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REPORT OF THE 18TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE OAU
COMMITTEE ON ASSISTANCE TO MEMBER STATES

IN AFRICA
MALAWI. 1-8 JUNE 1988

DRAFT REPORT OF THE 18TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE OAU
COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES IN
AFRICA, MANGGCHI MALAWI, 1-8 JUNE 1988

OPENING

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1. The 18th ordinary session of the OAU Coordinating Committee on Assistance

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to Refugees in Africa was officially opened on Thursday 2 June, 1988 by Hon. E.C.J. Bwanali, MP, Minister of Health of the Republic of Malawi, under the Chairmanship of Rev* Dr. Ismael Ncko of the Lutheran World Federation.

2. In his statement, the Minister, on behalf of the Life President of Malawi,

Ngwazi Dr. Kamuzu Banda, welcomed participants and observers to the meeting and wished them a happy stay in Malawi. He drew the attention of the Committee to the ever increasing number of refugees in Africa, a situation that has assumed alarming proportions. He attributed the phenomenon of asylum-seeking to civil strife, drought and famine on the continent* The Minister remarked that because of the current global economic crisis which has adversely affected the continent, Africa has continued to find it more and more difficult to adequately cater for the needs of refugees.

3. He commended the work of the OAU Commission of 15 on Refugees and of the OAU Bureau for Refugees and pledged Malawi's support for the OAU's efforts in finding durable solutions to the problem of Refugees. The Minister disclosed that in the last half of 1986, Malawi experienced increased influxes of refugees from Mozambique in the wake of banditry activities which have continued to cause untold human suffering and extensive damage to property. He further disclosed that to date Malawi is host to over 500,000 Mozambican refugees and this figure is in fact on the increase as in other countries of the Southern region.

4. He stated that prior to 1986, the Government of Malawi was solely responsible

for the care and maintenance of the refugees.

5. He pinpointed land shortage as one of the main problems facing the government in its efforts to cater for the needs of the refugees. In addition, a number of social and economic facilities have been ever stretched as a result of the large influx of refugees into the country. He disclosed that the government of Malawi has

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acceded to the 1951 UN Convention, its 1967 Protocol on Refugees as well as
ratified the 1954 GAU Convention Governing the specific Aspects of the
Refugee
Problems.

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6. The Minister paid tribute to the various voluntary and other international
organisations and the international community for the various forms of assistance
extended to the government of Malawi. He finally called on the OAU to tackle the
root causes of the Refugee problem in Africa.

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7. The OAU Assistant Secretary-General in charge of Political Affairs,

H.E. Ambassador Yilma Tadesse, in his statement also welcomed participants and
observers to the meeting. He conveyed the regret of the OAU Secretary
General,

Mr. Ide Gumarou, for his inability to be present in Malawi due to other equally
pressing issues affecting the continent. He expressed the OAU's appreciation and
thanks to the Life President and people of Malawi for the generous facilities placed
at the disposal of participants.

8. Ambassador Yilma Tadesse identified apartheid in South Africa, the destabilisation
policies of the racist Pretoria regime, the activities of the South African backed
armed bandits and the illegal colonial occupation of Namibia as the main
causes of
the refugee problem in Southern Africa. This situation has consequently led to

a humanitarian crisis in Southern Africa.

2. He recounted the efforts of the OAU to address this situation including the call
for the convening of the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees
and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa scheduled to be held in Oslo, Norway, from
22 to 24 August 1988.

10. The Assistant Secretary-General disclosed that the OAU in cooperation

on with UN,
UNHCR and UNDP have since last year established a Steering Committee
to deal with
all policy issues relating to the preparations for the Conference. He appealed to the
various Non-Governmental Organisations to endeavour to attend the Conference at
a very high level.

11. On the OAU Coordinating Committee, the Assistant Secretary-General recalled the decision of the OAU Commission of 15 on Refugees to review the role and activities of the Committee in light of the continued failure of the Committee to carry out some of its responsibilities especially with regard to the funding of the operational activities of the Bureau for Refugees.

12. He touched on the documentation for the meeting indicating that the documents deal basically with the activities of the OAU Bureau for Refugees in favour of refugees in Africa.

13. The Assistant Secretary-General paid tribute to Malawi and the other Southern African countries for their determination to provide for the needs of the refugees and displaced persons in the region despite their own problems. In conclusion, he announced that following the visit of the mission of the OAU Commission of 15 on Refugees to Malawi last year and resulting from the concern of the OAU over the plight of the refugees in the country and the burden placed on the country, the OAU had decided to make a financial contribution of US\$50,000 to support the efforts of the government of Malawi in providing for the emergency needs of the refugees.

14. The Assistant Secretary-General added that an officer from the OAU Bureau for Refugees would soon be visiting Malawi to consult with the authorities on the possibility of establishing income generating projects in favour of the refugees.

15. Finally, he appealed to international organizations and voluntary agencies

to increase their assistance to Malawi to enable her to cope more effectively with the refugee problem.

16. The Chairman of the OAU Commission of 15 on Refugees, H.E. Lt. General B.N. Mibenge who is also Ambassador of Zambia to the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, also made a statement to the Committee.

17. On the situation in Southern Africa, Ambassador Mibenge associated himself with the sentiments expressed by the Assistant Secretary-General over the

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worsening situation of refugees in Southern Africa in general and in Malaw
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cular. He reiterated that the denial of human and other basic rights by the
Pretoria
regime has contributed significantly to the problem of refugees in Souther
n Africa.

18. Ambassador Mibenge reviewed the refugee situation in Africa outlining the efforts of various Member States concerned to tackle the root causes of the problem.

He specifically pointed out the positive developments taking place in Eastern and Central Africa and the rapprochement between the parties to the conflict in the Horn and the Sudan. He called on the international community to continue to encourage these moves in order to achieve durable solutions to the refugee problem on the continent.

19. The Ambassador finally expressed the gratitude of the OAU to voluntary and international organizations for the assistance they continue to give to Africa and appealed to them to increase this assistance.

20. After these statements, the Chairman thanked the Minister, Hon. Bwanali, for sparing his valuable time to open the session. He, on behalf of the Committee and observers requested the Minister to convey to H.E. the Life President of the Republic of Malawi, Ngwasi Dr. Karnusu Banda, the thanks and gratitude of the Committee for the reception and hospitality extended to all participants and observers.

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Earlier on Wednesday 1 June, members of the Committee and observers visited Chiumbagami Refugee camp in Mangochi District.

21. AGENDA

After minor amendments the Committee, adopted the following agenda.

1. Opening

i) Statement by Hon. E.C.I. Bwanali, M.P.,

Minister of Health.

ii) Statement by H.E. Ambassador Yilma Tadesse,

OAU Assistant Secretary-General in charge of Political Affairs.

iii) Statement by H.E. Ambassador B.N. Mibenge,
Chairman of the OAU Commission of Fifteen on Refugees.

2. Adoption of proposed agenda

3. Organization of work

4. Election of the Bureau for 1988/1989.

5. Statement of outgoing chairman.

6. Consideration of the report on the activities of the OAU Bureau for Refugees.

7. Progress report on the preparation for the international Conference on the

Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa.

8. Individual reports on the activities of members of the OAU Coordinating Committee on Assistance to Refugees.

9. Individual reports on the activities of observer organization/agencies to the OAU Coordinating Committee on Assistance to refugees.

10. Any other business.

11. Visit to some refugees camps in Malawi. (MANGCHCHI, NSANJE and DEDZA

DISTRICTS)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

22. The Committee agreed to the following working hours
Morning - 09.00-13.00

Afternoon - 14.00 - 19.00

ELECTION OF THE BUREAU FOR 1988/89

23. The Representative of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia proposed the following organizations to constitute the Bureau for 1988/89. It was seconded by the representative of the World Health Organisation. The Committee unanimously endorsed the proposal-

1. Chairman - Mr. B.J.B. Mpyisi - (ILO)

2. Vice-Chairman - Bishop C.K. Bamwose- AACC

3. Rapporteur - Mr. Tom Kataika - CARITAS

4. Secretary -

24. After the election, the outgoing Chairman, Dr. I. Hoko congratulated the new Chairman and his Bureau on their election. He paid tribute to the government and people of Malawi for the typically African hospitality extended to refugees from a sister State. He exhorted the committee and the CAU to continue to interact in their common effort to solve the problem of refugees in Africa. The outgoing Chairman noted with satisfaction the steps currently being deployed by member States concerned to tackle the root causes of the refugee problem. Thereafter, the representative of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia paid a glowing tribute to Dr. Ncko, for his dedicated service to the Committee and Africa as a whole. His personal commitment to the cause of African refugees and gentle nature have endeared him to the entire membership of the Committee. In seconding the motion, the representative of Amnesty International remarked that during the period that Dr. Hoko was Chairman, there were many positive developments on the refugee scene as well as in the field of human rights on the continent. He wished Dr. Hoko every success in the years ahead.

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Progress Report on the Activities of the OAU Bureau for Refugees -

Document BR/CO-CTTEE/78 April 1987 - May 1988

25* In his introduction of this item, a representative of the OAU Secretariat reviewed the general refugee situation in Africa since the Committee's last session in Monrovia, Liberia, in March, 1987. The representative of the Secretariat informed the Committee that in independent Africa there has been a wind of change blowing through the refugee scene in the sense that there have been efforts by affected Member States to tackle the root causes of the refugee problem. In the Horn, some Member States that had been in conflict resulting in refugee influxes have recently reconciled their differences to the point of restoring diplomatic relations.

26. The misunderstanding between the two sister States of Libya and Chad assumed a new and positive dimension recently when the former decided to recognise the government in Ildjamena with a pledge to repatriate Chadian prisoners of war in Libya to their country.

25. In North Africa, two states which had been in conflict over the Western Sahara, namely, Algeria and Morocco decided to restore diplomatic relations after a break of almost twelve years. In addition, the two States have undertaken to work for a durable solution to the problem. The representative of the Secretariat disclosed that a number of Zimbabwean refugees in Botswana had registered to return home following the declaration of a general amnesty by the Government of Zimbabwe. A similar positive development relating to negotiations to end the conflict is currently unfolding in the Sudan.

27. He next drew the attention of the Committee to the commendable efforts of the Uganda Government to bring back home her nationals who have been living in other countries as refugees. These positive developments, the representative of the Secretariat remarked, are in the right direction and should be encouraged and supported to enable these refugees to return to their countries of origin so that they can

n live normal
and dignified lives once again.

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29. On the Southern African situation, the representative of the Secretariat reiterated that the root cause of the refugee problem in this region is apartheid coupled with Pretoria's support for the surrogate gangs operating in, especially, Angola and Mozambique.

He reminded the Committee of the brutal activities of the bandits which have left thousands of people dead, others displaced within and outside their countries of origin, drawing attention of the Committee to the recently published report on Mozambique by the US Government. He disclosed that currently there are about 6 million displaced persons in Southern Africa.

30. In concluding this part of the report, he appealed to the International Community to bring pressure to bear on the Pretoria regime to dismantle its abhorrent policy of apartheid, and end its policy of destabilisation of Governments in the Frontline and neighboring

States.

31. The Representative of the Secretariat then drew the attention of the Committee to the second part of the Report which dealt with the activities of the Bureau for Refugees in the area of Education and training, Research and Placement and Information dissemination.

32* On Education and Training, the attention of the Committee was drawn to the fact that because of lack of funds, the OAU Bureau for Refugees has not been able to provide scholarships to as many refugees as it would have wished to do. Member States of the OAU have not been able to provide scholarships to refugees either, because of economic problems.

33* On the imposition of economic fees, the Committee was informed that the Commission of X 5 on Refugees has taken up this matter with the Member States concerned with an appeal to them to waive these fees.

34* In the area of Research and Placement, he informed the Committee of the

research work that had been carried out during the period under review by the Bureau for Refugees on the refugee situation in twenty nine Member States. Additionally, an exercise is currently under way to categorise all OAU Resolutions dealing with the refugee situation in Africa.

35. In connection with the placement of refugees, the Committee was informed that a number of countries which had pledged to offer employment opportunities to refugees have been contacted with an appeal to them to expedite action on the placement of qualified refugees. Additionally, the Bureau for Refugees has since 1986 funded a total of 28 income generating projects in favour of Refugees worth US\$25,238.82. Meanwhile, the OAU Bureau for Refugees has identified some other OAU Member States where income generating projects in favour of refugees would be established.

36. On the dissemination of information, the Committee was informed that the Bureau's Newsletter "African Refugees" remains the main organ for such an activity.

He drew the attention of the Committee to constraints of the Bureau for Refugees in this area of refugee service because of the shortage of funds as well as personnel.

37. The third part of the report which dealt with the efforts of the Bureau for Refugees to implement recommendations of the last session of the Committee dwelt on such issues as the review of the Membership of the Committee, contributions to the operational budget of the Bureau for Refugees, the need for Member States to provide Primary Health care for Refugees and the admission of the Association of African Universities into the membership of the OAU Refugee Scholarship Committee.

38. On the final part of the report, the representative of the Secretariat also informed the Committee of the envisaged International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa enumerating its objectives and the preparatory activities that have so far been carried out by the Steering Committee.

39. The representative also informed the Committee about some of the meetings and conferences that staff members of the Bureau for Refugees have participated in during the past year.

40. In a complementary report on the preparations for the said International Conference, the Assistant Secretary General in charge of Political Affairs informed the Committee that various aspects of the preparatory activities have in fact been finalised by the Steering Committee. These included documentation and the adoption of a Public Information Plan, invitation to Member States of the OAU and UN and to various International and Non Governmental organizations.

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41. The Assistant Secretary-General singled out the role of voluntary agencies for commendation and remarked that it was in recognition of this role that the Steering Committee had decided to establish a Contact Group comprising ICVA, INTER-ACTION, FAVDO and AACC to articulate IGO views as far as Conference is concerned. Besides, ICVA would be making a statement on behalf of the NGO Community, tie conducted by appealing to invited NGGs to insure a high level and effective participation in the said conference.

GENERAL DEBATE

42. in the debate that ensued, the Committee made general remarks, sought and obtained clarifications on various issues regarding the International Conference.

The Committee commended the Bureau for Refugees for the very informative and detailed reports. Special note was taken of the Bureau's brilliant coverage of the Refugee Situation on the Continent. The Committee also took note with satisfaction the efforts being made by CAU Member States concerned to tackle the root causes of the refugee problem on the continent and appealed to the OAU Commission of 15 on Refugees to continue with their efforts to help find durable solutions to the Refugee problem.

43* on the question of Education and Training for refugees in Africa, an issue that generated a great deal of interest and debate, the Committee noted the inability of many organizations to fund the education of refugees because of high tuition and other fees charged by various institutions in some OAU Member States. In the same vein, the Committee observed that sometimes refugees have had to be sent to private schools because there were no vacancies in government educational institutions which charged lower fees.

44Â« The Committee further observed that there were still some OAU M

ember States

which continue to charge economic fees thus limiting the capacity of organisations to sponsor more students. But at the same time, countries within Southern Africa were noted to have waived economic fees on refugees.

45.Â« The Committee expressed concern over the fact that most of the time trained refugees cannot secure jobs and expressed the hope that Member States of the OAU, Organizations and refugee serving agencies would consider providing employment to such trained refugees.

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46. The observer from the Federal Republic of Nigeria informed the Committee of a programme in her country which involved the attachment of South African refugees to various business establishments and parastatals to enable them to acquire the needed skills. The salaries of such refugees are normally paid by the sponsoring agencies.

47* The United Nations Commissioner for Namibia also has similar bilateral arrangements, but the Committee felt there should be a mechanism whereby Member States could be approached by other organisations with similar employment schemes for refugees.

45. Another issue was the need for refugees to be given education relevant to the educational system obtaining in their countries of origin. In the same vein, whenever possible, refugees should be placed in schools or institutions in areas close to their countries of origin to avoid possible dangers of alienation.

49* The Representative of the UNHCR assured the Committee that his office was committed to providing primary education for all refugee children. Opportunities also existed within its programme for adult education and the provision of higher education for deserving refugees. Regarding the kind of primary education provided to refugees, he stated that UNHCR has normally provided education similar to that obtaining in the country of asylum. A notable exception however is the current situation in Malawi where the Mozambican curriculum is being followed in camp schools for the Mozambican refugees,

50* The OAU Secretariat clarified the position of the OAU as far as the granting of scholarships to refugees is concerned, indicating that need and the ability of a refugee to obtain a job or be self-reliant after training were some of the criteria used by the OAU in awarding scholarships to refugees.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

51. The committee took note of the activities of the OAU Bureau for the Refugees in the area of education and training of refugees and the constraints faced by the latter in the provision of more scholarships to refugees because of the lack of funds. Note was also taken of the high tuition and other fees charged to refugees in certain Member States of the OAU. It also recognised the need for refugees to be given the type of education that would make them self employed or employable. In this connection the Committee RECOMMENDED:

i) Member States of the OAU concerned should consider waiving economic fees in favour of refugees \ they should also consider providing places in their educational institutions for refugees. In this regard the Committee

appealed to the OAU Commission of 15 to pursue these issues with concerned Members States and to keep the Committee informed of the outcome.

ii) Sponsoring organizations should consider placing refugee students in educational institutions with systems that relate to those obtaining in their countries of origin in order to avoid possible dangers of alienation.

iii) Refugee serving organizations should promote basic and integrated education for the refugees in order to provide them with certain basic skills which will facilitate their integration in their countries of asylum and enable them to find a point of entry into the economies of their countries of origin when they eventually return home.

iv) Member States should consider devising a well thought out policy in the provision of education within the framework of the resources available to governments, bearing in mind the needs of the refugees as well as the manpower requirements of Member States.

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RESEARCH

52. On the Research activities of the OAU Bureau for Refugees, the Committee advised the Bureau to identify areas where research was needed to facilitate better policy making and programme development for refugees.

53. The attention of the Secretariat was drawn to the recommendation made during the session of the Committee held in Harare, Zimbabwe, calling upon the Bureau for Refugees to make use of the various Universities on the Continent and to involve the relevant Faculties in its research activities.

54. A number of organisations informed the Committee of their research activities and said they were prepared to collaborate with the OAU Bureau for the Refugees in this area of refugee service. It was, however, noted that funding was very vital if institutions in Member States were to carry out research work for the Bureau for Refugees.

The Assistant Secretary General in charge of Political Affairs also disclosed to the Committee that there were moves within his Department to carry out research work on various issues of concern to the continent in so far as this research work would be relevant in the discharge of the duties assigned to the OAU Secretariat. He cautioned against research which is merely done for academic purposes emphasizing that research work must be practical and should lead to help in the understanding and solution of problems facing the Continent.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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56. The Committee took note of the role of NGOs and other agencies involved in the provision of humanitarian and developmental assistance in Africa. However, it was further noted that not all these experiences and work in the region are sufficiently documented and disseminated. The Committee therefore RECOMMENDED as follows:

i) The work and experience of these agencies, namely the work and experience regarding the health of refugees and/or displaced persons be monitored, documented, and evaluated in a systematic manner in accordance with the relevant system(s) of the country concerned and disseminated.

ii) The OAU Bureau for Refugees should, as soon as possible, collect data and evaluate the different governmental infrastructures established within Member States to address refugee needs.

iii) The root causes of the refugee problem in Southern Africa and the search for durable solutions should be well documented by the GAU/bureau for Refugees.

iv) The OAU Bureau for Refugees should consider undertaking research work on the integration of refugees into national development programmes such as education, health care and employment indicating the areas of conflict and complementarity between refugee needs and those of nationals.

v) In pursuit of these recommendations, the Committee further Recommended that the OAU Bureau for Refugees should utilise the expertise of the Universities within Africa in its research activities.

vi) The assistance of members of the Committee should be sought in terms of research work and funding.

vii) The Bureau for Refugees should identify areas of priority for research into refugee situations and their causes and should communicate these to the Committee. The Committee in turn should provide the Bureau for Refugees with their publications on refugees and their plans for initiating research into

these priority areas.

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EMPLOYMENT OF REFUGEES/INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES

57. The Committee took note of the difficulties the Bureau for Refugees continues to face in securing employment opportunities for refugees in Member States of the CAU. These difficulties, it was observed, stem from the problem of unemployment facing most African countries but in some cases because of the difficulties in obtaining work permits for refugees as aliens, in this connection, the Committee once again expressed satisfaction with OAU's promotion and funding of income generating projects in favour of refugees.

58. The Committee therefore RECOMMENDED as follows;

- i) The promotion of income generating activities should be linked to thorough market research to ensure available and regular markets for the products from such projects.
- ii) Refugee serving organisations should consider absorbing qualified refugees, with special attention also be given to the possibility of attaching qualified refugees to the public or private sectors in Member States of the OAU in order to enable the refugees to acquire the necessary skills.
- iii) Member States should consider issuing work permits to refugees without undue constraints.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

59. The Committee appreciated the constraints facing the Bureau for Refugees in terms of inadequate personnel to man the information Unit. Consequently, the Committee RECOMMENDED as follows:

- i) There is a crying need to increase the number of officers within the information unit.
- ii) There is also the need for regular exchange of information between the Bureau for Refugees and the members of the Coordinating Committee on the one hand,

and between the OAU Bureau for Refugees and other voluntary organizations on the other hand.

iii) The Bureau for Refugees should update its mailing list in order to widen the area of circulation of its Newsletter "African Refugees".

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60. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE PLIGHT OF REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

61* On the forthcoming International Conference, the Committee appreciated the recognition given to the role of NGO's by the OAU. Clarification was sought and obtained as to the venue, fit GO participation and documentation.

62. The Committee noted the importance of the Conference to NGO's and wondered whether there would be a forum for NGG interaction during the Conference. The Assistant Secretary General who had earlier briefed the Committee drew its attention to the fact that the Conference would last only 3 days; thus, its duration does not allow for exhaustive exchange of views among the NGO's. He, however, assured the Committee that the views of the NGO's would be properly articulated by ICVA which would be addressing the Conference on behalf of the NGG community.

63. On the relationship between the envisaged Conference and ICARA II, the Committee was informed that whereas the latter dealt with refugees on the whole continent and was a pledging Conference, the forthcoming Conference would address a new and specific problem within one of the sub-regions of the continent, and besides, it was not a pledging Conference as such.

64. The Committee took note of the importance of the said International Conference not only to Africa but also to the international community including Non-Governmental Organisations. It also took note with satisfaction the role assigned to the NGG community in the Conference.

65. In light of the above observations, the Committee RECOMMENDED as follows:

- i) Non-Governmental Organisations should participate effectively and at high level in the said International Conference.
- ii) Non-Governmental Organisations should consider increasing their assistance

to refugees and displaced persons as well as the countries of asylum.

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MEMBERSHIP OF THE GAU COORDINATING COMMITTEE/

FUNDING OF OPERATIONAL BUDGET OF
THE BUREAU FOR REFUGEES

65. On the decision of the OAU Commission of 15 on Refugees to open up the Membership of the Committee to new Members, the Chairman gave a background leading to the decision, borne of the issues he stressed were:

- i) the inability of the Bureau for Refugees to carry out its operational activities due to lack of funds; and
- ii) the failure of the Coordinating Committee to fund over the years budgets which it has itself helped to prepare.

66. After these preliminary remarks by the Chairman, a number of delegations wondered why the Bureau had not prepared a programme of activities for presentation to the Committee. Such a programme, they opined, would have assisted the Committee in reaching

certain decisions especially on the provision of funds for the operational activities of the Bureau.

67. ~~As~~ in reaction to this observation, the Secretariat informed the Committee that this approach had, indeed, been the practice in the past; but because of the chronic failure of the Committee to even consider contributing the minimum to the budget of the Bureau, the practice has had to be stopped.

The Secretariat further recalled its frustration over this matter and the decision of the OAU Commission of 15 on Refugees to recommend to the OAU Council of Ministers the establishment of a Special Refugee Contingency Fund to enable the OAU Bureau for Refugees to carry out its operational activities. This Fund, it was explained, amounted to 1% of the total budget of the OAU in any given year. The expenses related to the award of scholarships to refugees, the establishment of income generating projects as

well as the publication of the Newsletter: "African Refugees" have all been met from this Fund.

69. In a collaborative statement, the Chairman of the OAU Commission of 15 on Refugees endorsed the Secretariat's information. He added that indeed the Commission at one point almost took a decision to abolish the Committee altogether. However, such

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a decision was postponed pending the submission of a report by a Sub-Committee of the Coordinating Committee on the whole question of fund raising to meet the operational needs of the Bureau for Refugees.

79. On the legal position with regard to fund raising or contributions to the operational budget of the Bureau, the Chairman felt that in the understanding of the Commission of 15 on Refugees, it was part of the responsibility of the Committee to contribute to the operational budget of the Bureau. He reminded the Committee that the Commission was still expecting the Sub-Committee's Report.

71. The Chairman also raised a number of issues related to the implementation of the recommendations of the previous session of the Committee, namely, the failure of the Secretariat to present documents to the Committee a month or so in advance as had been directed and the absence of a list indicating the invited observer organisations.

72. The Chairman of the Coordinating Committee in reaction to the queries raised by the Chairman of the Commission of 15 on Refugees, stated that the Sub-Committee met once since its establishment but had not yet completed its work. The Committee, therefore, directed that the Sub-Committee should continue with the exercise to enable it

to work out modalities on how funds could be raised for the operational activities of the Bureau. The Committee also requested the Sub-Committee to report to it during its next session.

73* The Representative of the All Africa Conference of Churches, His Lordship Bishop Bwamose, in a solemn statement drew the attention of the Committee to the serious nature of the refugee situation in Africa. He took note of the efforts of the various organizations including the OAU to tackle this problem of refugees in Africa. In this connection, he emphasised the need to maintain the OAU Coordinating Committee as an operational organ and partner of the OAU. He, therefore, appealed to both bodies to

continue to stress the factors that unite them in their common effort to serve Africa's refugees and displaced persons. The two bodies, he observed, needed each other and that the channels of communication between the two bodies should always be kept open.

Following this, the Committee endorsed the statement of the representative of the AACC.

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74* The Committee also noted the efforts of the Sub-Committee established to work out modalities for raising funds to support the activities of the OAU Bureau for Refugees.

It also took note of the fact that the task assigned to the sub-committee had not yet been completed. It regretted the absence of a work programme from the OAU Bureau for Refugees which would have enabled the Committee to consider contributing to some of the activities of the Bureau.

RECOMMENDATIONS

75, The Committee, thus, RECOMMENDED as follows

i) The sub-committee should continue with its work and report to the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee.

ii) The OAU should provide a programme of work indicating the financial implications and present such a work programme to the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee for consideration.

in this regard, the assistance and advice of members of the Bureau of the Committee resident in Addis Ababa should be sought.

iii) Those members of the Coordinating Committee who have the means to contribute to the operational budget of the Bureau for Refugees should continue to do

so. Furthermore, the OAU Bureau for Refugees should write officially to all

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organisations that participated as observers in the 10 Ordinary Session of the Committee inviting them to consider becoming members of the Committee.

These organisations should be provided with the Rules of Procedure of the OAU Coordinating Committee as well the criteria for membership of the OAU Coordinating Committee to enable them to make up their minds on the question of membership of the Committee.

This matter will be taken up by the .Committee aLits next_sessionJnl96S.

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AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES RIGHTS

76. The Committee took note with satisfaction the entry into force in October 1988 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the election of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the decision by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU to establish a Secretariat of the Commission in Banjul, Gambia. The Committee therefore RECOMMENDED that:

- i) the OAU Commission should continue to urge Member States that have not yet done so to consider ratifying the said charter and to adhere strictly to the provisions of the said charter; and
- ii) the Bureau for Refugees should consider making available to the Committee the reports of the Human and Peoples' Rights Commission.

77* At the end of the debate and following the Observations and Recommendations, the Committee adopted the Report of the Bureau for Refugees for the period April 1987 to May 1988.

REPORT OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE AND OBSERVERS

Members of the Committee and Observers presented individual reports on the activities of their organisations in favour of refugees. The said reports were circulated among member organisations and are available at the OAU Bureau for Refugees.

Reports from observer organisations are also available at the Bureau for Refugees.

These reports would be summarised by the Secretariat and circulated to all members of the Committee as well as to interested non-members.

DATED AND VENUE

The determination of the date and venue of the 18th session was left to the secretariat it being understood that consultations would be held between the Bureau for Refugees and the Bureau of the Coordinating Committee.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8U. The Representative of the Lutheran World Federation drew the attention of the Committee to the US State Department Report on Mozambique and requested for its circulation for the information of members. The Committee was informed by the Secretariat that indeed such a report had been circulated to all Member States of the OAU during the Session of the OAU Council of Ministers. In addition, copies were made available to the members of the Coordinating Committee and Observers alike. The Committee recommended that the Commission of 15 on Refugees should monitor developments in this matter.

VISITS TO REFUGEE CAMPS IN NSANJE AND DEDZA DISTRICTS

£1* The members of the Committee as well as observers spent two days after the discussions visiting a number of refugee camps in the Nsanje and Dedza districts of Malawi. The members and observers were accompanied by the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Dr. Karnvanzina, Principal Secretary, Office of the President and Cabinet as well as Party Officials.

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The visits afforded the members and observers the opportunity to assess on the spot the gravity of the situation facing Malawi. It was observed that in Nsanje District there were over 2000 new arrivals from Mozambique in a single day while another 5000 arrived in the Mulanje district on the day of the visit to the camps.

83. The problems currently facing Malawi include shortage of water supply, and health as well as educational facilities. It was, however, observed that despite her own problems Malawi was determined to share her own resources with nationals of a Sister State. The Committee therefore again appealed to the international Community to extend increased assistance to Malawi. Malawi was commended for her generous and humanitarian policy towards the refugees.

fter the visits, and there being no other business, the Committee's work closed on

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