commissioner's Office prevented it from promoting the repatriation of refugees, and, even if it did, it would be for the Council to remedy that situation in such a way as to enable the High Commissioner's Office to give first consideration to voluntary repatriation. Similarly, the High Commissioner's Office and the countries of residence should co-operate in keeping refugees informed, so far as was possible, about decrees and declarations of amnesty, and about the assistance offered by their countries of origin to refugees who wished to be repatriated.

50. As to the position of European refugees living in Egypt who came within the High Commissioner's mandate, there were at present 3,589 of them. Most had been completely integrated into Egyptian life. Following an agreement concluded in 1954 between the Egyptian Government and the High Commissioner, a branch of the High Commissioner's Office had been opened in Cairo to assist those refugees to return to their countries of origin or to emigrate to other countries, and the Egyptian authorities had agreed that they could return within two years if they were unsuccessful in settling elsewhere. The projects for re-integrating European refugees in the countries of the Middle East should therefore not be applied to Egypt. Although Egypt had not yet acceded to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, of 28 July 1951, its laws and regulations guaranteed the refugees all the protection they needed.

51. Referring to paragraphs 114 to 117 of the Report on the Fourth Session of the UNREF Executive Committee, annexed to the High Commissioner's report, which dealt with the situation of refugees who had recently left Egypt, he said that the term "refugees from Egypt" used in the relevant document (A/AC.79/58) seemed to him to be open to misunderstanding by giving the impression that what was meant were Egyptian nationals. To dispel that misunderstanding, he explained

that the persons who had left Egypt following the events of November 1956 could be divided into two categories: those who had been living in Egypt and had a specific nationality; and those who had been living in Egypt but were stateless.

52. The first category could be further sub-divided into two groups. The first comprised Egyptian nationals of all creeds, who were protected by the provisions of article 38 of the Egyptian Constitution under which no Egyptian could be expelled from Egyptian territory or prevented from returning to it. That group was not in question. The second group consisted of persons of British or French nationality (totalling 11,046 and 7,013 respectively), a number of whom (800 British and 648 French nationals) had left Egypt on account of the hostilities but could not be regarded as refugees in the legal sense of the term.

53. The category of stateless persons living in Egypt included 7,000 Jews. The Egyptian Government had always been well-disposed towards them, as the Chief Rabbi of Egypt and the Chairman of the Committee for Security and Justice in the Middle East had gratefully acknowledged. But the Egyptian Government had been obliged to ask some of those stateless Jews to leave the country because they had been engaging in activities inimical to the security of the State. A list of their names had been communicated to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

54. In conclusion, he noted that there was a marked discrepancy between the statistics in his possession and those supplied on 11 April 1957 by the High Commissioner's branch office in Egypt. The latter had made it clear that its figures were only approximate. He would like to ask the High Commissioner whether account had been taken in compiling those statistics of the status of the various categories of persons affected by the measures which Egypt had been forced to take to safeguard its security as a sovereign State.

55. Mr. VUKMANOVIĆ (Yugoslavia) observed that the High Commissioner's Office had had a great deal of extra work to do during 1956 owing to the unexpected emergence of the problem of the Hungarian refugees, in the solution of which Yugoslavia, as a country of first asylum, was keenly interested. The facts were that, faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, his country had admitted refugees from Hungary to its territory, at first in a trickle and then in large numbers. Faced by a large influx of refugees during the second half of December 1956, Yugoslavia had accepted the assistance offered by the High Commissioner's Office with effect from 6 November 1956, in order to provide for their accommodation and maintenance, and for their resettlement in other countries or repatriation. An agreement on the subject had been concluded between the Yugoslav Government and the High Commissioner's Office on 15 February 1957.

56. The Yugoslav Government had been actuated by strictly humanitarian motives, and had always scrupulously ensured that the refugees admitted to its territory were free to decide their own fate and to choose for themselves their permanent place of residence. Of the 19,559 Hungarian refugees admitted to Yugoslavia up

to 1 July 1957, 2,521 had been repatriated, 7,832 had emigrated to other countries, and 575 had found a home in Yugoslavia. At the present time, 8,531 refugees were housed in eighteen centres opened for the purpose. It would be much easier to arrange the resettlement of refugees in other countries if certain governments would relax their immigration regulations in favour of Hungarian refugees from Yugoslavia. The present attitude of those governments was quite unjustified, because the refugees in question were in no way different from those who had sought asylum elsewhere. In fact, Hungarian refugees had begun to enter Yugoslavia only when the closing of the Austro-Hungarian frontier had made it impossible for them to flee elsewhere.

57. The Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia were represented by elected committees who helped to run the reception centres. They enjoyed freedom of movement, were at liberty to profess their own religion, and had recently been allowed to work in Yugoslav factories and undertakings, so far as jobs were available, and enjoyed all the benefits of Yugoslav social legislation.

58. The Yugoslav Government had taken special measures to ensure that children under 14 years of age and young persons under 18 years of age were properly cared for. Where the parents had remained in Hungary and had asked for the children to be sent back, the latter had been repatriated through the Yugoslav Red Cross under a procedure which provided every safeguard. However, there were still in Yugoslavia 17 children under 14 years of age, and 617 young persons under 18 years of age, who had been admitted to Yugoslav schools.

59. In the matter of the feeding of Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia, an agreement had been concluded between the Yugoslav Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. Up to 1 July 1957, a sum of \$5,756,763 had been spent in housing and maintaining the Hungarian refugees. The value of aid supplied by the League of Red Cross Societies in the form of food, clothing, footwear and medicines had amounted to \$1,125,000 up to the same date. On the basis of those figures, and estimating that there might still be about 6,700 Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia at the end of 1957, the cost of maintaining them between 1 July and 31 December 1957 could be put at \$1,929,925. A sum of \$633,950 would also be required for settling 775 Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia (of whom 575 had already been integrated).

60. Taking all those figures into account, the total expenditure already incurred by Yugoslavia, or to be incurred by the end of 1957, would amount to \$8,320,638. Reimbursement up to 1 July 1957 amounted to \$721,135, so that the Yugoslav Government had actually spent — or would spend — the considerable sum of \$7,599,493. To meet that expenditure, the Yugoslav Government had already borrowed 3,000 million dinars from the National Bank of Yugoslavia. If the expenditure incurred in maintaining the refugees was not soon repaid, his Government would be obliged to borrow further sums from the National Bank, as no provision had been made for such outlay in the ordinary budget.

61. Emphasizing that his Government had made every effort to solve the problem of the Hungarian refugees in its country, he drew attention to the fact that a final

solution would have to be found with the aid of all States Members of the United Nations, particularly those which were in a position to absorb the refugees permanently. To ensure the quickest and most effective solution, countries which could accept refugees should relax their immigration regulations. The Yugoslav Government should also be reimbursed for the expenditure it had incurred in the same ratio as the other countries which had admitted Hungarian refugees. It felt that it had discharged its moral duty to the Hungarian refugees, and considered that it was now for other countries to give practical effect to the recommendations made by the General Assembly and the UNREF Executive Committee in that connexion.

62. Mr. JACOBY (United States of America) paid a tribute to the devotion of the High Commissioner and his staff.

63. The High Commissioner's review of the refugee situation showed that his Office had done much to meet the needs recognized by an enlightened world community. The High Commissioner's Office was an instrument for ensuring that international protection was afforded to the victims of political persecution. Besides acting as a channel for mobilizing and supplying assistance, it provided means of sustaining a broad international effort to deal with refugee problems. Without the High Commissioner's work, the conscience of humanity might become dulled, and unfortunate individuals unable to find new homes might be doomed to live indefinitely in misery and insecurity.

65. So far as the problem of Hungarian refugees was concerned, his delegation agreed that strenuous efforts should be made to carry to a conclusion the notable progress already made in finding permanent solutions, and hoped that through sustained co-operation the international community would be able to complete the work which it had started so well.

66. The United States of America had played a substantial part in coping with the Hungarian refugees. Nearly 34,000 Hungarian refugees had entered his country, and in diminished numbers more were still being admitted. His Government had also contributed \$5 million in response to the appeals made by the High Commissioner in consultation with the Secretary-General. The total expenditure incurred by the United States Government on behalf of Hungarian refugees amounted to over \$40 million in the form of grants to international organizations, such as the High Commissioner's Office and ICEM, of direct aid through the United States Escapee Program, and of aid supplied to receiving governments direct. By means of general fund-raising campaigns, private voluntary agencies in his country had collected and distributed a further \$18 million. If to those figures was added an estimated expenditure of \$30 million for airlift operations, it would be seen that, outside its own territory, his country had spent almost \$90 million on behalf of the Hungarian refugees, not to speak of the costs of resettlement within the country. Those figures reflected the humanitarian response of the American people to a great human tragedy.

67. His delegation was convinced that the General Assembly should, and indeed must, provide for the prolongation of the High Commissioner's mandate. It would be surprised if any free government expressed a contrary view. In the last nine months, the Hungarian refugee problem had quite rightly been in the forefront; but, largely as a result of the High Commissioner's efforts, the plight of the thousands of refugees of long standing who still remained homeless had not been forgotten. Consequently, the High Commissioner's Office must continue in being.

68. At the same time, it was to be hoped that the dimensions of the general refugee problem would not persist undiminished and that the High Commissioner would succeed in finding permanent solutions for those who were now refugees, and that, thanks to more enlightened public policy, the creation of great new political groups of refugees would be avoided. For that reason, his delegation would prefer the General Assembly to prolong the Office of the High Commissioner for a definite term of five years, providing for a review of the situation as the end of that period approached.

69. The UNREF programme was quite distinct from the question of the continuation of the High Commissioner's Office. His delegation was urgently concerned with the plight of the refugees living in camps, for whom that programme had been primarily designed. It had always felt that, in view of the severely limited funds at UNREF's disposal, the problem of refugees still in camps should be given the highest priority; but it had not always been satisfied that sufficient emphasis had been placed on that matter. Consequently, it urged the High Commissioner to intensify to the utmost his efforts to achieve permanent solutions for as many as possible of the refugees still in camps.

70. The discussion of specific financial details was a matter which his delegation thought would be better left to the General Assembly, not only because the latter was the body which must take the final decisions, but also because it felt that there was as yet no adequate statistical basis on which to make definite plans. His delegation awaited with great interest the survey of non-settled refugee populations in various countries which the High Commissioner was at present undertaking. That alone could show how great the needs of the programme were. If, as was to be expected, the survey was available to the General Assembly when it considered the UNREF programme at its twelfth session, a completely realistic determination of future requirements could be made.

71. For those reasons, his delegation had been glad to join with others in sponsoring the joint draft resolution (E/L.760), which seemed to provide a reasonable basis for action by the General Assembly at its twelfth session, and which he hoped would be unanimously adopted by the Council.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.