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AFRICAN UNITY

Secretariat
P. O. Box 3243

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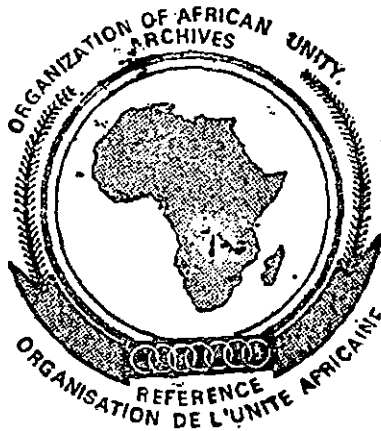
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REPORT ON MISSIONS OF THE COMMISSION OF FIFTEEN ON REFUGEES
IN AFRICA TO THE THIRTY-SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF
THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS



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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

For over two decades now the growing magnitude of the refugee problem in Africa has been a recurring theme at many meetings of various refugee serving organisations. Hence, the increasing concern of the OAU Member States, UN Specialised Agencies and other International and Voluntary Agencies involved in refugee work has centred on evolving effective means with which to alleviate this refugee problem.

In spite of this effort, the number of refugees in Africa has been rising at the rate of hundred per cent after every five years. In 1965, for example, the estimated figure was half a million; in 1970, one million; in 1975, two million; in 1978, four million; and the turn of 1980, Africa was hosting an estimated figure of five million refugees, making it the continent with the highest concentration of refugees in the world. What is more, the majority of these refugees are women and children: not that adult refugees do not deserve our attention; but that in all reality women and children are particularly vulnerable to hardships of whatever form in refugee situations. Furthermore, it should be noted that most of Africa's five million refugees are being hosted by some of the poorest countries on the continent.¹

¹ Some of the African countries exceptionally overburdened by refugees are: Cameroon with ca. 250,000; Djibouti ca. 13,500; Ethiopia ca. 20,707; Somalia ca. 1.5 million; and Sudan ca. 0.5 million; as endorsed by Thirty-Fifth Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers Meeting in Freetown in June 1980. (Vide CM/Res.814(XXXV) Paragraph 5).

In view of this alarming refugee situation in Africa, a conference aimed at analysing the African refugee problem was convened at Arusha, in Tanzania, from 7 to 17 May 1979. This conference passed pertinent recommendations on "The Situation of Refugees in Africa and prospective solutions to this problem in 1980s as contained in the OAU Document REF/AR/CONF/Rpt.1/Rec.1 - 16. The conference identified the principle of "Burden-Sharing as a key factor in our endeavours to alleviate the misery of refugees in Africa. In this regard, an appeal was made calling upon all OAU Member States in collaboration with all refugee-serving agencies, to make concerted efforts and substantially alleviate the problems of refugees in Africa. One specific recommendation that emerged out of the Arusha Conference called upon the OAU Secretary-General as a matter of urgency, to restructure and strengthen the OAU Bureau for Refugees by recruiting competent and professionally experienced officers (Vide REF/AR/CONF/Rpt.1/Rec.12 paragraph 3).

The Arusha Recommendations were unanimously adopted at the Thirty-Third Session of the OAU Council of Ministers which met in Monrovia, Liberia in July 1979 (Vide Resolution CM/Res.727 (XXXIII)).

At the subsequent Thirty-Fourth Session of the OAU Council of Ministers held in Addis Ababa in February 1980, another resolution was passed which endorsed, among other things, the recommendation of the Twelfth Ordinary Session of the

Commission of Ten² on Refugees in Africa which had stated:

Accepts the principle of sending a delegation of the OAU Commission of Ten on Refugees in Africa to those countries whose names will be identified by the OAU General Secretariat in consultation with Member States with a view to studying refugee problems.³

In light with this resolution, the OAU General Secretariat in collaboration with the OAU Member States concerned, identified the following eighteen (18) countries in which we had to undertake missions on an experimental basis from the end of August until the middle of October 1980.⁴

²It should be noted here that the Commission of Ten on Refugees in Africa was established in 1964, about two decades ago when the refugee problem was comparatively small. Recognising the increasing magnitude of the current refugee problem in Africa, therefore, the Thirty-Fifth Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers meeting in Freetown, Sierra Leone in July 1980, decided by Resolution CM/Res.814(XXXV) paragraph 5, to review and expand the Membership of the Commission on Refugees from ten to fifteen countries. These countries were selected to represent the following five OAU regions:-

Eastern: Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda;
Central: Zaire, Cameroon and Angola;
Western: Nigeria, Mali, Senegal and Niger;
Southern: Zimbabwe, Zambia and Swaziland;
Northern: (up to the time of writing this report the names of the two countries to represent this region had not yet been submitted).

³(CM/Res.774(XXXIV) Paragraph 5).

⁴However the list excludes OAU Member States in Southern Africa region because the problem of refugees in these countries constitutes a component of the assistance programme to the Front-Line States which is currently handled by the OAU Committee of Nineteen.

Algeria	Morocco
Cameroon	Nigeria
Congo	Senegal
Egypt	Sierra Leone
Ethiopia	Somalia
Ghana	Sudan
Kenya	Togo
Liberia	Tunisia
Libya	Zaire

1.2 Purpose of the Missions

Globally, the purpose of the missions was, among other things, to make consultations with the representatives of the OAU Member States and to sensitize them with the magnitude of the current refugee problem in Africa. In this regard we were specifically mandated to make an on-the-spot assessment of the gravity of the refugee problem, especially in countries with the highest refugee populations, with a view to finding a viable solution to the problem.

Furthermore, we were mandated to visit countries that were in a position to offer material and/or financial assistance, as well as employment opportunities to refugees for the sake of promoting the principle of "burden-sharing" as enshrined in the Arusha Conference Recommendations.

1.3 Terms of Reference

In fulfilment of our missions we were empowered to discuss, draw conclusions and make recommendations on the following:

1.3.1 Accession to, and Implementation of, International Instruments Concerning Refugees and International Solidarity

This called for an appeal to be made to the Member States who had not yet done so to ratify the international texts on refugees, namely, the 1951 UN Convention, the 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees.

1.3.2 Work Permits

In most African countries it is necessary for a refugee to procure a work permit to enable him to secure a job. We were, therefore, requested to take up this issue with all the Governments of countries visited and to stress the need to issue such work permits to refugees liberally, because in certain countries without permit a refugee cannot have access to employment and hence cannot become self-sufficient.

1.3.3 Return Clause

We were also requested to raise the issue of "return clause" and to ask countries to incorporate in the travel documents of refugees, guaranteeing them if need be, an opportunity to return to their original countries of asylum on completion of their studies or employment contracts.

Some African countries are reluctant to incorporate the "return clause" in the travel documents for refugees for fear of encouraging refugees to return and stay indefinitely. On the other hand the countries to which refugees go for studies or employment are reluctant to accept refugees without a "return clause" in their travel document for fear that they get stuck with them.

We were, therefore, mandated to appeal to governments of countries visited to be liberal in issuing travel documents with a "return clause" incorporated in the travel document while issuing entry visas. An appeal was also to be made to the receiving governments not to insist on the issue of a "return clause" in the process of offering refugees education or employment/resettlement opportunities.

1.3.4 Economic Fees

This refers to a situation where a refugee as an alien is charged extra or higher fees in comparison to the nationals. We were requested to plead with the governments concerned to waive economic fees often imposed on refugees.

1.3.5

Burden-Sharing

This refers to a situation where a country with fewer or without refugees at all agrees to accept some refugees for resettlement from another country with too many refugees. It also refers to a situation where a country with relatively abundant resources can either offer financial and material contributions, or can admit into its educational institutions and/or offer scholarships to a number of refugees from other over-burdened countries. In this regard, we were requested to draw the attention of governments visited to countries that are exceptionally over-burdened by the refugee problem.

1.3.6 National Refugee Machineries

This calls for the existence of committees composed of representatives of Government Ministries and Departments, Governmental, non-governmental organisations or Voluntary Agencies which deal with refugees in various OAU Member States for the purpose of co-ordinating refugee services in a given country. We were requested to discuss the modalities of setting up "National Refugee Machineries" with all Governments visited.

1.3.7 Enactment of Amnesty Laws

This refers to the refugees' countries of origin considering declaring genuine general amnesty to their nationals who have fled into exile to return home. In order to make this credible, we were requested to appeal to the governments concerned to enact amnesty laws, and to ensure their implementation without subsequent reprisals.

1.3.8 Naturalization

This refers to the granting of citizenship to refugees who have integrated themselves into the host society and have expressed the desire to become citizens of their country of asylum. Within the realm of refugee service, this is regarded as one of the permanent solutions to refugee problems in Africa. We were, thus, requested to appeal to countries visited to consider granting citizenship to refugees whenever the situation warrants.

What follows is an analysis of the composition of the missions, the countries visited, the discussions evoked and the decisions reached during the OAU field-missions.

2. COMPOSITION AND WORK OF MISSIONS

For practical purposes, we split ourselves into three groups to undertake missions in the following regions: Central and Western Africa, Eastern Africa and Northern Africa.

2.1 Composition of missions.

2.1.1 Mission One

Representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Zambia in Ethiopia. (Leader);

Representative of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Ethiopia;

Representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Niger in Ethiopia;

Representative of the UNHCR Regional Liaison Office; and

Two Representatives of the OAU/BPEAR.

2.1.2 Mission Two

Representative of the Embassy of the United Republic of Tanzania in Ethiopia (Leader);

Representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Zaire in Ethiopia;

Representative of the Embassy of the United Republic of Cameroon in Ethiopia; and

Representative of the OAU/BPEAR.

2.1.3 Mission Three

Representative of the Embassy of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan in Ethiopia (Leader);

Representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Senegal in Ethiopia;

Representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Uganda in Ethiopia; and

Representative of the OAU/BPEAR.

2.2 Country by Country Analysis

In selecting the countries for the three Missions, the OAU General Secretariat, guided by the decisions of the Thirty-Fourth Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in February 1980 (Vide GM/Res.774(XXXIV) paragraphs 5 and 6), had in mind the following two basic criteria:

- 2.2.1 - Countries with high concentrations of refugees, in order to assess their needs; and

- 2.2.2 - Countries with relatively few refugees, in order to explore their possibility of participating in the principle of burden-sharing in all its forms.

It was in the light of this that we set ourselves to visit the following countries:

- 2.2.2.1 - Mission One: Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Zaire, Congo and Cameroon.
- 2.2.2.2 - Mission Two: Kenya, Togo, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Senegal.⁵
- 2.2.2.3 - Mission Three: Egypt, Morocco, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Nigeria.

⁵The OAU delegation arrived in Dakar, Senegal on 26 September 1980, a day earlier than the date given in the original itinerary. As the Senegalese Government did not know about this advance arrival, it could not therefore, meet the delegation at the airport. Owing to this, and also to the transportation problems with both the Nigerian and Ghana Airways at that particular time, the delegation was advised by the airlines officials to leave Dakar by the Nigerian Airways on the following day, the 27 September 1980, or else, they would have been obliged to remain in Dakar for more than one week. The delegation, therefore, had to leave without fulfilling the mission.

⁶The delegation of Mission Three could not visit Morocco because the Government of Morocco had cabled to request for postponement of the visit. Though later another cable expressing readiness to meet the delegation was received, it was too late to reschedule the itinerary.

In all the countries visited, we were accorded fraternal welcome and were met on arrival by a variety of high ranking Government officials. Additionally, we were given the opportunity to meet various government officials responsible for refugee matters in the relevant ministries.

2.3 Discussions held and Decisions reached during the Missions

It is necessary to emphasize that we held discussions with top Government officials on the specific objectives of the Missions as well as conditions affecting refugees in Africa in general; and where the situation warranted, we were accorded the opportunity to visit refugee settlements. These physical visits to various refugee camps enabled us to gain further insight into the magnitude of the refugee burden being borne by the host countries. We, thus, feel strongly that, as a token of appreciation, other OAU Member States and refugee-serving organizations should provide additional assistance with a view to alleviating the problems of refugees in the fields where the host countries are not in a position to do it effectively. In this connection, we would like to register our anxiety concerning the acute shortage of water supply prevailing in most of the refugee camps that we visited. Additionally, these and other refugee camps are, suffering not only from food shortage but also from the poor distribution channels for the available food. Furthermore, we would like to draw the attention of the OAU Member States to the Health problems prevalent in most refugee camps. Despite the commendable efforts being made by the host countries several problems remain to be solved regarding hygienic conditions and the needed medicaments.

In view of all these enormous responsibilities being shouldered by countries with the highest concentration of refugees, such countries should not only be given the financial and material assistance they deserve but should also be viewed and appreciated as the most reliable donors.

Furthermore, we were able to obtain meaningful responses from the Member States that we visited on the following issues that we raised for discussion during our visits:

2.3.1 Accession to, and Implementation of, International Instruments concerning Refugees and International Solidarity

On the issue of accession to international instruments concerning refugees, a number of countries we visited had already implemented⁷ this issue, and we thus congratulated them. Countries that we found in the process of implementing the accession to the said instruments were encouraged, and appealed to, to speed up the process; and those countries that had not yet taken the initiative to accede to these instruments promised to do so in the very near future. We observe, however, and with deep appreciation that despite the fact that certain countries had not yet acceded to the international instruments concerning refugees, they were still co-operative in the field of extending service to refugees on humanitarian grounds. What follows, therefore, are the specific positions of the countries we visited regarding the issue under review.

⁷ To date only 20 OAU Member States have ratified the International Instruments on Refugees. These are: Algeria, Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, Dahomey (Benin), Ethiopia, Guinea, Liberia, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Upper Volta, Zaire and Zambia.

The following countries had already acceded to all the international instruments concerning refugees: Algeria, Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Togo, Sudan, and Zaire; while Somalia and Tunisia had only acceded to the 1951 UN Convention and the 1967 Protocol and were making arrangements to accede to the 1969 OAU Convention. We were informed that Kenya had already acceded to the 1951 UN Convention and that it was in the final stages of ratifying the rest of the instruments.

Those countries that had not acceded to the international instruments concerning refugees at the time of our visit promised to give priority consideration to acceding to the said instruments and to accordingly inform the OAU of their action.

2.3.2 Work Permits

We were informed in the following countries that refugees do not require work permits to obtain employment: Algeria, Ghana, Libya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo and Tunisia. However, in the following countries we were informed that refugees are issued with work permits in order to facilitate the procurement of employment: Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Sudan and Zaire.

On the whole the countries we visited agreed that giving employment to refugees is one of the most effective ways of alleviating the problem of dependency that faces many refugees.

2.3.3 "Return Clause"

The problem of travel outside the country of asylum that many refugees experience was appreciated by all the countries we visited. However, we were informed that the following countries, as a matter of practice, insert "return clause" in travel documents issued to refugees to enable them to return to their countries of asylum: Algeria, Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo and Zaire.

The rest of the countries, i.e., Libya and Tunisia stated that the question of return clause was not an issue as refugees were free to travel like their nationals sometimes even using Libyan or Tunisian national passports.

2.3.4 Economic Fees

In view of the difficulties many refugees face in meeting the high fees that some educational institutions charge, the issue of economic fees was one of the specific problems of refugees that we discussed with the Member States we visited. In Egypt we were informed that economic fees were only imposed on those refugees who are sponsored by international organisations such as UNHCR, UNEPTSA, AFGRAD, DAAD and IUEF. All the other countries visited i.e., Algeria, Cameroon, Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia and Zaire categorically informed us that they did not charge economic fees.

2.3.5

Burden-sharing

The principle of "burden-sharing" which was the cornerstone of our missions was discussed on five levels: that of a state offering financial contribution; material assistance such as medicaments; technical assistance; educational facilities both in terms of admission into educational institutions and scholarship award; and offering resettlement or employment facilities. Most of the Member States we visited agreed to offer resettlement opportunities to refugees with professional expertise. The Government of Liberia, for instance, accepted to take eight refugee families and the Bureau is working out the modalities to enable these refugees travel to Liberia. Some States informed us that they had material as well as technical assistance lined up for despatch to whichever country or countries with refugees that happen to be in need of it. Many States such as Tunisia urged the Bureau, as a matter of urgency, to send lists of applicants for admission into educational institutions or scholarships.

The following is, therefore, a summary of the positions of the countries visited on this subject: Kenya, Somalia, and Cameroon expressed that they were already participating in burden-sharing. The rest of the countries, i.e., Algeria, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Libya, Nigeri, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia and Zaire expressed that they would in various ways⁸ redouble their efforts in participating in the principle of "burden-sharing".

We noted with great interest that in spite of the fact that some of these countries were already experiencing social-

⁸ See Section 3 on "Pledges" of this report.

economic problems because of hosting large numbers of refugees, they too, promised to continue extending assistance to refugees in other countries in the spirit of African Unity and International Solidarity.

All the countries generally agreed that "burden-sharing" was the most effective way of alleviating the burden of countries with high concentration of refugees.

2.3.6 National Refugee Machineries

As already mentioned, we were specifically requested to discuss the modalities of setting up "national refugee machineries" with the governments of the countries visited. In most of these countries "national refugee machineries" exist in one form or another. What we found lacking was the institutionalisation of these machineries in terms of co-ordination both between the various organs dealing with refugees in a particular country, and co-ordination between these government organs on one hand, and the OAU/BPEAR on the other. We discussed this subject with the countries visited which agreed to institutionalise their existing national refugee machineries and the OAU/BPEAR is keeping a close eye in order to ensure that this is implemented.

2.3.7 Enactment of Amnesty Laws

We observed that several Member States we visited have taken seriously the question of "enactment of amnesty laws" and have in fact, in the spirit of African Unity, declared general amnesty to refugees on several occasions. In such instances, however, we appealed to the governments concerned

to ensure that refugees are not confronted with reprisals on their return. The countries that informed us of their "enactment of amnesty laws" and all the necessary steps taken so far to enable their nationals in exile to return were, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Zaire. The rest of the countries, though not affected by this issue, recognized the importance of enacting amnesty laws as one of the ways of permanently solving the refugee problem.

2.3.8 Naturalization

On the issue of "naturalization" we observed that a number of Member States were making an effort to grant citizenship to refugees who had already integrated themselves neatly into their host communities and had expressed ardent desire to become citizens of their respective countries of asylum. We were, however, made to understand that refugees with serious criminal records are not usually allowed to benefit from the concept of "naturalization".

We learned further that many refugees preferred returning to their countries of origin to becoming nationals of their countries of asylum.

PLEDGES

During our missions, a variety of pledges of assistance to refugees in Africa were made by the Member States visited; and what follows is a summary of these pledges:

COUNTRYPLEDGE

3.1 ALGERIA

The Government of Algeria agreed to consider offering employment to skilled refugees in Algeria. Likewise, the Government promised to consider refugees for admission in its institutions of higher learning. This country is also hosting more than 150,000 refugees and the OAU/BPEAR has recently submitted 12 dossiers for resettlement.

3.2 CAMEROON

The Government of Cameroon promised to sign all the international instruments on refugees in due course and to inform the OAU of its action. Cameroon is also currently hosting more than 250,000 Chadian refugees.

3.3 CONGO

The Government of Congo is prepared to receive and offer educational and employment opportunities to African refugees subject to a submission of a detailed dossier on each refugee by the OAU/BPEAR.

3.4 EGYPT

The Government of Egypt is prepared to offer educational places and at times scholarships to refugees. It is also willing to offer technical and material assistance such as doctors, nurses and medicine respectively. At present the constitutional authorities of the Government of Egypt are in their final stages of ratifying formally the international instruments on refugees.

COUNTRY

PLEDGE

- 3.5 ETHIOPIA
The Government of Ethiopia is prepared to participate in "burden-sharing by repatriating and rehabilitating its nationals from Sudan and Djibouti. But the Government is also currently hosting about 20,707 refugees.
- 3.6 GHANA
The Government of Ghana is prepared to offer educational and employment opportunities to refugees.
- 3.7 KENYA
The Government of Kenya promised to ratify the 1967 UN Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention on refugees in the near future and would accordingly inform the OAU. It also promised to continue offering resettlement opportunities to refugees emanating from the nearby countries.
- 3.8 LIBERIA
Out of the 21 refugees whose names had been submitted to the Government of Liberia, Liberia offered employment to 8 of them in the wake of the mission.
- 3.9 LIBYA
The Government of Libya is considering acceding to the international instruments on refugees. The Government has also set aside US \$250,000 for refugees for 1980, and is willing to offer employment as well as educational opportunities to refugees subject to careful screening of the candidates.

	<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>PLEDGE</u>
3.10	NIGERIA	The Government of Nigeria stated that it would consider acceding to the international instruments on refugees and would duly inform the OAU of its action. In terms of assistance, the Government of Nigeria is prepared to participate in "burden-sharing" by offering material and financial assistance. In addition, it will make room available in its educational institutions for refugees or award them scholarships. Nigeria is also hosting 100,000 refugees.
3.11	SIERRA LEONE	The Government of Sierra Leone promised to consider favourably employing African refugees. It is at present in process of ratifying all the international instruments on refugees.
3.12	SOMALIA	The Government of Somalia is in the process of finalising arrangements for ratifying the 1969 OAU Convention on refugees, and is already hosting over 1.5 million refugees.
3.13	SUDAN	The Government of the Sudan promised to set up a national fund to assist refugees within the Sudan. Currently Sudan is hosting over 0.5 million refugees.
3.14	TOGO	The Government of Togo is prepared to take students in its institutions of higher learning. In addition, the Government of Togo is prepared to offer employment to skilled African refugees instead of expatriates from abroad.

COUNTRYPLEDGE

3.15 TUNISIA

The Government of Tunisia agreed to consider acceding to all the international instruments on refugees in the very near future. In terms of assistance the Government of Tunisia is ready to offer food, teaching materials, medicines, doctors, technicians, etc. In addition, it will offer educational opportunities to refugees for courses in fields such as carpentry, auto-mechanics and electricity and agreed to open doors for refugees seeking education in its School for the Blind.

3.16 ZAIRE

The Government of Zaire is planning to repatriate more Zairian refugees who are willing to return. Additionally, Zaire is currently hosting more than 0.5 million refugees.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 In conclusion, we fully appreciate the plight of refugees in Africa and pay tribute to all those African States which are hosting incredibly large numbers of refugees. We also congratulate all those Member States which, in the spirit of African Unity, accorded us fraternal welcome during our missions. But at the same time we would like to place on record that every new refugee situation that emerges on the continent of Africa blights the fervent hopes and aspirations of our brothers and sisters in exile and makes the progress of our work tardy. It is for this reason that our priority now should be that of designing reconciliatory measures aimed at enabling conflicting States sort out their differences amicably, so as to create conditions amenable for the return and subsequent safety of the refugees to their respective countries of origin.

Furthermore, our experience in these missions reveals that there is a tendency of failing to recognize the role played by the host countries at the initial stage of refugee influxes and before the international community is alerted of the problem. We strongly feel that such receiving countries should be regarded as the most reliable donors.

Finally, we wish to register our deep felt appreciation to all international organisations that, in the spirit of international solidarity, have always extended service to refugees in Africa.

4.2 Recommendations:

In framing these general recommendations we would like to recall two points:-

- 4.2.1 the original mandate of the OAU/BPEAR: the promotion of the resettlement and employment of African refugees and the collection, collation and dissemination of information and data on education, training and employment opportunities in Africa; and
- 4.2.2 the purpose of the mission, namely: to acquaint selected Member States of the OAU with the magnitude of the current refugee problem in Africa and to make an on-the-spot assessment of the African refugee problem with a view, inter alia, to promoting the principle of "burden-sharing".
- 4.2.3 Within the general frame-work of these two points we submit the following recommendations:

- I. Although a substantial number of the Member States we visited had acceded to the international instruments concerning refugees; some had not. We therefore recommend: all Member States of the OAU that have not yet done so should as a matter of priority, ratify all the said instruments.
- II. The issues of "work permit" and "return clause" do not apply in many countries we visited. However, we recommend: in those countries where these issues are a prerequisite for the welfare of refugees, governments of such countries should liberally allow refugees to benefit from them.
- III. Although most Member States we visited informed us that they do not charge economic fees, a few of them do so with regards to refugees sponsored by various international organisations. Taking into consideration the financial constraints facing refugees, we recommend: economic fees be waived regardless of the sponsor. We further recommend: this recommendation be effectively implemented.
- IV. Some of the States that expressed willingness to open doors for refugees in need of education and training facilities pointed out that they have no employment opportunities to give to refugees on completion of their study programs. Hence, we recommend: the OAU/BPEAR in collaboration with the UNHCR and related bodies explore the possibility of channelling refugees trained in the countries referred to above to other countries which may be in need of such trained manpower.
- V. We acknowledge the willingness expressed by several Member States to naturalize refugees who have lived in their countries for a long time. We, therefore, recommend: Member States be more liberal in granting citizenship to refugees who have lived in these states for a long time.

- VI. Several countries we visited stated that they had materials and personnel assistance lined up for despatch to whichever African country or countries with refugees that happen to need this assistance; but added that they were not in a position to bear the transportation costs. It is, therefore, recommended: the OAU/BPEAR establish contact with countries and organisations that could be in a position to bear such transportation costs.
- VII. Some of the countries we visited have taken the initiative to establish National Special Funds for the benefit of refugees that have sought sanctuary in these states. We pay tribute to these states, and we recommend: other Member States consider setting up national refugee funds to which their own nationals can contribute. We also recommend: a special fund aimed at catering for emergency needs of refugees be established within the OAU General Secretariat.
- VIII. Given the fact that Africa hosts more than half of the world's total refugee population, the assistance it receives is relatively inadequate. We therefore, recommend: the OAU General Secretariat appeal to the UNHCR Office to consider increasing its commitment and assistance to the African refugees commensurate with the gravity of the refugee problem on the Continent.
- IX. In some countries we visited, the notion of enlarging the circle of the OAU/BPEAR traditional donors through missions was emphasized. In this connection we welcome the idea of holding a pledging conference on Refugees in Africa; and recommend: the OAU in collaboration with the UNHCR undertake thorough preparation to ensure its success. We further recommend: the OAU establish diplomatic

contacts with both the traditional and potential donors for the purpose of sensitizing them with the issues and options regarding the pledging conference.

- X. We recognize the part conflicts between neighbouring countries play in creating and perpetuating the refugee problem on the Continent. We therefore, recommend: priority be given to instituting reconciliatory measures aimed at enabling conflicting neighbouring States in the spirit of African Unity to solve their differences peacefully.
- XI. We fully recognize the excellent co-operation existing between the OAU/BPEAR and the UNHCR through its Regional Liason Office in Addis Ababa. We, thus, recommend: efforts be made to strengthen similar relationships between the OAU/BPEAR and UNHCR Branch Offices in other African States.
- XII. The Governments we visited appreciated the issue of establishing OAU/BPEAR "national refugee machineries" but deplored the inadequate allowance that the OAU has been offering the National Correspondents. We, therefore, recommend: in order to boost the activities of these "national refugee machineries" the allowance of the OAU/BPEAR National Correspondents be reviewed to fit in the present day reality.
- XIII. We feel that the missions we undertook to the countries mentioned in this report yielded fruitful results in the sense that several Governments made a number of concrete commitments and pledges for the African refugees. We therefore, recommend: the OAU/BPEAR mount a follow up of these pledges and submit regularly progress reports to the OAU Commission of Fifteen.



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