

Reaffirming that effective implementation of these international standards is of fundamental importance,

Recognizing the value of continuing efforts to identify specific areas where further international action is required to develop the existing international legal framework in the field of human rights pursuant to Article 13, paragraph 1 a, of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recognizing also that standard setting should proceed with adequate preparation,

Emphasizing that the standard setting activities of the United Nations should be as effective and efficient as possible,

1. *Calls upon* Member States and United Nations bodies to accord priority to the implementation of existing international standards in the field of human rights and urges broad ratification of, or accession to, existing treaties in this field;

2. *Urges* Member States and United Nations bodies engaged in developing new international human rights standards to give due consideration in this work to the established international legal framework;

3. *Reaffirms* the important role of the Commission on Human Rights, among other appropriate United Nations bodies, in the development of international instruments in the field of human rights;

4. *Invites* Member States and United Nations bodies to bear in mind the following guidelines in developing international instruments in the field of human rights; such instruments should, *inter alia*:

(a) Be consistent with the existing body of international human rights law;

(b) Be of fundamental character and derive from the inherent dignity and worth of the human person;

(c) Be sufficiently precise to give rise to identifiable and practicable rights and obligations;

(d) Provide, where appropriate, realistic and effective implementation machinery, including reporting systems;

(e) Attract broad international support;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide appropriate specialized support to United Nations bodies working on standard setting in the field of human rights.

97th plenary meeting
4 December 1986

41/121. Reporting obligations under United Nations instruments on human rights

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General containing updated information as at 1 June 1986 on the problem of overdue reports by States parties to United Nations instruments on human rights, the comments of States parties with more than two such reports and information on training activities to assist States in fulfilling their reporting obligations,⁸¹

Noting with concern the critical situation with regard to overdue reports under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination³ and the significant backlog of reports developing in relation to other United Nations instruments on human rights,

Recognizing the burden that coexisting reporting systems places upon Member States that are parties to various instruments and noting that this burden may become more onerous as additional instruments come into force,

Welcoming the decision of States parties⁸² to the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to approve the practice of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of considering multiple overdue reports in consolidated form,

Reiterating the fundamental importance it attaches to the fulfilment of reporting obligations under international instruments on human rights,

Drawing attention to the need for States parties to submit reports in a timely manner to the various bodies that have been set up to supervise implementation of United Nations instruments on human rights and to co-operate as fully as possible with those bodies to make the best use of their meeting time, in particular by presenting their reports on scheduled dates or, if that is not possible, by providing sufficient notice to enable meeting time to be reallocated,

Bearing in mind the need for those bodies which depend on funding from the regular budget of the United Nations to improve their efficiency and cost-effectiveness, especially in view of the financial emergency faced by the United Nations,

1. *Urges* States parties with overdue reports to make every effort to present their reports as soon as possible and to take advantage of opportunities whereby such reports could be consolidated;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue work on developing a compilation of the general guidelines elaborated by the various supervisory bodies and the list of articles dealing with related rights under United Nations instruments on human rights;

3. *Encourages* States parties to take the relevant guidelines into account when preparing reports and to provide reports that are as succinct as possible;

4. *Invites* the Chairmen of the supervisory bodies to encourage their respective members:

(a) To give priority attention to consideration of remedial measures to deal with the problems highlighted in the Secretary-General's report;

(b) To give further consideration to harmonizing and consolidating the reporting guidelines developed by these bodies and to other means whereby duplication could be avoided in the submission of material by States parties to the various supervisory bodies;

(c) To consider rearranging, where possible, the periodicity of reporting, especially in view of the future probable increase in the number of instruments;

(d) To report on the results of their deliberations to the appropriate meetings of States parties;

5. *Further invites* the Chairmen of these bodies to maintain communication and dialogue with each other on common issues and problems;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consider making provision in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989 for a meeting of the Chairmen of these bodies in 1988;

7. *Invites* the new Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁷⁶ to give early attention to the question of the reporting system on implementation of the Interna-

⁸¹ A/41/510.

⁸² See CERD/SP/SR.16, paras. 23 and 24.

tional Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,²² taking due account of reporting guidelines developed by the Sessional Working Group of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;⁷⁶

8. *Reaffirms* the importance of maintaining summary records of the substantive proceedings of the bodies supervising implementation of United Nations instruments on human rights, in particular for the presentation and consideration of reports by States parties;

9. *Endorses* the Secretary-General's proposals to arrange, within existing resources and taking into account the priorities of the programme of advisory services, training courses for those regions experiencing the most serious difficulties in meeting reporting obligations under United Nations instruments on human rights;⁸³

10. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-second session a separate item entitled "Reporting obligations of States parties to United Nations instruments on human rights".

97th plenary meeting
4 December 1986

41/122. Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its resolutions, particularly resolution 40/117 of 13 December 1985, relating to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to refugees in Africa,⁸⁴

Mindful that the fundamental purpose of the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, held at Geneva from 9 to 11 July 1984,⁸⁵ was to launch collective action by the international community aimed at achieving lasting solutions,

Gravely concerned at the persistent and serious problem of large numbers of refugees on the African continent,

Aware of the heavy burden borne by African countries of asylum on account of the presence of these refugees and its consequences for their economic and social development, and of the great sacrifices made by them, despite their limited resources,

Deeply concerned that the refugee situation has been severely affected by the critical economic situation in Africa, as well as by drought and other natural disasters,

Bearing in mind the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990,⁸⁶ adopted by the General Assembly at its thirteenth special session, the special session devoted to the critical economic situation in Africa, which refers in particular to the need for the speedy implementation of the recommendations of the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa,

Recognizing that the efforts of the countries of asylum require the concerted support of the international community to meet the needs for emergency relief, and for medium-term and long-term development aid,

Taking note of the declarations, decisions and resolutions adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its twenty-second ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa from 28 to 30 July 1986,¹⁵ and of the resolutions adopted by the Council of Ministers of that organization at its forty-fourth ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa from 21 to 26 July 1986,¹⁶ on the situation of refugees in Africa,

Emphasizing the collective responsibility of sharing the urgent and overwhelming burden of the problem of African refugees through effective mobilization of additional resources to meet the urgent and long-term needs of the refugees and to strengthen the capacity of countries of asylum to provide adequately for the refugees while they remain in those countries, as well as to assist the countries of origin in rehabilitating voluntary returnees,

Reiterating once again the vital importance of the complementarity between refugee aid and development assistance,

Deeply concerned that many of the projects submitted to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa have yet to be funded and implemented,

Desirous of ensuring the speedy implementation of the recommendations and pledges made at the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa,

1. *Expresses its deep appreciation* to African host countries, which are the biggest donors, for their generous contribution and continuous efforts to alleviate the plight of refugees in spite of their critical economic situation;

2. *Reiterates its appreciation* to all donor countries, the organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, regional organizations and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for their initial support and response to the projects submitted to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa;⁸⁷

3. *Urges* the international community to maintain the momentum created by the Conference and to translate into reality the projects submitted as well as the principles of the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Conference;

4. *Emphasizes* the vital importance of the complementarity of refugee aid and development assistance and of achieving durable solutions to the problem of refugees in Africa and the necessity of providing assistance for the strengthening of the social and economic infrastructures of African countries receiving refugees and returnees;

5. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to continue to keep the situation of refugees in Africa under constant review so as to ensure that adequate assistance is available for care and maintenance and for bringing about durable solutions;

6. *Requests* the United Nations Development Programme to increase its efforts to mobilize additional resources for refugee-related development projects and, in general, to promote and co-ordinate with the host countries and the donor community the integration of refugee-related activities into national development planning;

7. *Calls upon* all Member States and organizations of the United Nations system concerned, as well as relevant regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to intensify their support for the speedy im-

⁸³ See A/41/510, sect. IV.

⁸⁴ A/41/572.

⁸⁵ A/39/402, annex.

⁸⁶ Resolution S-13/2, annex.

⁸⁷ See A/41/572, annex.