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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Assistance to student refugees in southern AfricaReport of the Secretary-General

1. As in previous years, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees continued, in 1989 and 1990, to organize and implement programmes for educational and other appropriate assistance for South African and Namibian refugees in the southern Africa region and elsewhere. The underlying aim of this assistance was to enable the young refugees to acquire the basic knowledge and skills needed to make them productive and self-reliant in their countries of asylum, and also to enhance their potential to assume leadership roles upon their eventual repatriation.
2. UNHCR's educational programmes for South African and Namibian students were targeted at the primary and lower secondary levels, that is, up to "O" levels. Assistance beyond this level continued to be funded by the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa (UNETPSA) under the agreement of understanding between that Office and UNHCR. UNHCR, however, continued to assist financially student refugees of other nationalities studying at higher post-secondary education levels.
3. The educational assistance programmes were implemented either directly by UNHCR offices in the respective countries, or through other agencies. Some 212 Namibian refugee students and one South African refugee student were sponsored to study in West Africa at the lower secondary level. Some 600 South African refugee students and those of other nationalities were supported to study at various primary, vocational and secondary levels in Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. In Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, some 35 students of

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other nationalities were sponsored to study at the university level. This assistance will continue through the 1990/91 academic year. The appropriation for educational assistance to Namibian and South African refugees in West Africa was \$452,165 in 1989, while for 1990 this has been reduced to \$207,700 in view of the repatriation of a number of the Namibian refugees during 1989/90 academic year.
