

1. *Recommends* that Member States should give special attention to possibilities of accelerating as far as possible the internal procedures that would lead to the ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General, on the basis of communications from Governments, to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session and at such other times as he may consider appropriate on the progress of the ratification of the Covenants and the Optional Protocol.

2001st plenary meeting,
6 December 1971.

2789 (XXVI). Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees concerning his current activities¹⁵ and having heard his statement,¹⁶

Noting with appreciation the results obtained by the High Commissioner in the accomplishment of his humanitarian task of providing international protection to refugees within his mandate and promoting permanent solutions to their problems,

Considering the increasing and fruitful co-operation between the High Commissioner and the other members of the United Nations system in the field of rural settlement, education and training of refugees in developing countries, particularly in Africa, which results in a better co-ordination of action and a greater efficiency of the United Nations system as a whole,

Noting with satisfaction the recent decision of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme to approve the participation of the High Commissioner in the new country programming system adopted by the United Nations Development Programme and his association, where necessary, with any efforts made by Governments, with the assistance of the Programme, to develop regions where large groups of refugees are being settled with the assistance of the High Commissioner,

Recognizing the importance of voluntary repatriation as a permanent solution to the refugee problem and the useful role that United Nations bodies and non-governmental agencies can play in facilitating the rehabilitation of groups of refugees who have voluntarily returned to their countries of origin,

Noting with satisfaction the increasing number of Governments contributing to the High Commissioner's assistance programme and the substantial increase in some of these contributions,

Commending the growing number of accessions to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951¹⁷ and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees of 1967,¹⁸

¹⁵ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 12 (A/8412) and Supplement No. 12A (A/8412/Add.1).*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Twenty-sixth Session, Third Committee, 1874th meeting, paras. 1-15.

¹⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189 (1954), No. 2545.

¹⁸ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 606 (1967), No. 8791.

1. *Expresses its deep satisfaction* at the efficient manner in which the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and his staff continue to accomplish their humanitarian tasks;

2. *Requests* the High Commissioner to continue to provide international protection and assistance to refugees who are his concern, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the directives of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme;

3. *Requests* the High Commissioner to continue his efforts, in co-operation with Governments, United Nations bodies and voluntary agencies, to promote permanent and speedy solutions to the problems of refugees who are his concern through voluntary repatriation, integration in countries of asylum or resettlement in other countries;

4. *Urges* Governments to continue to lend their support to the High Commissioner's humanitarian action by:

(a) Facilitating the accomplishment of his task in the field of international protection;

(b) Co-operating in the promotion of permanent solutions to refugee problems;

(c) Providing the necessary means to attain the financial targets established with the approval of the Executive Committee.

2001st plenary meeting,
6 December 1971.

2790 (XXVI). United Nations assistance to East Pakistan refugees through the United Nations focal point and United Nations humanitarian assistance to East Pakistan

A

The General Assembly,

Noting the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on his activities as the focal point in co-ordinating international relief assistance for refugees from East Pakistan in India,¹⁹

Noting also the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations programme of relief assistance to the people of East Pakistan,²⁰

Wishing to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner, and to their staffs, for the work they have done under difficult conditions,

Deeply concerned at the magnitude of the human suffering to which the crisis in East Pakistan has given rise and at its possible consequences,

Concerned also at the heavy burden imposed on India and at the disturbing influence of the general situation on the process of economic and social development in the area,

Noting with appreciation the prompt and generous response of the international community to the needs that have arisen from the crisis, including the efforts of non-governmental organizations to raise funds for the relief of the suffering,

Recognizing that voluntary repatriation is the only satisfactory solution to the refugee problem and that this is fully accepted by all concerned,

¹⁹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Third Committee, 1876th meeting.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1877th meeting.

Believing that the voluntary repatriation of the refugees can be brought about only if a climate of confidence is created,

Convinced that further large-scale international assistance is required to meet the needs of the refugees in India and of the people of East Pakistan,

1. *Expresses its profound sympathy* with those who have suffered from the situation in the area;

2. *Endorses* the designation by the Secretary-General of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to be the focal point for the co-ordination of assistance to East Pakistan refugees in India, from and through the United Nations system, as well as the Secretary-General's initiative in establishing the United Nations East Pakistan relief operation;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to continue their efforts to co-ordinate international assistance and to ensure that it is used to the maximum advantage to relieve the suffering of the refugees in India and of the people of East Pakistan;

4. *Appeals* to Governments, intergovernmental agencies and non-governmental organizations to intensify their efforts to assist directly or indirectly, with the collaboration of the Governments concerned, in relieving the suffering of the refugees in India and of the people of East Pakistan;

5. *Urges* all Member States in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations to intensify their efforts to bring about conditions necessary for the speedy and voluntary repatriation of the refugees to their homes.

2001st plenary meeting,
6 December 1971.

B

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the large-scale efforts undertaken for humanitarian reasons to meet the unprecedented problems confronting the international community,

Aware of the urgency and extreme seriousness of the situation of the refugees, which is assuming dangerous proportions,

Recommends that the President of the General Assembly should make a statement indicating:

(a) The concern of the international community, which has seldom been confronted with a refugee problem of such enormous dimensions as that of the refugees from East Pakistan in India;

(b) That the voluntary participation of Governments and organizations should be continued and intensified with a view to assisting the Secretary-General and his representative, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees acting as the focal point, in their meritorious humanitarian action for the relief of the suffering of the refugees and of the population of East Pakistan;

(c) That the only solution to this grave refugee problem is the safe return of the refugees to their homes and that this requires a favourable climate which all persons of goodwill should work to bring about in a spirit of respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

2001st plenary meeting,
6 December 1971.

2816 (XXVI). Assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind that throughout history natural disasters and emergency situations have inflicted heavy loss of life and property, affecting every people and every country,

Aware of and concerned about the suffering caused by natural disasters and the serious economic and social consequences for all, especially the developing countries,

Also aware of the varying needs of nations experiencing such disorders, which present new challenges for international co-operation,

Concerned about the ability of the international community to come to the aid of countries in a disaster situation,

Recalling its resolutions 2034 (XX) of 7 December 1965, 2435 (XXIII) of 19 December 1968, 2608 (XXIV) of 16 December 1969 and 2717 (XXV) of 15 December 1970, and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1533 (XLIX) of 23 July 1970 and 1546 (XLIX) of 30 July 1970 on assistance in cases of natural disaster,

Expressing appreciation of the Secretary-General's comprehensive report²¹ and of its perceptive examination of all aspects of the question, and taking note of the relevant passage in his statement to the Economic and Social Council on 5 July 1971,²²

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1612 (LI) of 23 July 1971 on assistance in cases of natural disaster and other emergency situations,

Noting the study, annexed to the Secretary-General's report, on the legal status of disaster relief units made available through the United Nations,²³

Mindful of the need to strengthen and make more effective the collective efforts of the international community, and particularly the United Nations system, in the field of international disaster assistance,

Bearing in mind that assistance provided at the request of the stricken countries, without prejudice to their individual country programmes under the United Nations Development Programme, can be an effective contribution to the rehabilitation and development of the stricken areas,

Bearing in mind also that the possible response of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other credit organizations and development agencies to a request from the Governments concerned for complementary assistance to the stricken areas, without prejudice to the assistance provided by those organizations for the normal development programmes of the stricken countries, can be an important element in the reconstruction and development of those areas,

Noting the competence of the United Nations and its related agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme to render assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations,

²¹ E/4994.

²² See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-first Session, 1773rd meeting.*

²³ E/4994, annex III.