

ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continued to provide protection and assistance for refugees during 1969. During the year, there were further accessions to legal inter-governmental instruments of benefit to refugees and an increase in the caseload of refugees benefiting from UNHCR assistance in Africa. Other organizations of the United Nations family increased their participation in refugee programmes, particularly programmes for the settlement on the land of refugees in developing countries.

ACTIVITIES IN 1969

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

The number of parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees rose

from 54 to 59 in 1969. Similarly, the number of parties to the 1967 Protocol rose from 29 to 40. (This Protocol extended the personal scope of the 1951 Convention and made it applicable to new groups of refugees.)

There were also accessions to other legal instruments affecting refugees, namely: the 1957 Hague Agreement relating to Refugee Seamen; the 1959 European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees; the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness; the 1956 Convention on the Recovery Abroad of Maintenance; and Protocol 1 annexed to the 1952 Universal Copyright Convention, concerning the Convention's application to the works of stateless persons and refugees.

A Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, which was to

serve as a complement to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, was adopted in September 1969 by the member Governments of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

The principle of granting asylum to refugees was increasingly recognized. The Convention of 1969 included an article on asylum which provided that no person should be subject to rejection at the frontier, or expulsion or return to a territory where his life or safety would be threatened. A similar provision was included in the 1969 Inter-American Convention on Human Rights.

Close co-operation continued between UNHCR and a number of Governments in the determination of eligibility for refugee status under the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol. This question received considerable attention in some countries in Africa.

Further progress was made in encouraging Governments to adopt favourable measures concerning the economic and social rights of refugees, which were important for their integration. Progress was also made with regard to administrative assistance and the issuance of travel documents. Lesotho and Peru began to issue travel documents as provided in the 1951 Convention. Turkey reduced the cost to refugees of obtaining such documents, while Austria abolished visa fees on a reciprocal basis for refugees from certain countries.

Special problems affecting individual refugees, including in particular family reunion in the country of reception, continued to receive attention.

A number of measures were taken to help refugees acquire the nationality of their country of residence once it was ascertained that repatriation was unlikely to take place in the foreseeable future. Among other things, the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted several resolutions, as well as a recommendation which was endorsed by its Committee of Ministers, the purpose of which was to facilitate the acquisition by refugees in member States of the Council of the nationality of their country of residence through naturalization and marriage; through the accession to and liberal implementation by Governments of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Stateless-

ness; and also through the dissemination among the refugees of information concerning the relevant legislation.

The Office of the High Commissioner continued to assist in the settlement of indemnification claims in the Federal Republic of Germany. By 31 March 1970, 2,717 refugees had been paid an amount of some DM123.5 million by the authorities of the Federal Republic. The UNHCR Supplementary Indemnification Fund of DM3,500,000 (US\$875,000), made available in 1966 by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for refugees persecuted by the national socialist regime for reasons of nationality, was closed in August 1969. As at the end of March 1970, 2,613 applications had been examined, resulting in 720 favourable decisions. Payments to the beneficiaries totalled \$866,680.

MATERIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

The number of refugees assisted during 1969 under UNHCR assistance projects in more than 50 countries rose from 235,000 (in 1968) to some 275,000. This was partly because of the limited but continued influx of new refugees, and partly because a start was made with the implementation of several new projects in Africa in response to governmental requests for aid to refugees.

Assistance was given through projects already started under previous programmes, through the current programme for 1969, whose revised target had been fixed at \$5,996,800 and through the UNHCR Emergency Fund, from which an amount of \$364,968 was spent, mainly to meet the emergency needs of refugees in several countries in Africa. Supplementary aid was provided at a cost of some \$150,000 to meet the basic needs of 75,000 refugees, the majority of whom belonged to a large group awaiting final arrangements for their rural settlement in Africa. An amount of \$68,280 was committed to assist 4,583 refugees to solve their individual legal problems with a view to facilitating their integration. A number of refugees benefited from complementary projects outside the UNHCR programmes which were financed from trust funds in an amount of \$1,741,638, including more than \$1,000,000 for educational assistance under the UNHCR education account.

Identifiable supporting contributions totalled

\$7,200,000, as against \$5,400,000 in 1968, not including the value of land and services made available for the settlement of refugees, the food supplies provided by the World Food Programme or bilateral aid indirectly benefiting refugees.

In accordance with the basic principles of UNHCR action, three solutions were open to the refugees: voluntary repatriation; resettlement, through migration, in another country; or local integration.

Every effort was made by UNHCR to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees who opted for this solution. The Office committed an amount of \$22,988, mainly towards the transportation of 1,632 refugees, mostly Congolese, Zambians and Namibians returning to their country of origin. The number of refugees who were known to have returned to their country through their own means was estimated at some 10,500, nearly all of them Africans.

Assistance for resettlement through migration took the form mainly of counselling, language training, and the provision of resettlement grants and contributions towards resettlement processing. An amount of \$382,719 was committed for this purpose in 1969. The number of beneficiaries was 13,762, most of them in the Americas, Europe and the Middle East. The activities of the High Commissioner in this field were conducted in close co-operation with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) and with a number of non-governmental organizations. Arrangements for the resettlement of individual African refugees were made, in co-operation with UNHCR, by the Bureau for the Placement and Education of Refugees established in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1968 under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

A major part of UNHCR programme funds, i.e. \$4,738,485, and allocations from the Emergency Fund were used to assist in the local integration of some 258,000 refugees.

ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES IN AFRICA

Of the refugees in Africa, the majority, some 250,000, received assistance in establishing themselves on the land. As previously, local settlement projects were of a comprehensive character. They included assistance towards the development of agriculture, as well as provision

for a certain amount of infrastructural equipment, including water supply, roads and vehicles and the provision of health and primary education facilities, as far as these could not be made available from other sources.

In certain countries, a stage was reached at which some of the refugee groups concerned had become self-supporting and where the consolidation of their settlement depended largely on the economic and social development of the area. This was the case in Burundi, where some 23,000 Rwandese were settled on the land in an area where an integrated rural development project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was undertaken for the benefit of the local population and of the refugees. Similarly, in the Central African Republic, the approximately 20,000 Sudanese in the M'Boki settlement who were still receiving UNHCR assistance in 1969 were to benefit from a UNDP/FAO project for the development of the Haut-M'Bomou region, including M'Boki, which was scheduled to begin in October 1970.

Assistance to other groups of refugees in these two countries, and in other countries in Africa, ranged from the provision of emergency relief to the improvement of living conditions of refugees through assistance in helping them move from a subsistence to a market economy. The countries concerned, in addition to Burundi and the Central African Republic, were Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Senegal, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zambia.

Three sizable rural settlement projects were started in the course of 1969 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Sudan. They involved the movement of refugees inland from the border area with a view to their rural settlement.

The problems of individual refugees, mainly of urban origin, several thousands of whom lived in some of the large towns and faced employment difficulties, continued to receive attention.

The Office continued its co-operation with the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa and channelled an amount of \$52,000 from the Fund to a voluntary agency for the relief

of refugees from South Africa who had been given asylum in various African countries.

During 1969, assistance to primary and post-primary education was provided by UNHCR, mainly in Africa, in cases where such assistance could not be provided from other sources. Contributions were made towards the financing of primary education in refugee settlements, and over \$1 million was made available towards post-primary education. Nearly three quarters of this amount was committed in Uganda, where the Government decided to admit refugees to public schools in the same way as nationals, and where the necessary additional facilities had to be provided.

ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES IN ASIA AND IN THE MIDDLE EAST

In Asia, UNHCR assistance was concentrated again on the settlement of Tibetan refugees, of whom there were some 56,000 in India and 8,000 in Nepal. An amount of \$321,000 was committed in India to continue the consolidation of earlier land settlement projects and to provide medical care. The Office also sponsored a scheme jointly with the Common Project of the 1966 European Refugee Campaign to provide help for handicapped refugees. In Nepal, \$49,000 was committed under the UNHCR Programme to improve the situation of 3,000 refugees in settlements. In Macau, progress was achieved in the implementation of previous projects, particularly in the field of housing. In Hong Kong, small numbers of European refugees in transit were assisted pending their resettlement and the large number of Chinese continued to benefit from development aid provided by the local authorities.

In the Middle East, UNHCR committed \$165,056 to assist some of the 10,000 refugees within the High Commissioner's mandate, with a view to their local settlement or resettlement through migration.

ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES IN EUROPE

The increased influx of refugees that started in 1968 in a number of European countries continued in 1969. In co-operation with the Governments of countries of asylum and of immigration, the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration and non-governmental

organizations, UNHCR continued where necessary to assist in the resettlement of new refugees in countries of immigration. A number of handicapped cases were again helped towards their permanent settlement in various countries in Europe and overseas. In Spain, the number of new arrivals exceeded the number of departures to the United States, and measures to accelerate resettlement to other countries became necessary.

As far as local settlement was concerned, UNHCR action was confined to a limited financial participation in projects for which insufficient local resources were available. These projects mainly concerned establishment assistance, vocational training and aid to the handicapped. Housing projects from earlier programmes and a sizable project for the settlement of refugees on the land in Yugoslavia were completed.

ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES IN LATIN AMERICA

In Latin America, UNHCR action was focused on assistance to the handicapped, including mentally ill and aged refugees for whom a network of places was made available in institutions, mainly in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela. A number of non-European refugees were assisted while in transit pending their resettlement and the emigration of a small group of non-European refugees was completed.

DECISIONS OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

At its mid-1969 session, the Economic and Social Council considered the annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, covering the period from 1 April 1968-31 March 1969. On 28 July 1969, the Council unanimously adopted a resolution (1433 (XLVII)) taking note with satisfaction of the report prepared by the High Commissioner for transmission to the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session, later in 1969. (For text of resolution see DOCUMENTARY REFERENCES below.)

In connexion with its consideration of organizational matters, the Economic and Social Council decided later in the year that in future the annual report of the High Commissioner

would be retained on the agenda of the Council's mid-year session, on the understanding that it would be transmitted to the General Assembly without debate unless the Council were to decide otherwise at the time of the adoption of the agenda. This decision was taken on 27 October 1969.

DECISIONS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly, at its twenty-fourth session, referred the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to its Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee. On 8 December 1969, the Third Committee approved by acclamation the text of a draft resolution concerning the report, and on 16 December, the General Assembly unanimously adopted the text as its resolution 2594 (XXIV).

By the preamble to the resolution, the General Assembly, among other things: noted with appreciation the results obtained by the High Commissioner in the accomplishment of his humanitarian task of international protection of refugees within his mandate; further noted the progress achieved in the search for permanent solutions to the problems of refugees who were the High Commissioner's concern and the constant efforts being made to promote the voluntary repatriation, the integration in countries of asylum or resettlement in other countries of those refugees. The Assembly, further, expressed its appreciation of the adoption, under the aegis of OAU, of the Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, as well as of the accession of an increasing number of countries to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol to the Convention; and it expressed the hope that the present trend of increasing accessions to the Convention and the Protocol would continue.

By the operative paragraphs of the draft resolution, the Assembly: (1) requested the High Commissioner to continue to provide international protection and assistance to refugees who were his concern, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, in particular

those relating to the new groups of refugees in Africa; (2) requested the High Commissioner to continue his efforts to achieve, by closer co-operation with the specialized agencies and other members of the United Nations system, a speedy and satisfactory solution to the refugee problems; and (3) urged Governments to continue to lend their support to the High Commissioner's humanitarian task, particularly by providing the necessary means to enable the financial targets to be reached.

(For text of resolution, see DOCUMENTARY REFERENCES below.)

The text of the resolution was sponsored in the Third Committee by: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Burundi, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Dahomey, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Iran, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Upper Volta and Yugoslavia.

Several other resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session also were concerned with the problems of refugees. These were: (i) a resolution (2555 (XXIV)) of 12 December 1969 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations; and (ii) a resolution (2557 (XXIV)) of 12 December 1969 on the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa.

By the first resolution the General Assembly, among other things, recommended that the specialized agencies and international institutions concerned, as well as the various programmes within the United Nations system, should take measures to increase the scope of their assistance to refugees from the colonial territories.

(See pp. 638-41 for further details.)

By the second resolution, the Assembly appealed anew to all States, organizations and individuals to make generous contributions to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa.

(See pp. 647-48 for further details.)

GOVERNMENTAL CONTRIBUTIONS PAID, PLEDGED OR CONDITIONALLY PLEDGED
TOWARDS THE FINANCING OF THE UNHCR PROGRAMME FOR 1969

(As at 31 March 1970, in U.S. dollars)

Government	Contribution	Government	Contribution	Government	Contribution
Abu Dhabi (State of)	10,000	Iceland	5,750	Philippines	1,250
Algeria	7,000	India	10,000	Portugal	4,000
Argentina	12,000	Iran	8,000	Qatar	5,000
Australia	195,125	Iraq	5,000	Saudi Arabia	8,000
Austria	24,000	Ireland	7,500	Senegal	3,597
Belgium	200,000	Israel	7,500	Sierra Leone	600
Botswana	500	Italy	20,000	Southern Yemen	240
Brazil	2,000	Ivory Coast	3,060	Sudan	2,800
Burundi	1,000	Japan	20,000	Sweden	468,848
Cambodia	1,000	Kenya	1,000	Switzerland	219,870
Canada	370,370	Kuwait	3,000	Togo	1,439
Central African Republic	1,633	Lebanon	2,000	Trinidad and Tobago	1,479
Chile	905	Liberia	5,000	Tunisia	2,500
China	7,500	Libya	5,000	Turkey	5,000
Colombia	1,000	Liechtenstein	3,472	Uganda	5,000
Cyprus	480	Luxembourg	4,000	United Arab Republic	6,900
Denmark	230,167	Madagascar	834	United Kingdom	359,971
Dubai	2,070	Malaysia	1,000	United Republic of Tanzania	3,500
Federal Republic of Germany	325,000	Mauritius	1,000	United States	800,000
Finland	40,000	Morocco	10,000	Uruguay	523
France	385,930	Nepal	2,272	Venezuela	4,000
Gabon	1,079	Netherlands	166,389	Yugoslavia	10,000
Ghana	3,000	New Zealand	22,400	Zambia	2,000
Greece	13,000	Nigeria	5,000		
Holy See	2,500	Norway	223,720		
		Pakistan	2,500	Total	4,300,173
		Peru	1,000		

DECISIONS OF ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL—47TH SESSION
Plenary Meetings 1622, 1623.

E/4677 and Corr.1. Report of United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (prelim-
inary mimeographed edition).

RESOLUTION 1433(xLvii), as suggested by President
and as orally amended by Turkey, adopted unani-
mously by Council on 28 July 1969, meetings 1622
and 1623.

The Economic and Social Council

Takes note with satisfaction of the report prepared
by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refu-
gees for transmission to the General Assembly at its
twenty-fourth session.

PROCEDURE FOR
CONSIDERATION OF
ANNUAL REPORT

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL—47TH SESSION
(RESUMED)

Plenary Meetings 1637, 1640.

E/4751. Procedure for consideration of annual report
of UNHCR and of report of UNICEF Executive
Board. Note by Secretary-General.

E/4735/Add.1. Resolutions adopted by Economic and
Social Council during its resumed 47th session.
Other decisions, p. 3.

A/7603. Report of Economic and Social Council to
General Assembly, Chapter XIV, section B, para.
624.

A/7603/Add.1. Addendum to report of Economic
and Social Council to General Assembly, Chapter
VIII.

DECISIONS OF
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY—24TH SESSION
Third Committee, meetings 1728, 1729.
Plenary Meeting 1835.

A/7603. Report of Economic and Social Council to
General Assembly, Chapter XI, section A.

A/7612 and Add.1. Report of United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), including
report on 20th session of Executive Committee of
High Commissioner's Programme, Geneva, 20-29
October 1969.

A/C.3/L.1755. Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Dahomey, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Iran, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Sudan, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Upper Volta, Yugoslavia: draft resolution, co-sponsored orally by Burundi and Saudi Arabia, approved by Third Committee by acclamation on 8 December 1969, meeting 1729.

A/7876. Report of Third Committee.

RESOLUTION 2594 (xxiv), as proposed by Third Committee, A/7876, adopted unanimously by Assembly on 16 December 1969, meeting 1835.

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and having heard his statement,

Noting with appreciation the results obtained by the High Commissioner in the accomplishment of his humanitarian task of international protection of refugees within his mandate,

Noting further the progress achieved in the search for permanent solutions to the problems of refugees who are the High Commissioner's concern, and the constant efforts being made by the High Commissioner, in co-operation with United Nations bodies and voluntary agencies, to promote the voluntary repatriation, the integration in countries of asylum or the resettlement in other countries of those refugees,

Recognizing the importance of the intermediary role of the High Commissioner in his relations with Governments and the constructive character of his humanitarian action,

Noting with satisfaction the increasing role of government financing of the High Commissioner's assistance programme owing to the growing number of contributing countries and to the substantial increase in certain contributions,

Expressing its appreciation of the adoption, under the aegis of the Organization of African Unity, of the

Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, on 10 September 1969, as well as of the accession of an increasing number of countries to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees of 1967, and expressing the hope that the present trend of increasing accessions to the Convention and the Protocol will continue,

1. Requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to continue to provide international protection and assistance to refugees who are his concern, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, in particular those relating to the new groups of refugees in Africa, and with the directives of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme;

2. Requests the High Commissioner to continue his efforts to achieve, by closer co-operation with the specialized agencies and other members of the United Nations system, a speedy and satisfactory solution to the refugee problems;

3. Urges Governments to continue to lend their support to the High Commissioner's humanitarian task, particularly by providing the necessary means to enable the financial targets, established with the approval of the Executive Committee, to be reached.

CONTRIBUTION PLEDGES

GENERAL ASSEMBLY—24TH SESSION

Ad Hoc Committee of General Assembly for announcements of voluntary pledges to programme of UNHCR, meeting 1 (A/AC.143/PV.1).

OTHER DOCUMENTS

A/AC.96/426. List of documents issued at 20th session of Executive Committee of High Commissioner's Programme.

HCR Bulletin. Quarterly record of activities, Nos. 5-8, 1969.