

RESOLUTION OF THE SITUATION OF REFUGEES IN
AFRICA

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, meeting in its Thirty-sixth Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 23 February to 1 March, 1981.

Recalling the resolution CM/Res.727 (XXXIII), paragraph 5, which urges all OAU Member States to consider ways and means of translating the principles of “burden sharing” into action by, inter alia, accepting a number of refugees in their countries and resolution CM/Res.774 (XXXIV), paragraph 5, which authorizes the OAU Commission of Ten (now Fifteen) on Refugees in Africa to undertake missions to some selected African States with a view to studying refugee problems therein,

Having considered the report of the OAU Secretary-General on the activities of the General Secretariat in relation to refugees in Africa as well as the report on the missions of the Commission of Fifteen on Refugees in Africa as presented by the Chairman of the Commission,

Noting the interest expressed by various OAU Member States in the outcome of these missions,

Deeply appreciating the positive responses of African governments to the problems of refugees, particularly in the early stages before the international community comes on the scene,

Reaffirming the humanitarian aspect of the activities of the OAU Secretary-General in the quest for a durable solution to the refugee problem in Africa,

Noting further the efforts undertaken by the OAU Secretary-General to revitalize and reactivate the OAU Bureau for Refugees to enable it to assume its responsibilities effectively,

Deeply concerned about the fact that the responses of the international community to date has not been commensurate with the needs of the steadily growing number of refugees in Africa which now amounts to more than half the world's total refugee population:

1. ADOPTS the report (Doc. CM/1093 (XXXVI) on missions of the Commission of Fifteen on Refugees in Africa;
2. COMMENDS Member States of the Organization of African Unity for their decision to receive the refugees and to make available to them and within the framework of their limited resources all facilities and services essential for the care and well being of the refugees;
3. APPEALS to the international community to render assistance to the countries of asylum in Africa to enable them to cater for the refugees and redouble their efforts in assisting the countries of origin in the rehabilitation of genuine voluntary returnees;
4. PAYS TRIBUTE to all those Member States of the Organization of African Unity, especially the United Republic of Tanzania, which in quest for a permanent solution to the African refugee problem, have granted citizenship to refugees who have sought sanctuary in these States;
5. WELCOMES the initiatives already taken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in close co-operation with the OAU Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to convene an International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa at a Ministerial level on 9 and 10 April 1981 at Geneva, Switzerland, under the auspices of the United Nations;

6. APPEALS FURTHER to all Member States of the OAU and the international community to provide the utmost support for the Conference by actively participating in it and by providing generously financial and material assistance to the refugees in Africa;
7. REQUESTS the OAU Secretary-General to closely follow up the pledges and commitments made by Member States during the missions of the Commission of Fifteen on Refugees in Africa in an effort to promote the principle of “burden sharing”;
8. REQUESTS FURTHER the Commission of Fifteen on Refugees in Africa to undertake, as soon as possible similar missions to those OAU Member States which are affected by the refugee problem but which were not visited by the Commission;
9. DEEPLY APPRECIATES the efforts of the OAU Secretary-General to give a new impetus to the activities the OAU Bureau for Refugees to enable it to cope with the responsibilities it has to shoulder.