

Expressing concern about the continuing and increasing backlog of reports on implementation by States parties of United Nations instruments on human rights and about delays in consideration of reports by the treaty bodies,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General¹²⁴ on progress achieved in enhancing the effective functioning of the treaty bodies, pursuant, *inter alia*, to the conclusions and recommendations of the meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, held at Geneva from 10 to 14 October 1988,¹²⁵

Taking note with appreciation of the study¹²⁶ on possible long-term approaches to enhancing the effective operation of existing and prospective bodies established under United Nations instruments on human rights, prepared by an independent expert pursuant to the above-mentioned resolutions,

1. *Endorses* the recommendations of the meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies aimed at streamlining, rationalizing and otherwise improving reporting procedures, and supports the continuing efforts in this connection by the treaty bodies and the Secretary-General within their respective spheres of competence;

2. *Welcomes* the appointment by the Secretary-General of a task force to prepare a study on computerizing, as far as possible, the work of the treaty-monitoring bodies, with a view to increasing efficiency and facilitating compliance by States parties with their reporting obligations and the examination of reports by the treaty bodies;

3. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General¹²⁷ to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights showing the extent of overlapping of issues dealt with in international instruments on human rights, which will assist efforts to reduce, as appropriate, duplication in the supervisory bodies of issues raised with respect to any given State party;

4. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to proceed with the planned finalization of the draft detailed reporting manual to assist States parties in the fulfilment of their reporting obligations, as well as with its circulation to the various treaty bodies by the end of 1989;

5. *Again urges* States parties to make every effort to meet their reporting obligations and to assist, individually and through meetings of States parties, in identifying and implementing ways of further streamlining and improving reporting procedures as well as enhancing co-ordination and information flow between the treaty bodies and with relevant United Nations bodies, including specialized agencies;

6. *Welcomes* the emphasis placed by the meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies and by the Commission on Human Rights on the importance of technical assistance and advisory services and, therefore:

(a) *Endorses* the request of the Commission that the Secretary-General report regularly to it on possible technical assistance projects identified by the treaty bodies;

(b) *Invites* the treaty bodies to give priority attention to identifying such possibilities in the regular course of their work of reviewing the periodic reports of States parties;

7. *Endorses* the recommendations of the meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies on the need to ensure financing and adequate staffing resources

for the operations of the treaty bodies and, with this in mind:

(a) *Reiterates* its request that the Secretary-General review the need for adequate staffing resources in regard to the various treaty bodies;

(b) *Requests* that he report on this question to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-sixth session and to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session;

8. *Calls upon* all States parties to meet fully and without delay their financial obligations under the relevant instruments on human rights, and requests the Secretary-General to consider ways and means of strengthening collection procedures and making them more effective;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General, as a matter of priority, to consider administrative and budgetary measures to alleviate the current financial difficulties of the treaty bodies and thus guarantee their regular functioning, and to report on these measures to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-sixth session;

10. *Emphasizes* that the adoption of such administrative and budgetary measures shall not prejudice the duty of States parties under United Nations human rights instruments to meet all their financial obligations pursuant to such instruments;

11. *Invites* the persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies to maintain communication and dialogue with each other on common issues and problems and, to this end, requests the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to convene a meeting of the persons chairing the treaty bodies in 1990;

12. *Expresses its satisfaction* with the study by the independent expert on possible long-term approaches to enhancing the effective operation of existing and prospective bodies established under United Nations instruments on human rights, which contains several recommendations on reporting and monitoring procedures, servicing and financing of supervisory bodies and long-term approaches to human rights standard-setting and implementation mechanisms, and which will be presented to the Commission on Human Rights for detailed consideration at its forty-sixth session;

13. *Decides* to give priority consideration at its forty-fifth session to the conclusions and recommendations of the independent expert, in the light of the deliberations of the Commission on Human Rights and those of the meeting of persons chairing the treaty bodies, under an item entitled "Effective implementation of United Nations instruments on human rights and effective functioning of bodies established pursuant to such instruments".

82nd plenary meeting
15 December 1989

44/136. International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 43/116 of 8 December 1988 on the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa,

Gravely concerned about the constant deterioration of the situation in southern Africa arising from the domination and oppression of the people of South Africa by the minority racist régime of South Africa,

¹²⁴ A/44/539.

¹²⁵ See A/44/98, annex.

¹²⁶ See A/44/668.

¹²⁷ E/C.12/1989/3.

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General¹²⁸ on the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa, held at Oslo from 22 to 24 August 1988,

Conscious of its responsibility to provide economic, material and humanitarian assistance to independent States in southern Africa in order to assist them in coping with the situation resulting from the acts of aggression and destabilization committed by the *apartheid* régime of South Africa,

Taking note with appreciation of the consultations undertaken by the Secretary-General to establish within the United Nations system a mechanism to ensure the implementation and overall co-ordination of relief programmes for internally displaced persons,

Noting with indignation that South Africa's policy of *apartheid* and its direct and indirect acts of aggression, intimidation and destabilization through armed terrorists continue to be the main causes of refugee flows and increasing displacement of persons in southern Africa,

Convinced that there is an urgent need for the international community to extend maximum and concerted assistance to southern African countries sheltering refugees, returnees and displaced persons and also to highlight the plight of these persons,

1. Takes note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa;

2. Reaffirms the need to continue the implementation of the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa adopted by the Conference;¹²⁹

3. Expresses its gratitude to the countries and organizations that have given assistance to the countries in southern Africa to enable them to cope with the situation of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in their countries;

4. Calls upon the international community to provide increased assistance to the countries of southern Africa to enable them to strengthen their capacity to provide the necessary facilities and services for the care and well-being of the refugees, returnees and displaced persons in their countries;

5. Reiterates its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his efforts, on behalf of the international community, to organize and mobilize special programmes of economic assistance for the front-line and other neighbouring States to help them withstand the effects of the acts of aggression and destabilization committed by the *apartheid* régime of South Africa;

6. Takes note with appreciation of the efforts made by the Secretary-General, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to implement those specific tasks and responsibilities assigned to them in the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action, and encourages them to continue their efforts;

7. Endorses the recommendation of the Secretary-General aimed at assigning to the United Nations resident co-ordinators the function of co-ordinating assistance for internally displaced persons, in close co-operation with Governments, local representatives of donor countries and United Nations agencies in the field;

8. Once again urges all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and governmental and non-governmental organizations to undertake the measures as required of them under the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action;

9. Decides to consider this question at its forty-fifth session on the basis of a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General.

82nd plenary meeting
15 December 1989

44/137. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the activities of his Office,¹³⁰ as well as the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner on the work of its fortieth session,¹³¹ and having heard the statements made by the Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the High Commissioner on 15 and 17 November 1989,¹³²

Recalling its resolution 43/117 of 8 December 1988,

Reaffirming the purely humanitarian and non-political character of the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner, as well as the fundamental importance of the High Commissioner's protection function and the need for States to co-operate with the High Commissioner in the exercise of this primary and essential function,

Noting with satisfaction that, following recent accessions, one hundred and six States are now parties to the 1951 Convention¹³³ and the 1967 Protocol¹³⁴ relating to the Status of Refugees,

Noting with concern that, despite developments that offer hope for solutions to refugee problems, refugees and displaced persons of concern to the Office of the High Commissioner continue to face, in certain situations, distressingly serious problems, including problems of protection as a result of expulsion and *refoulement* of refugees, their unjustified detention and measures that do not recognize their special situation,

Particularly concerned that in various regions the safety and welfare of refugees and asylum-seekers are seriously undermined on account of military or armed attacks, forced recruitment of refugees into armed forces and other forms of violence, and noting that further efforts should be made to ensure rescue and disembarkation of asylum-seekers in distress at sea and, in this context, noting also the problems relating to stowaway asylum-seekers,

Noting the efforts of the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to address the special problems and needs of refugee and displaced women and children, who in many cases are exposed to a variety of difficult situations affecting their physical and legal protection as well as their psychological and material well-being,

Emphasizing the need for States to assist, on as wide a basis as possible, the efforts of the Office of the High Commissioner in its search for durable and timely solutions to the problems of refugees based on new approaches that

¹³⁰ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 12 (A/44/12).

¹³¹ Ibid., Supplement No. 12A (A/44/12/Add.1).

¹³² Ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Third Committee, 44th and 47th meetings, and corrigendum.

¹³³ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 189, No. 2545.

¹³⁴ Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

¹²⁸ A/44/520.

¹²⁹ See A/43/717 and Corr.1 and Add.1.