

RESOLUTION ON THE SITUATION OF REFUGEES IN AFRICA

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, meeting in its Forty-fifth Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 23 to 28 February, 1987,

Having exhaustively considered the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the General Secretariat with regard to the refugee situation in Africa, and the report of the activities of the OAU Commission of Fifteen on Refugees,

Considering that refugee increases continue to occur in various parts of the Continent and to place extra burden on countries of asylum, especially the Frontline States and other States bordering racist South Africa,

Noting further with deep concern the destruction caused to the social and economic infrastructure of the Frontline States and other States in the region by the activities of these armed bandits and by the military attacks of the racist regime's security forces,

Recalling the various OAU Resolutions and, in particular, Resolution CM/Res.987 (XLII) on the accession to the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, the 1969 OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of the refugee problem in Africa as well as the principles enshrined in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights,

Noting with satisfaction the coming into force in October 1986 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights,

Recalling Article I of the OAU Convention of 1969 governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa as well as recommendation No. 2 of the 1979 Arusha Conference concerning the definition of the term refugee and determination of refugee status and Resolution CM/Res.727(XXXIII) on Arusha Refugee Conference,

Recalling Article II (6) of the OAU Convention of 1969 governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa which stipulates that for the reasons of security, countries of asylum shall, as far as possible, settle refugees at a reasonable distance from the frontiers of their country of origin,

Recalling further Article III of the 1969 OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa and Resolution AHG/Res. 26 (II) on the commitments of Member States to a humanitarian policy in favour of refugees and in particular on the need to prohibit refugees residing in the respective Member States from engaging in any political and military activity likely to endanger the good relations between the host country and the country of origin, without prejudice of the rights of people under colonial and apartheid domination,

Re-affirming once more Article V of the 1969 OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of the refugee problems in Africa and the various OAU Resolutions calling on all Member States to encourage voluntary repatriation as the most desirable solution to refugee problems,

Recalling Resolution CM/Res.1040 (XLIV) on the need to gather reliable and accurate statistical data on refugee and returnee populations and the need for Member States to integrate the formulation and implementation of refugees/returnees programmes into the national, medium and long term development plans, in order to ensure a harmonious integration, mutual benefits and social integration among nationals and refugees,

Noting the danger posed to the security of the refugees, workers in refugee camps and nationals of asylum countries by military and other hostile acts in and outside refugee camps and surrounding areas,

Noting with concern that some Member States, despite several OAU resolutions, continue to charge “Economic” fees to refugees in their educational institutions and recognizing the need for the OAU Commission of 15 on Refugees to take up the question of economic fees, the provision of resettlement and educational facilities for

refugees within Member States during the Commission's field fact-finding missions in 1987,

Noting further with appreciation the commendable activities of the international Community, especially, the offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and voluntary agencies in favor of refugees:

1. TAKES note of the Report of the Secretary-General on the Activities of the General Secretariat on the Situation of Refugees in Africa;
2. ADOPTS the Report on the Activities of the OAU Commission of Fifteen on Refugees;
3. COMMENDS Member States who continue to receive and cater for the needs of refugees;
4. EXPRESSES solidarity with the Member States of the OAU bordering racist South Africa and further expresses Africa's appreciation for the sacrifices these States continue to make in order to provide sanctuary and security to refugees fleeing from the banditry activities of the South African regime and its actions;
5. CALLS once again on OAU Member States to extend urgent and increased material and financial support to the Frontline States and other States bordering racist South Africa to enable them to cater adequately for the needs of the refugees;
6. URGES Member States to seriously consider providing transit and resettlement facilities to the refugees from Southern Africa whose security is threatened;
7. COMMENDS Member States which have ratified the 1951 UN Convention and its 1967 protocol, in 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees and, especially, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and urges those Member

States that have not done so to ratify these legal instruments pertaining to the refugee situation as soon as possible;

8. INVITES Member States which do not have a large number of refugees, to assist other countries over-burdened by the presence of refugees to establish the necessary infrastructures for the settlement, placement and education of those refugees on the basis of the principles of solidarity and burden-sharing;
9. INVITES Member States to adhere to the established procedure for determining refugee status in line with both the 1981 UN Convention on Refugees and the 1969 OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of the refugee problem in Africa;
10. INVITES Member States to provide sites for refugee settlement at reasonable distance from the frontiers of the refugees' country of origin;
11. CALLS on Member States to enforce the civilian character of refugee camps;
12. APPEALS to Member States to strive to promote conditions amenable for voluntary repatriation of refugees, as soon as the factors that provoked asylum-seeking disappear;
13. URGES Member States hosting refugees to allow non-political, independent, neutral and humanitarian organizations especially the UNHCR to have free access to refugee camps in the respect of the relevant international conventions and national legislations of host countries to enable them to assist governments in verifying numbers, status and actual needs of persons claiming refugee status;
14. CALLS on Member States to provide the necessary protection and security to refugees and refugee workers against all acts of aggression from whatever quarter in and out of refugee camps;

15. INVITES Member States in co-operation with OAU Secretariat, UNHCR, UNDP and other competent humanitarian, organizations to take the necessary measures to incorporate into national plans, refugee programmes and take measures to facilitate the integration of returnees in the national society;
16. URGES once again, those Member States that continue to charge “economic” fees to refugees in their educational institutions to take urgent and necessary measures to facilitate the integration of returnees in the national society;
17. CALLS on the OAU Commission of Fifteen on Refugees to take up all issues relating to burden-sharing, especially the provision of re-settlement/placement and educational facilities to refugees, with concerned Member States during the Commission’s forthcoming on-the-spot fact-finding missions and report the results of these consultations to the Forty-sixth Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers in July 1987;
18. CALLS on the international community especially the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to maximize its assistance in favor of refugees;
19. REQUESTS the Secretary-General to pursue the contacts already established with SADCC Member Countries with a view to organizing the International Conference on the Situation of Refugees in Southern Africa, to be attended by all African States and International Organization such as the UNHCR, UNDP and others.