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OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

International Conference on Central American Refugees

Report of the Secretary-General

1. Since the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) took place in Guatemala City from 29 to 31 May 1989, and at the General Assembly's request (A/44/139, para. 4) within the framework of the emergency programme of the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America (A/42/949, annex), UNHCR and UNDP have provided technical and material support for the finalization of the development and reconstruction projects presented to the Conference by the seven affected Governments of Central America, Belize and Mexico.
2. In compliance with the Concerted Plan of Action adopted at the Conference (A/44/527), a governmental "National Committee" was formed in each affected country to define official priorities regarding the linkage of development projects for uprooted populations to their countries' national plans, as well as to co-ordinate preparation for the First International Meeting of the CIREFCA Follow-Up Committee, held at United Nations Headquarters on 27 and 28 June 1990. Also, in compliance with the Plan of Action, representatives of donor Governments, non-governmental organizations, the affected Governments, UNDP and UNHCR work together in each country in a "Support Group" which serves as a forum for sharing of information and viewpoints regarding project design and implementation.
3. Invited by the Secretary-General, who opened the International Meeting, as well as the High Commissioner, who also addressed it, 72 Member and Observer States, 59 non-governmental organizations, 14 organizations of the United Nations system and three other international organizations gathered to review the progress reports of the seven affected Governments on the application of the Concerted Plan

* A/45/150 and Corr.1.

of Action in their respective countries, as well as to show their diplomatic, political and financial support for the CIREFCA process as it enters the crucial stage of project implementation.

4. Contributions towards the financing of projects presented within the CIREFCA framework, or announced within the spirit of the Meeting, amounted to \$156.2 million. 1/ This amount includes contributions to the 59 CIREFCA projects to be implemented jointly or separately by the CIREFCA actors who comprise the respective Support Groups as well as to UNHCR General Programme projects already in progress, CIAV, 2/ ONUVEN, 3/ and ONUCA 4/ in addition to projects being proposed and implemented by other international organizations within the spirit of CIREFCA.

5. The Meeting adopted by acclamation the "Declaration of the First International Meeting of the Follow-Up Committee of the International Conference on Central American Refugees". 5/ In addition to supporting a strengthening of the mechanisms set in motion by the Conference Declaration and Concerted Plan of Action (A/44/523, annex), in particular the Support Group, the Meeting's Declaration calls for the highlighting of the following considerations in development-related projects for uprooted persons in the region: participation of women, physical and intellectual development of children, conservation of the ethnic and cultural values of the beneficiary groups, and protection of the environment.

6. It also recognizes the importance of the role played by the non-governmental organizations as well as the affected populations in the needs-identification, planning and implementation stages of the CIREFCA projects. This concern was echoed by several donor countries in their statements of support, as was their satisfaction at the repatriation of over 16,000 Salvadorian and Nicaraguan refugees since the CIREFCA Conference in 1989 as well as their preoccupation regarding the security of the affected populations, in particular returnees. On 26 June 1990, in keeping with commitments made in the Concerted Plan of Action, the Belizean Government became the 107th party to ratify the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees 6/ and its 1967 Protocol. In July 1990, the Mexican Congress amended its Migration Law to include the concept of "refugee", using the expanded definition included in the 1984 Declaration of Cartagena. 7/

7. The Meeting's President, Costa Rican Vice-President Arnoldo Lopez Echandi, stated in his opening remarks that, at every Central American summit meeting held to date, solving the problems of uprooted populations has been emphasized as a sine qua non for the achievement of a firm and lasting peace in the region. For this reason, in the International Meeting's final Declaration, the 72 Governments present requested the Secretary-General, the Office of the UNHCR and UNDP to continue their support to the affected Governments, in particular through the work of the CIREFCA Joint Support Unit.

Notes

1/ The 59 proposals presented to the International Meeting budgeted a total of \$161 million. These proposals, when added to the PRODERE (Development Programme for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees in Central America) projects and to other CIREFCA-related initiatives, total \$289 million, a significant reduction in the \$393 million requested at the 1989 CIREFCA Conference. For greater detail, see A/42/949, annex I.

2/ CIAV (the International Verification and Support Commission), based on the Tela Plan as created by the Presidents of Central America where they asked the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the OAS Secretary-General to carry out the demobilization and repatriation or relocation of the Nicaraguan Resistance and their families. (See A/44/451-S/20778, annex I.)

3/ ONUVEN (the United Nations Observer Mission to Verify the Elections in Nicaragua) (A/44/375).

4/ ONUCA (the United Nations Observer Group in Central America) was set up to verify the security provisions of the Esquipulas II peace plan (Security Council resolution 644 (1989)).

5/ CIREFCA/CS/90/10.

6/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/1775), p. 48.

7/ "[P]ersons who have fled their country because their lives, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order." Cartagena de Indias, 22 November 1984.
