

RESOLUTION ON THE OAU BUREAU FOR THE PLACEMENT AND
EDUCATION OF AFRICAN REFUGEES

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, meeting in its Twenty Third Ordinary Session in Mogadiscio, Somalia, from 6 to 11 June 1974,

RECALLING its resolutions and those of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on Refugee problems in Africa and more particularly resolution CM/Res.329 (XXIII),

HAVING CONSIDERED the report of the Administrative Secretary General on the activities of the BPEAR,

HAVING STUDIED the report of the Eight Ordinary Session of the OAU Commission of Ten on Refugees on the question of the enlargement of the Mandate of BPEAR,

RECOGNIZING the responsibility of the OAU as the policy making body on all matters pertaining to Africa, in all fields of human activities,

RECOGNIZING EQUALLY the universal mandate of the UNHCR in the field of legal protection and assistance to refugees,

DESIROUS of maintaining, improving and strengthening the fruitful co-operation between the OAU and all international organizations and Voluntary Agencies engaged in the assistance of African Refugees in Africa,

CONCIOUS of the role that the OAU Commission of Ten on Refugees should play in all activities of the BPEAR,

NOTING the obstacles that are encountered by the BPEAR in the implementation of the resolutions for the benefit of the African Refugees,

NOTING WITH SATISFACTION the entry into force of the OAU Convention of African Refugees following its ratification by the required one third of the Member States;

NOTING, however, that less than half of the Member States have ratified the OAU Convention on Refugees,

CONSIDERING the benefits that would accrue to African Refugees from the implementation by the Member States of the said Convention,

CONVINCED that actions undertaken in favour of African Refugees by the BPEAR in the fields of Education and Placement can only succeed with the full financial, material and moral support of Member States,

1. ADOPTS the report of the Eighth Ordinary Session of the OAU Commission of Ten on Refugees and endorses all the recommendations contained thereof:-

MANDATE OF THE BPEAR

- (a) The BPEAR which now includes the former Refugee Section of the OAU will henceforth assist the commission of Ten on Refugees in the formulation of the OAU policies in the field of assistance to refugees and refugee work in Africa;
- (b) The BPEAR recruit a rural settlement expert, who will within the BPEAR assist the Commission of Ten with the formulation of OAU policies in the field of resettlement of rural refugees in order to facilitate liaison with the

UNHCR and enhance the existing co-operation between OAU and UNHCR in the same field;

(c) In respect of Legal Assistance and Rural Resettlement, the BPEAR will render its assistance in accordance with the agreement of co-operation between the UNHCR and OAU;

2. The BPEAR will foster the Education and Placement of African Refugees in accordance with Recommendation XI of the Conference on Legal, Economic and Social Aspects of African Refugee Problems as approved by the Council of Ministers in Resolution CM/Res.141 (X).

3. The BPEAR will compile and disseminate information concerning education , training and job opportunities for African Refugees in accordance with Recommendation XI of the conference on legal, Economic and Social Aspects of African Refugee Problems as approved by the Council of Ministers in Resolution CM.Res.141 (X).

B. ADMINISTRATIVE INTEGRATION OF THE BPEAR STAFF:

(a) All staff BPEAR is with effect from June 1st 1974 totally integrated within the OAU General Secretariat;

(b) The Administrative Budget of the BPEAR, as from 1st June 1974 is included in the ordinary budget of the OAU General Secretariat.

C. DUTIES OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

1. The Coordinating committee shall be an advisory and coordinating body comprising representatives of:

- (a) United Nations and its specialized agencies particularly, UNHCR, ILO, ECA, UNESCO, UNDP;
 - (b) Governmental and non-governmental organizations who show great interest in the problem of African refugees : WHO, All-Africa Conference of churches, International University Exchange Fund, Lutheral World Federation, Norwegian Refugees, council, World Council of Churches, World University Service, Association of African Universities, Afro- American Institute, Catholic Relief Services, Y.W.C.A., International Council of Voluntary Agencies, Council for Namibia, International Students Movement of the United Nations, Common Wealth Secretariat Amnesty International, Caritas Internationalis.
 - (c) Executive Secretariat of the OAU Liberation Committee.
 - (d) Chairman of the Annual Conference of Liberation Movements;
 - (e) Observers who may be authorized to participate in the deliberation of the Committee without the right to vote.
2. The Co-ordinating Committee shall have the following duties in the field of Education and Placement:
- (a) to advise the BPEAR on general policy in the field of Education and Placement of African Refugees;
 - (b) to coordinate the efforts of Member Organizations in order to enable the BPEAR to discharge its duties as efficiently as possible;
 - (c) to approve BPEAR Programmes;

- (d) to examine BPEAR activity reports;
- (e) to approve the BPEAR operational budget;
- (f) to examine the financial report of the BPEAR's operational budget.

D. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The OAU Advisory Committee on Financial and Budgetary Matters is requested to provide the necessary appropriations for the BPEAR in the OAU's Financial Year 1974/75 Budget, so that the BPEAR staff would be paid by the OAU General Secretariat as from June 1st, 1974.

E. RULES AND REGULATIONS ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BPEAR

Rules and Regulations on the Functions of the BPEAR are adopted with immediate effect.

II DECIDES:

- (a) That Members of the Co-ordinating Committee resident in Addis Ababa shall form the Working Group of the Co-ordinating Committee;
- (b) That the OAU Commission of Ten on Refugees shall approve the admission to, suspension or expulsion of members and observers from the Co-ordinating Committee.

3. INVITES Member States which have not yet done so to notify the OAU Convention on Refugees, to apply its provisions with the flexibility to accede to the 1951 United Nations Convention and to the 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees and to apply their provisions to African Refugees;

4. INVITES Member States to strengthen their co-operation with BPEAR by informing it on a regular basis of:
 - (a) the actions envisaged or being taken to ratify the OAU Convention of refugees;
 - (b) the actions envisaged or being taken to implement the provisions of the said convention:
 - (c) the difficulties which prevent or delay the ratification of the said convention.
5. INVITES Member States to give the BPEAR their moral, material and financial support and to take the necessary measures for the success of its activities in the fields of Education and Placement:
6. APPEALS to Member States, in accordance with Resolutions CM/Res.266 (XIX) and CM/Res.296 (XX) to outline; at national level, their policies which clearly sets out the principles governing any action to be taken in favour of African Refugees and inform the BPEAR about them;
7. INVITES Member States to organize and celebrate every year the “African Refugee Day” in order to raise funds to enable the BPEAR to assist refugees more adequately;
8. APPEALS to Member States with large numbers of Refugees or with potentialities to absorb additional numbers of refugees to set up National Committees which shall promote the Education, Training, Employment and Recruitment of Refugees and supply the Bureau with the necessary information on the facilities that Member States can offer in these fields;

9. INVITES Member States concerned to establish intergovernmental Committee for facilitate voluntary repatriation of Refugees to their home countries, in accordance with Article V of the OAU Convention on specific Aspects of the African Refugee problem;
10. REQUESTS the OAU Administrative Secretary General to put at the disposal of the BPEAR the services of the OAU Legal Division;
11. EXPRESSES its satisfaction with the assistance which UNHCR has ceaselessly been lending to the BPEAR in the fund raising and wishes that the co-operation between the BPEAR and the UNHCR on the one hand, and between BPEAR and other International Organizations and Voluntary Agencies on the other, will develop and strengthen for the benefit of African refugees;
12. CONGRATULATES the OAU Commission of Ten on Refugees, the Co-ordinating Committee and the BPEAR for the efforts made in studying the problem of the enlargement of the BPEARS terms of reference.