

of the refugees, returnees and displaced persons in their countries;

4. *Reiterates its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his efforts, on behalf of the international community, to organize and mobilize special programmes of economic assistance for the front-line and other neighbouring States to help them to withstand the effects of the acts of aggression and destabilization committed by the *apartheid* régime of South Africa;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to implement those specific tasks and responsibilities assigned to them in the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to undertake studies and consultations in order to consider the need for the establishment, within the United Nations system, of a mechanism or arrangement to ensure the implementation and overall co-ordination of relief programmes to internally displaced persons;

7. *Urges* all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and governmental and non-governmental organizations to undertake the measures required of them under the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action;

8. *Expresses its gratitude* to the Government of Norway for acting as host to the Conference, and to all the Nordic countries for their generous assistance towards the convening of the Conference;

9. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme for the valuable assistance that they provided to the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity in the organization of the Conference;

10. *Commends* the Organization of African Unity for having convened the Conference and for focusing the attention of the international community on the grave humanitarian problems of the southern African region;

11. *Decides* to consider this question at its forty-fourth session on the basis of a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General.

75th plenary meeting
8 December 1988

43/117. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the activities of his Office,⁸⁷ as well as the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner on the work of its thirty-ninth session,⁸⁸ and having heard the statements made by the High Commissioner on 16 and 18 November 1988,⁸⁹

Recalling its resolution 42/109 of 7 December 1987,

Reaffirming the purely humanitarian and non-political character of the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner, which are undertaken in the common interest of humanity,

Noting with satisfaction that, following recent accessions, more than one hundred States are now parties to the 1951 Convention⁹⁰ and the 1967 Protocol⁹¹ relating to the Status of Refugees,

Noting with concern that, despite developments that offer hope for solutions to refugee problems, refugees and displaced persons of concern to the High Commissioner continue to face, in certain situations, distressingly serious problems,

Particularly concerned that in various regions the safety and welfare of refugees and asylum-seekers continue to be seriously jeopardized on account of military or armed attacks and other forms of violence, and noting that further efforts should be made in dealing with the problem of rescuing asylum-seekers in distress at sea and, in this context, also noting the problems relating to stowaway asylum-seekers,

Stressing the fundamental importance of the High Commissioner's function to provide international protection, particularly in the context of the increasing complexity of the contemporary refugee problem, and the need for States to co-operate with the High Commissioner in the exercise of this essential function,

Noting the efforts of the High Commissioner to continue to address the special problems and needs of refugee and displaced women and children, who in many cases are exposed to a variety of difficult situations affecting their physical and legal protection as well as their psychological and material well-being,

Emphasizing the need for States to assist, on as wide a basis as possible, the efforts of the High Commissioner to promote speedy and durable solutions to the problems of refugees,

Realizing in this context that voluntary repatriation or return remains the most desirable solution to the problems facing refugees and displaced persons of concern to the High Commissioner, and welcoming the fact that in various parts of the world it has been possible for significant numbers of them to return voluntarily to their countries of origin,

Recognizing that the enhancement of basic economic and social rights is essential to the achievement of self-sufficiency and family security for refugees, as well as to the process of re-establishing the dignity of the human person and realizing durable solutions to refugee problems,

Recognizing that durable solutions for refugees in developing countries can, in the majority of cases, be achieved through a development-oriented approach and that the heavy burden placed on a host country as a result of growing influxes of refugees requires sufficient resources to redress the negative impact and the strain on its socio-economic infrastructure in rural and urban areas,

Welcoming the conclusions and decisions on refugee aid and development adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session⁹² as a tangible recognition of the need to en-

⁸⁷Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 12 (A/43/12).

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, Supplement No. 12A (A/43/12/Add.1).

⁸⁹See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Third Committee, 44th meeting, paras. 1-21, and 48th meeting, paras. 80-84, and corrigendum.

⁹⁰United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, vol. 606, No. 8791.

⁹²Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 12A (A/43/12/Add.1), para. 32.

sure the compatibility of refugee aid and national development plans of the developing asylum countries,

Commending those States that, despite severe economic and development problems of their own, continue to admit large numbers of refugees and displaced persons of concern to the Office of the High Commissioner into their territories, and emphasizing the need to share the burden of these States to the maximum extent possible through international assistance, in accordance with the conclusions on refugee aid and development adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session,

Stressing the need for the international community to continue to provide adequate resettlement opportunities for those refugees for whom no other durable solution may be in sight, with particular attention given to refugees who have already spent an inordinately long time in camps,

Welcoming the valuable support extended by Governments to the High Commissioner in carrying out his humanitarian tasks, and recognizing the need for continuing and increasing co-operation between the Office of the High Commissioner and other bodies of the United Nations system and with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations,

Also welcoming the decision of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session to open sessions of its two sub-committees and informal meetings to participation as observers by States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies which are not members of the Executive Committee,⁹³

Noting the High Commissioner's continuing efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office, particularly in strengthening field activities and responsibilities,

Commending the High Commissioner and his staff for the dedicated manner in which they discharge their responsibilities, and paying tribute to those staff members who have endangered their lives in the course of their duties,

1. *Strongly reaffirms* the fundamental nature of the function of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to provide international protection and the need for Governments to co-operate fully with his Office in order to facilitate the effective exercise of this function, in particular by acceding to and implementing the relevant international and regional refugee instruments and by scrupulously observing the principles of asylum and *non-refoulement*;

2. *Endorses*, in this regard, the conclusions on international solidarity and refugee protection adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session;⁹⁴

3. *Notes with particular concern* the continued violation, in certain situations, of the principle of *non-refoulement*, recalls existing prohibitions as contained in conclusions 4 and 5 adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its twenty-eighth session,⁹⁵ stresses the need to strengthen measures to protect refugees against such action and appeals to all States to abide by their international obliga-

tions, taking fully into account their legitimate security concerns;

4. *Appeals* to all States that have not yet become parties to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees to consider acceding to these instruments in order to enhance their universal character;

5. *Condemns* all violations of the rights and safety of refugees and asylum-seekers, in particular those perpetrated by military or armed attacks against refugee camps and settlements and other forms of violence;

6. *Endorses once again* the conclusions on military and armed attacks on refugee camps and settlements adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-eighth session,⁹⁶ and again calls upon all States to observe these principles;

7. *Commends* the High Commissioner for the work undertaken by his Office to identify and meet the special needs of refugee children and, in particular, for the guidelines of the Office on refugee children, and invites the High Commissioner to pursue his efforts on behalf of refugee children, drawing on the valuable contributions that non-governmental organizations continue to make in this area;

8. *Endorses* the conclusions on refugee women adopted by the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner at its thirty-ninth session,⁹⁷ and urges States to extend their full co-operation to the High Commissioner in his efforts to ensure that the special needs of refugee women in the fields of protection, assistance and durable solutions are met;

9. *Notes* the close connection between the problems of refugees and of stateless persons and invites States actively to explore and promote measures favourable to stateless persons in accordance with international law;

10. *Recognizes* the importance of fair and expeditious procedures for determining refugee status and/or granting asylum in order, *inter alia*, to protect refugees and asylum-seekers from unjustified or unduly prolonged detention or stay in camps, and urges States to establish such procedures;

11. *Recognizes* the importance of achieving durable solutions to refugee problems and, in particular, the need to address in this process the root causes of refugee movements in order to avert new flows of refugees, taking into account the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on International Co-operation to Avert New Flows of Refugees,⁹⁸ and to facilitate the solution of existing problems;

12. *Urges* all States to support the High Commissioner in his efforts to achieve durable solutions to the problem of refugees and displaced persons of concern to his Office, primarily through voluntary repatriation or return, including assistance to returnees as appropriate, or, wherever appropriate, through integration into countries of asylum or through resettlement in third countries;

13. *Expresses deep appreciation* for the valuable material and humanitarian response of receiving countries, in particular those developing countries which, despite limited resources, continue to admit, on a permanent or temporary basis, large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers;

⁹³*Ibid.*, para. 35.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, para. 24.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, *Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 12A (A/32/12/Add.1)*, para. 53.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, *Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 12A (A/42/12/Add.1)*, para. 206.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, *Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 12A (A/43/12/Add.1)*, para. 26.

⁹⁸A/41/324, annex.

14. *Urges* the international community, in accordance with the principle of international solidarity and burden-sharing, to assist the above-mentioned countries in order to enable them to cope with the additional burden that care for refugees and asylum-seekers represents;

15. *Supports broadly* the purpose of a Project Planning Fund along the lines stipulated in paragraph 32 of the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner on the work of its thirty-ninth session⁸⁸ and, in particular, the following recommendations:

(a) The Office of the High Commissioner should remain a focal point for encouraging refugee-related technical assistance and capital investment in developing asylum countries;

(b) Assistance to refugees should be additional to funds earmarked for development programmes in developing asylum countries;

(c) The High Commissioner should be requested to prepare a comprehensive report in which the nature and operational aspects of the Project Planning Fund and the mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner, as well as the role of development-oriented agencies and non-governmental organizations, would be clearly defined;

16. *Recognizes with appreciation* the work done by the High Commissioner to put into practice the concept of development-oriented assistance to refugees and returnees, as initiated at the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa⁹⁹ and reaffirmed in the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa,¹⁰⁰ urges the High Commissioner to continue that process, wherever appropriate, in full co-operation with appropriate international agencies, and further urges Governments to support these efforts;

17. *Emphasizes* the essential role of development-oriented organizations and agencies in the implementation of programmes that benefit refugees and returnees, urges the High Commissioner and those organizations and agencies, in accordance with their respective mandates, to strengthen their mutual co-operation towards the attainment of durable solutions, and calls upon the High Commissioner to continue to promote such co-operation;

18. *Welcomes* the various initiatives undertaken by the High Commissioner in regard to the promotion and dissemination of the principles of refugee law and protection and calls upon his Office, in co-operation with Governments, to intensify its activities in this area, bearing in mind the need, in particular, to develop practical applications of refugee law and principles and to continue to organize training courses for governmental and other officials involved in refugee activities;

19. *Calls upon* all Governments to contribute, in a spirit of international solidarity and burden-sharing and in every way feasible, to the High Commissioner's programmes with the aim of ensuring that the needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons of concern to the High Commissioner are met.

75th plenary meeting
8 December 1988

43/118. International Conference on Central American Refugees

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 42/1 of 7 October 1987 concerning the peace initiatives undertaken in connection with the agreement on "Procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace in Central America",¹⁰¹ signed by five Central American Presidents at Guatemala City on 7 August 1987 at the Esquipulas II summit meeting, 42/110 of 7 December 1987 on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons of Central America, 42/204 of 11 December 1987 on special economic assistance to Central America and 42/231 of 12 May 1988 on the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,¹⁰²

Also taking note of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,⁸⁷

Gravely concerned about the present situation in the Central American region, the flows of refugees to neighbouring countries and countries outside the region, and the impact of those flows of refugees on the social and economic development of the area,

Conscious of the need to address the problem of Central American refugees who have found asylum in some Central American countries, including Belize and Mexico, and desirous of contributing to the search for lasting solutions of benefit to the countries and communities of asylum and origin,

Taking into account that, as stated in point 8 of the agreement concluded at the Esquipulas II summit meeting,¹⁰¹ the Central American countries have undertaken, as a matter of urgency, to address the problem of refugees, including their repatriation and relocation through bilateral and multilateral processes,

Welcoming the establishment of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Central American Refugees, consisting of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua, and emphasizing the importance of the success of their work,

Welcoming with satisfaction the San Salvador communiqué on the Central American refugees,¹⁰³ signed on 9 September 1988, whereby it was decided to convene an International Conference on Central American Refugees, to be held at Guatemala City in May 1989,

Emphasizing that the general objective of the Conference is to examine the needs of Central American refugees and concrete proposals for practical solutions to their problems, as a contribution to peace in the region,

Reiterating the paramount importance of humanitarian and apolitical considerations, both in dealing with and in solving the problem of refugees, returnees and displaced persons, and the need to ensure that this approach is strictly observed by the countries of origin and of asylum and other interested participants,

Expressing its appreciation for the work done by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in support of the preparation for the Conference, and for its co-operation with the Preparatory Committee,

¹⁰¹ A/42/521-S/19085, annex. For the printed text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-second Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1987*, document S/19085, annex.

¹⁰² A/43/729-S/20234. For the printed text, see *Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-third Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1988*, document S/20234.

¹⁰³ A/C.3/43/6, annex.

⁹⁹ See A/41/572, annex.

¹⁰⁰ See A/43/717 and Corr.1, annex.