

**RESOLUTION ON THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON
ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND
DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION**

The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, meeting in its Sixty-Second Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 21 to 23 June, 1995,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region,

Recalling Resolution CM/Res.1527 (LX) adopted by the Sixtieth Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers in June 1994 in Tunis, Tunisia, which called for the convening of a Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region,

Noting with satisfaction that the Conference took place from 15 to 17 February 1995 in Bujumbura, Burundi, under the joint auspices of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,

Recognizing with appreciation the role of the OAU Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in organizing and co-chairing the Bujumbura Conference,

Paying tribute to the Government of the Republic of Burundi for hosting the Conference and commending the States of the Great Lakes Region and the international community as a whole for their participation and contribution to the successful conclusion of the Conference,

Concerned that the refugee influxes and displacement of people in the Great Lakes Region have continued to occur and are placing extra burden on countries of asylum,

Noting with deep gratitude the readiness and willingness with which the asylum countries in the Region have always received refugees and displaced persons in spite of the economic difficulties facing them,

Recognizing the continued efforts of the UNHCR, governmental and non-governmental organizations in providing assistance to the refugees and displaced persons in the Great Lakes Region,

Convinced that the Plan of Action which was adopted by the Regional Conference in Bujumbura remains the basis for humanitarian action in the region in favour of refugees, returnees and displaced persons, particularly its focus on voluntary repatriation as the most preferred durable solution in the problem of refugees:

1. **TAKES NOTE WITH APPRECIATION** of the report of the Secretary-General on the Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons;
2. **URGES** Member States of the Great Lakes Region to continue addressing the root causes of the problem of refugees and displaced persons and **APPEALS** to countries of origin to create a climate of security and trust which constitutes the key to the return of refugees;
3. **ENCOURAGES** the countries of the Region to continue to uphold their generous asylum policies;
4. **COMMENDS** the international community for the humanitarian assistance it has continued to render to the refugees and displaced persons in the Region and **CALLS** on it to continue to provide assistance to the millions of refugees and displaced persons in the Great Lakes Region;
5. **CALLS UPON** the international community to assist countries of asylum in coping with the adverse consequences of hosting large numbers of refugees;
6. **SUPPORTS** the efforts deployed to ensure the effective functioning of the International Tribunal to try the perpetrators of genocide and persons responsible for grave violations of international humanitarian law in Rwanda;
7. **COMMENDS** the asylum countries and the UNCHR for putting in place security arrangements to enhance security in refugee camps;
8. **NOTES WITH SATISFACTION** the signing of the Tripartite Agreement on Repatriation of Refugees by Rwanda, Tanzania and UNHCR on 12 April 1994 and the inauguration on 22 May 1995 of the Joint Commission for Repatriation and Reintegration of Rwandese Refugees, whose membership includes the OAU, UNHCR and Refugee Representatives;
9. **APPEALS** to the countries of the Region as well as the international community to

continue in their efforts to create propitious conditions for voluntary repatriation of refugees and **REQUESTS** the countries of origin and the international community to facilitate resettlement and reintegration of refugees as well as the return of displaced persons to the respective communities;

10. **APPLAUDS** the initiatives of the OAU Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in their efforts to continue following up the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted by the Bujumbura Conference;
11. **REQUESTS** the OAU Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to meet at their earliest convenience if possible and if time permits in the course of this 62nd Ordinary Session of the Council with the Chairman of the Council of Ministers; the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the countries of the Great Lakes Region and other interested Member States with a view to finding ways and means of speeding up the implementation of the Plan of Action;
12. **REQUESTS** the OAU Secretary-General to cooperate closely with the United Nations Secretary-General to find ways and means of organising an international conference on peace, security and stability in the Great Lakes region.