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Sixth Report on the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Report

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1. Introduction

1. This report gives a brief summary of the main activities of the Office of the High Commissioner since the previous report transmitted to the Council of Europe in September 1956.

2. In accordance with the provisions of Article 2 of the Statute, the activities of the Office have been based on the principle that its work should be of an entirely non-political character but humanitarian and social, and that its duty is to provide international protection and promote permanent solutions for refugees to help them to resume a normal life.

3. During the period under review the main problem confronting the Office has been the Hungarian refugee emergency which began at the end of October 1956. Under the terms of Resolution 1129 (XI) of the General Assembly of the United Nations, this Office was called on to co-ordinate assistance to these refugees. Thanks to the concerted effort of Governments, the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration and the League of Red Cross Societies and other voluntary agencies, it has been possible to provide emergency aid and care and maintenance to nearly 200,000 Hungarian refugees who had entered Austria and Yugoslavia by 1st September 1957 and to resettle some 160,000 of them in other countries. A special tribute is due to the Governments of Austria and Yugoslavia for having generously granted asylum to the large numbers of Hungarian refugees who presented themselves at their frontiers.

4. This Office was faced with a second emergency when, owing to events which took place in the Middle East towards the end of 1956, several thousands of persons formerly residing in Egypt, who qualified as refugees within the mandate, required assistance for resettlement elsewhere, and needed emergency aid while in transit in countries which granted them asylum while awaiting final resettlement.

5. The Office has carried on its current activity of international protection on behalf of the refugees within its mandate, who, it should be recalled, may be distinguished from those within the competence of the Special Representative of the Council of Europe, in that they are outside their country of nationality or former habitual residence and do not enjoy the same rights as nationals of their present country of residence. The number in Europe alone still exceeds 1,000,000.

6. This Office has also continued the programme of the United Nations Refugee Fund which is essentially designed to provide permanent solutions for non-settled refugees, with special emphasis on those in refugee camps. As of May 1957 some 30,000 refugees were benefiting from the programme, while the refugee camp population in Austria, Germany, Greece and Italy decreased from 84,750 on 1st January 1955 to 50,330 on 1st January 1957[1]It is, nevertheless, expected that partly owing to the anticipated deficit of 82,700,000 in the 816,000,000 target for governmental contributions to UNREF, there will by the end of 1958 still be 30,000 refugees in camps for whom permanent solutions will be required. Accordingly, the Economic and Social Council, at its twenty-fourth Session recommended, in its Resolution 650 (XXIV) contained in Annex III, that the UNREF Programme should be intensified and that the General Assembly authorise the High Commissioner to appeal to Governments for further funds required to ensure the closure of refugee camps.

7. The Economic and Social Council also recommended to the General Assembly, in its Resolution 650 (XXIV), that the Office of the High Commissioner be prolonged for a further period of five years beyond 31st December 1958, when its present mandate expires.

8. Throughout the period under consideration very close liaison has been maintained with the Council of Europe whose most effective co-operation, particularly in connection with the Hungarian refugee emergency, has been invaluable.

2. The problem of Hungarian refugees

Summary of the problem and results achieved

9. On 28th October 1956 the first considerable number of refugees from Hungary arrived in Austria. The daily rate increased until it reached its peak between 20th-26th November, when more than 46,000 Hungarian refugees arrived in Austria. The influx then gradually decreased. As many arrivals were unrecorded, the total number of refugees is not precisely known, but it appears that, as of 1st September 1956, nearly 180,000 Hungarian refugees had entered Austria. About 6,000 had been repatriated, 152,000 had been resettled and over 20,000 were still in that country.

10. The influx into Yugoslavia, which began at the end of October 1956, assumed larger proportions in the second week of January 1957. It then gradually decreased. As of 1st September 1957, a total number of nearly 20,000 Hungarian refugees had entered Yugoslavia, 2,700 had been repatriated, 11,700 had been resettled and 5,500 were still in that country, including 600 who had established themselves locally.

11. At the outset, three major problems arose : to provide emergency aid to the refugees most of whom came over without any belongings; to ensure their care and maintenance on a more permanent basis insofar as they could not be resettled straight away, and, thirdly, to relieve the disproportionate burden falling on the Governments of Austrian and later Yugoslavia, by finding resettlement opportunities for the largest possible number of refugees and obtaining the funds needed for their care and maintenance.

12. The problem of Hungarian refugees was considered by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its second emergency special session in November 1956, and at its eleventh ordinary session. The Assembly passed three resolutions (No. 1006 ES II, No. 1129 (XI) and No. 1039 (XI)) under which it entrusted to the Office of the High Commissioner the task of co-ordinating international assistance to Hungarian refugees, of assessing their needs and of making joint appeals, together with the Secretary-General, for offers of resettlement and financial contributions.

1. Excluding new refugees from Hungary.

13. Two such appeals were made. In response to them, an amount exceeding ten and a half million U. S. dollars was received by or promised to U. N. H. C. R. to date, as shown in detail in Appendix I. Very effective contributions have been made by members of the Council of Europe through the Council itself and independently, of which this Office is most appreciative. Of the private contributions amounting to some U. S. $710,000, U. S. $420,000 were received from the Lord Mayor's Fund in London and U. S. $140,000 from the United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

14. Details concerning the emergency aid and care and maintenance arrangements in which the League of Red Cross Societies has played a major r&le, are given in the following sections concerning Austria and Yugoslavia respectively.

15. With regard to repatriation, the Office of the High Commissioner, in accordance with its statute, assists refugees in voluntarily returning to Hungary when they express a wish to do so. Repatriation Missions from Hungary have visited camps and centres in Austria and Yugoslavia to interview refugees who wished to return. A neutral observer from this Office was present during these interviews to ensure that the refugees could take their decision without any pressure from any side. Furthermore, refugees who have expressed the wish to be repatriated are given the opportunity, before their final departure from Austria or Yugoslavia, to change their decision if they so desire.

16. It may be estimated that, as of 1st September 1957, a total of about 12,000 Hungarian refugees had returned to Hungary from Austria, Yugoslavia and other countries.

17. The resettlement of the refugees has been organised by governments, in the great majority of cases with the very effective help of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (f. C. E. M.). As of 1st September 1957, a total of over 160,000 Hungarian refugees had been resettled in countries of second asylum in Europe and overseas. The resettlement within a short lapse of time of such a considerable number of refugees would have been impossible if most of the countries had not considerably relaxed the immigration criteria in respect of these refugees. Special mention should be made of the admission by Denmark, Norway, and Sweden of some 350 difficult cases including their dependents.

18. Particular attention has been paid to the special problems raised by the position of unattached youth. In consultation with the Austrian and Yugoslav authorities, a special procedure has been put into force for the authorisation of the movement, whether for emigration or for repatriation, of youth below 18 years of age.

Hungarian Refugees in Austria

19. Emergency aid, which was of the greatest importance in the reception of the refugees in the border area, was supplied by the League of Red Cross Societies and other voluntary agencies. Within Austria, the activities of the many voluntary agencies were co-ordinated by the Branch Office of the High Commissioner in conjunction with the Austrian Ministry of the Interior. At UNHCR Headquarters, Geneva, a special co-ordinating committee was set up under the chairmanship of the High Commissioner, which included representatives of the European Office of the United Nations, of the World Health Organisation, of the Council of Europe and the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, of the International Red Cross, of the Administration of the United States Escapee Program, of the League of Red Cross Societies and of the other voluntary agencies working for refugees.

20. The responsibility for providing care and maintenance to the Hungarian refugees fell in the first instance on the Austrian Government. Refugees were accommodated in disused buildings, some of which had to be adapted at considerable cost to the Austrian Government, as well as in hotels, boarding houses and similar institutions. From 15th December 1956, however, the League of Red Cross Societies undertook to provide food, clothing and first aid for Hungarian refugees in designated camps. This commitment was progressively extended, with financial assistance from this Office, to include all camps accommodating more than 500 refugees. The responsibility for providing care and maintenance in these camps for the period 1st July to 30th September 1957 was taken over by the Austrian Red Cross, with continued assistance from the League of Red Cross Societies.

21. The major part of the expenditure, involved has been borne by the League itself and by the national Red Cross societies. The funds required were contributed largely as a result of public appeals in many countries.

22. The financial burden carried by the Austrian Government has been considerably lightened by the care and maintenance operation undertaken by the League of Red Cross Societies and by direct cash contributions to the Austrian Government, mainly for care and maintenance and accommodation expenditure, made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees, totalling nearly S4,500,000 as a result of their joint appeals. In addition, several Governments have given bilateral assistance. The United States Government in particular has contributed agricultural surpluses to a value of 810,000,000 from which the Austrian Government expects to receive net proceeds of $7,700,000. It is thus expected that all expenses which will have been incurred by the Austrian Government for the reception and care and maintenance of Hungarian refugees up to the end of 1957 will be covered by international contributions.

23. It is estimated that unless additional immigration quotas are granted some 14,000 Hungarian refugees will still be in Austria on 31st December 1957. It is likely that 8,000-10,000 of these will either be unable or not wish to emigrate from Austria.

24. To meet their long-term needs, the UNREF Executive Committee at its fifth session approved a permanent solutions programme, at a cost to this Office of 83,500,000. This programme includes housing projects, as well as projects to provide small loans and to assist refugee youths, university students, intellectuals and other groups.

25. The UNREF Executive Committee had already approved, at its fourth session, long-term projects in the amount of U. S. $290,000 mainly to benefit young Hungarian refugees who it was felt should be removed from the social and moral dangers of camp life, while awaiting opportunities of emigration or integration.

26. In order to assist in the planning and implementation of projects for Hungarian refugee youth, an educational adviser was seconded by UNESCO to the UNHCR Representative in Austria. His advice has been of the greatest value.

Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia

27. In agreement with the Yugoslav Go- j vernment, a provisional UNHCR Branch Office was opened in Belgrade on 15th February 1957, The Yugoslav Government authorised I, C. E. M. and a number of international voluntary agencies to operate in Yugoslavia within the framework of the activities of the UNHCR Branch Office, with a view to giving supplementary assistance and to facilitating the resettlement of Hungarian refugees.

28. Emergency aid to Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia is supplied by the Yugoslav Red Cross with the assistance of the League of Red Cross Societies and by the other voluntary agencies.

29. The Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia have been accommodated in camps and centres and, during the winter, in tourist hotels not in use at that time, The Yugoslav Government has incurred considerable expense with regard to the adaptation and furnishing of camps and centres.

30. The League of Red Cross Societies has made a very considerable contribution towards the cost of care and maintenance borne by the Yugoslav Government. In consultation with this Office, it was arranged that the League of Red Cross Societies would, from 1st March to 30th September 1957, provide basic food, clothing and medical supplies for up to 17,000 refugees, distribution to be undertaken by the Yugoslav Red Cross. It is estimated that the contribution of the League of Red Cross Socle--ties during this period, plus the assistance given by voluntary agencies, will represent a considerable saving for the Yugoslav Government,

31. As of 1st September 1957, this Office had paid, committed or reserved a total amount of approximately U. S. $1,750,000 for assistance to Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia, in addition to the funds obtained by the League of Red Cross Societies from other sources. The Yugoslav Government is, however, still faced with unrecovered expenses, estimated by this Office at more than $7,000,000 by the end of 1957.

32. In the light of present resettlement possibilities, it is hoped that most of the 6,500 Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia who have applied for emigration may be resettled by the end of 1957. It is important that enough resettlement possibilities are found for these refugees shortly, particularly since their present accommodation is inadequate for the wintor.

3. International protection

33. The Office lias continued its activity ! of international protection which the High | Commissioner considers one of the most impor- j tant ones entrusted to this Office. This acti-vity, it will be recalled, primarily consists of action to promote the ratification of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refu-gees and the inclusion in other intergovernmental instruments of specific references to refugees where necossary, and, on the other hand, in efforts to promote where necessary, the improvement by governments of their legislation and administration regulations insofar as they affect refugees.

34. The number of refugees who come within the competence of the High Commis- I sioner and require protection to a varying extent according to the country in which they reside, still exceeds 1,000,000 in Europe alone. In the course of 1956, a considerable number acquired a new nationality and ceased to come within the mandate of the Office. In Austria, some 30,000 refugees of German ethnic origin had acquired Austrian nationality in accordance with the Option Law of 2nd June 1954. A further number in Austria, which cannot yet be estimated, acquired German nationality under the German Federal Law of 2nd February 1955. An estimated 20,000 refugees within the mandate of U. N. H. C. R. were naturalised in other European countries, including 4,000 in Germany, 4,500 in Sweden and nearly 4,000 in the United Kingdom. On the other hand, however, the influx of new refugees, particularly in Austria and Italy, has continued since the last report was submitted to the Council of Europe. The rate of influx actually increased in the course of 1957, particularly during the last few months, so that the total number of refugees within the mandate in Europe increased rather than decreased. (Not taking into account the influx of Hungarian refugees, data on which are contained in Section II of this report,)

35. Since the last memorandum drafted for the Council of Europe, the following States have ratified the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees : the Republic of Ireland j on 30th November 1956 and Liechtenstein on i 8th March 1957. In addition, the Government of Morocco made a declaration to the Secretary-General on 7th November 1956, to the ' effect that it assumed the obligation arising out of the ratification of the 1951 Convention by the French Government and that it considered itself, therefore, a party to the Convention.

36. The following twenty-one States are now parties to the Convention : Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Ecuador, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Holy See, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

37. Under the terms of arrangements made with the Governments concerned, the Office participates to a varying degree in the determination of the eligibility of refugees, which is particularly important as it is the condition for the granting to refugees of the rights and benefits provided by the 1951 Convention, other intergovernmental instruments and relevant national legislation. Meanwhile, arrangements to this effect have been taken in Austria, Belgium, Egypt, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Morocco and the Netherlands. In some cases the UNHCR representative is entrusted with eligibility determination. In many cases the UNHCR representative is a member of the Governmental Commission which determines eligibility, or at least attends a meeting as an observer, and is given an opportunity of making representations on behalf of deserving cases. In most of the countries concerned, the representative of the High Commissioner is given similar facilities in cases where a refugee is threatened with expulsion or subject to a domiciliary ban.

38. While there has been an increase in the influx of new refugees during the period under review, there has also been an increase in the number of refugees who are already residing in a given country and who apply for recognition of refugee status. This is largely due to the fact that formal recognition of refugee status is required in most countries for refugees to be entitled to the benefits of the 1951 Convention, and to benefit under the German Laws on indemnification of victims of persecution.

39. Among the fields in which the Office is seeking improvements in the situation and status of refugees, particular mention should be made of the right to work and of travel facilities for refugees.

40. At the time of ratifying the 1951 Convention, the Austrian Government made a reservation to the effect that paragraphs 1 and 2 (a) of Article 17 concerning wage-earning employment be considered as recommendations. As a result of administrative measures taken by j the Austrian Government, several categories of refugees have been exempted from the requirement of an employment permit in order to take up paid employment, subject to certain conditions.

41. Refugees included in UNREF projects for integration in Italy are already receiving residence and work permits. Furthermore, the Italian Government has issued a declaration to the effect that refugees within | the mandate of the High Commissioner who, as of 27th March 1957, did not receive assistance from the Administrazione Aiuti Internazionale or from USEP, and had either resided | at least three years in Italy or had a wife or children of ftalian nationality, would receive a residence permit valid for an indefinite period, and permission to enable them to take up salaried employment or to carry out commercial activities or establish themselves as artisans subject to the relevant regulations.

42. Furthermore, most countries which have granted asylum to refugees from Hungary have accorded to them the right of employment which they have undertaken to grant to refugees under the 1951 Convention, and in some instances they have given these refugees additional facilities.

43. The travel documents provided for by the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees are now issued by the following signatory Governments : Austria, Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, | and the United Kingdom. A general under- i taking to recognise all travel documents issued in accordance with the Convention has been given by the following states, non-parties to the Convention : Argentina, Ceylon, China, I Colombia, Cuba (for transit only), Dominican ' Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Leba- j non, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Portugal and Vene- | zuela. A number of other governments have signified their recognition of the documents so far issued.

44. By a decree of 13th September 1956, the Government of Chile has undertaken to put into effect the provisions of the Agreement relating to the Issue of a Travel Document to Refugees of 15th October 1946, and will issue to refugees resident in Chile the document provided for by that Agreement.

45. During the period under review, the following further action has been taken by European Governments towards the facilitation of refugee travel.

46. France has concluded bilateral agreements with Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, similar to the agreements existing between the countries of the Benelux Union, exempting refugees from the requirement of an entry visa. According to these agreements, refugees holding a valid travel document issued under the provisions of the 1951 Convention by one of the signatory countries can travel to the other signatory country without the requirement of a visa, for a stay not exceeding three months. These agreements, concluded on 15th February 1957, came into force on 15th May 1957. It is hoped that other European countries will adopt similar measures in the near future for the exemption of refugees from the requirement of visas.

47. The French Government has waived the requirement of entry and exit visas for refugees resident in France who hold the Convention travel document. The Government of Austria has undertaken to grant entry visas free of charge to refugees travelling to Austria on a visit, or in transit for another destination, provided they hold a travel document issued in accordance with the 1951 Convention by a State which has adopted a similar practice. The Government of Norway has decided to grant entry yisas free of charge to refugees holding refugee travel documents issued by States whose nationals do not require visas for entry into Norway.

48. The Council of Europe has closely cooperated with the Office of the High Commissioner in this particular field by including a particular clause for facilities of travel by refugees in its recommendation concerning the simplification of frontier formalities. At its fifth session the UNREF Executive Committee recommended in this connection that the High Commissioner should continue his efforts to facilitate travel by refugees, especially in conjunction with action taken by the Council of Europe and the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation for the simplification of frontier formalities.

49. Further progress has also achieved in ; various countries, the promotion of education j facilities for refugees, and in granting the refugees social security benefits under the European i Social Security Agreements sponsored by the j Council of Europe.

4. Promotion of repatriation and resettlement

General Remarks

50. Under the terms of the Statute, the Office of the High Commissioner should facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees | who come within its mandate. The Office is j not authorised by the General Assembly to undertake operational tasks connected with j the repatriation or resettlement of refugees nor has it been provided with funds for these activities,

51. The Intergovernmental Committee for | European Migration (I. C, E. M.) is closely co-operating with the Office of the High Commissioner in the field of resettlement and carried out the movement of the largest proportion of refugees within the mandate of this Office \ who are in a position to emigrate. Its co- | operation has been particularly effective in | the Hungarian refugee emergency when it played a major r61e in ensuring the speedy j transportation of the large numbers of Hungar- ! ian refugees arriving in Austria. The Migra- ' tion Committee is also carrying out the evac-] uation of refugees of European origin from j China via Hong Kong, where the Committee i and U. N. H. C. R. have a joint representative i for this purpose.

Repatriation

52. In accordance with the terms of the Statute and the provisions of Resolution 925 (X) adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth session, the Office has continued to ensure the protection of refugees in connection with repatriation. At the request of the High Commissioner the Governments of the countries of residence of refugees inform Branch Offices of any intended visit of a repatriation mission, and invite them to send a representative to accompany the mission, in the capacity of an impartial observer, to see that no undue influence is exercised on the refugees from any side.

53. In the case of individual refugees applying to the Office or one of its Branch Offices for repatriation, they are referred to the appropriate authorities of their country of origin.

54. According to information received by this Office, it is estimated that some 2,700 refugees within the mandate, excluding new refugees from Hungary, returned to their countries of origin in the course of 1956, as shown in the following breakdown :

55. Austria - 270

56. Belgium - 50

57. China - 1.000

58. France - 150

59. Germany - 650

60. Greece - 90

61. Italy - 200

62. United Kingdom - 250

63. Near and Middle East - 40

64. Total - 2.700

Resettlement

65. Negotiations between this Office and European Governments have resulted in the development of intra-European resettlement schemes enabling permanent solutions to be found for approximately 2,500 refugees (excluding new Hungarian refugees for whom details may be found in Section II and Appendix I of this report).

66. The intra-European migration schemes have offered particularly favourable opportunities to refugees who do not come within the category of " difficult cases " but who are nevertheless unable, because of physical or social handicaps, to participate in normal migration programmes. Such schemes for dif-ficult-to-(re)settle cases sometimes require the provision of a small resettlement grant to help establish a family which is economically weak or to provide for a period of rehabilitation in the country of immigration. A project in an amount of 850,000 to provide such grants was authorised for implementation by the UNREF Executive Committee at its fourth session.

67. The Office, in conjunction with the administration of the United States Escapee Program, has been able to negotiate resettlement schemes under which 401 refugees have been admitted to Belgium from Greece, 74 from Turkey and approximately 150 from ftaly. Many of these refugees came within the diffi-cult-to-(re)settle category.

68. During 1956 the Swedish scheme for the admission of a thousand refugees, announced in the previous report to the Council of Europe, was successfully concluded. Under this programme the Government of Sweden admitted, without resettlement grants from U. N. R. E. F., refugees suffering from tuberculosis and their dependents, as well as physically and socially handicapped family units. In the autumn of 1956 a Swedish mission visited Greece and Turkey at the suggestion of the Office and selected an additional twenty-five refugees suffering from tuberculosis, together with their dependents, for treatment and permanent settlement in Sweden.

69. Resettlement of 205 refugees in France and 407 refugees in the Netherlands was carried out during 1956 under schemes negotiated by the Office.

70. In the course of 1956 a total of 36,351 refugees within the mandate of this Office emigrated under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (I. C. E. M.) (excluding Hungarian refugees) mainly to the following countries : United States 22,591, Israel 5,358, Australia 2,941 and Canada 1,896, as shown in more detail on the table contained in Appendix IV.

71. The increase in the number of refugees resettled can be attributed largely to the accelerated implementation of the United States Refugee Relief Act of 1953 in the period preceding its expiry on 31st December 1956. A further contributing factor has been the development of the intra-European migration schemes referred to above, particularly those of the Governments of Sweden and Belgium.

72. According to provisional estimates a total number of 15,800 refugees coming within the mandate of this Office have been resettled under the auspices of I. C. E. M. during the first six months of 1957 (excluding new Hungarian refugees). This number includes 1,100 refugees who benefited from schemes for intra-European resettlement.

5. The programme of the United Nations Refugee Fund (U. N. R. E. F.)

73. The UNREF Programme which was authorized by the General Assembly of the United Nations in October 1954 reached its peak activity in the course of 1957.

74. It will be recalled that the programme was mainly designed to achieve permanent solutions for the non-settled refugee population, which on 1st January 1955 amounted to approximately 300,000, including 84,750 refugees in camps in Austria, Germany, Greece and Italy. A relatively small part of the United Nations Refugee Fund was intended to provide emergency aid to the neediest refugees, including the care and maintenance of refugees of European origin in China and in transit in Hong Kong, and the settlement in homes and institutions of the so-called " difficult cases, " i. e. the aged and chronically sick who cannot support themselves.

75. It is the policy of the High Commissioner that the refugee should be enabled freely to choose the solution which he most favours : repatriation, resettlement or integration. The activities of the Office in the field of repatriation and resettlement have been described in Section IV. As the majority of the refugees who wished to be resettled in other countries and who were able to satisfy their immigration criteria have been moved, the UNREF programme is of necessity primarily a programme of local integration in those countries with the highest number of non-settled refugees, and of refugees in camps. The High Commissioner, nevertheless considers that efforts could he further pursued, and possibly intensified, to promote the resettlement of those refugees who wish to emigrate. This could be achieved in particular by looking upon a refugee family as a unit. It might thus be possible for those members of a refugee family who, considered individually, do not comply with the selection criteria of immigration countries, to be supported by other members of the family and be admitted together with them. Mention should be made in this connection of the recently adopted amendment to the United States Immigration and Nationality Act (1952), Section 12 of which provides for the admission, under certain conditions, of persons with close relatives in the States.

76. In accordance with decisions taken by the UNREF Executive Committee at its fourth and fifth sessions held during January and June 1957, projects to a total value of 86,474,664 were authorized for implementation within the Revised Plan of Operations, 1957. 84.5 per cent of this amount is being used for permanent solutions, with the following allocation : Austria 82,252,359; Germany 8928,976; Greece 81,239,986; Italy 8559,880 : 8.5 per cent is being used for the settlement of difficult cases; 5 per cent for the Hong Kong operation and 2 per cent for emergency assistance.

77. Of the $16,000,000 which is the target for governmental contributions to the Fund over the four-year period 1955-1958 for which it was established, a total amount of 810,240,751 has been contributed, whether promised or paid, to date, in accordance with the list of contributions appearing in Appendix ff. As of 1st April 1957 some 30,000 refugees were benefiting under projects within the programme and over 10,000 had been firmily settled.

78. In accordance with the policy laid down by the UNREF Executive Committee full emphasis continues to be placed on the achievement of permanent solutions for refugees living in camps in Austria, Germany, Greece and Italy, where the greater part of the UNREF programme is being carried out. Their number decreased from 84,750 on 1st January 1955 to 50,330 on 1st January 1957, owing inter alia to the direct and indirect effects of the UNREF programme. The total number of beneficiaries under the programme, however, is smaller than had been anticipated at the time when the programme was established, and it has now become evident that it will not be possible to complete the programme by the end of 1958. This is due partly to the shortfall of $2,700,000 to the target of $16,000,000 for governmental contributions, partly to the influx of

new refugees and in particular to the Hungarian refugee emergency which necessarily slowed down the implementation of some of the projects, and partly to the fact that the most suitable refugees have been selected for existing projects and the achievement of permanent solutions for the remaining refugees involves a higher cost. An intensification of the programme will now be necessary if permanent solutions are to be found for all the refugees living in camps.

79. In a re-appraisal of the UNREF programme (Document A/AC.79/72) which was submitted to the Executive Committee at its fifth session, it was estimated that by the end of 1958 there would still remain some 30,000 refugees living in camps in Europe for whom it would not be possible to achieve permanent solutions, and that even if the shortfall of $2,700,000 in governmental contributions were made up before that date, a further amount of $4,800,000 would be required in order to complete the UNREF programme. At its fifth and sixth (special) sessions the UNREF Executive Committee considered this matter and adopted Resolution 6 requesting the High Commissioner to " intensify to the fullest extent possible his programme of permanent solutions in order to benefit the maximum number of refugees remaining in camps without losing sight of the need to continue to seek solutions for the problems of refugees outside camps "

80. The Economic and Social Council endorsed the request made to the High Commissioner by the Executive Committee in Resolution No. 6. In its Resolution No. E/RES/650 (XXIV) contained in Appendix III, the Council recommended " that the General Assembly authorize the High Commissioner to make an appeal to States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies for the purpose of raising funds needed for closing the refugee camps ".

81. When the General Assembly considers this matter at its Twelfth Session it will have before it the results of the survey which is being undertaken at the request of the UNREF Executive Committee to ascertain full demographic data concerning the non-settled refugees living in those countries where the major part of the UNREF programme is being carried out. The non-settled refugees include several thousand difficult cases and approximately 14,000 European refugees in China. The settlement of difficult cases and the care and maintenance of refugees of European origin who are being moved from China under the joint UNHCR/ICEM operation are part of the UNREF programme. The intensification of the UNREF programme, however, provides for the closure of the refugee camps and financial provision will have to be made separately for the settlement of difficult cases and for the continuation of the Hong Kong operation after 3ist December 1958. In recent months a new problem has arisen in that refugees of European origin in China have been granted exit permits by the Chinese authorities at a considerably higher rate than previously, thereby increasing the number of refugees requiring care and maintenance while in transit in Hong Kong and increasing the cost of transport. An appeal for additional funds to continue the Hong Kong operation has been adressed by the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration to Governments concerned with the support of the Office of the High Commissioner. It is very much hoped that the necessary funds will be contributed Lo permit the continuation of the Hong Kong operation.

6. Conclusions

82. In transmitting this report to the Council of Europe, the High Commissioner would like to stress the great importance which he attaches to the continued protection of refugees within his mandate and, in particular, to the further improvement of their status wherever necessary.

83. As a result of the concerted efforts of Governments concerned and organizations, it has been possible during the period under review to go a long way towards the solution of the Hungarian refugee problem. It is the objective of the High Commissioner to complete the solution of the Hungarian refugee problem by the end of 1957. Further resettlement opportunities will have to be made available in order to achieve solutions for an estimated 14,000-17,000 Hungarian refugees for whom there is no practical possibility of becoming integrated in Austria and Yugoslavia. It is very much hoped that Members of the Council of Europe will continue to play their part in admitting additional numbers of Hungarian refugees within the near future.

84. With regard to the other non-settled refugees and in particular the refugee camp population, an inspiring example to other governments could be set by members of the Council of Europe in increasing their contributions to U. N. R. E. F. to make up the shortfall of $2,700,000 in governmental contributions to U. N. R. E. F., and in assisting the Office of the High Commissioner in obtaining such further funds as may be needed to ensure the closure of all refugee camps, at present estimated at U. S. $4,800,000. Here again further offers of resettlement will not only permit of permanent solutions to be achieved more quickly, but may also reduce the overall cost involved in the completion of the UNREF Programme.

85. In this connection, the High Commissioner must emphasize that once the primary objective of the UNREF Programme, that, is, the closure of refugee camps, is achieved, there will still be the problem of the non-settled refugee population outside camps, including, in particular, European refugees in China and difficult cases. Financial provision will have to be made separately to achieve a solution of their problems.

86. In conclusion the High Commissioner would like to pay a sincere tribute to the Governments of Members of the Council of Europe who have assisted him in carrying out his task and particularly in dealing with the Hungarian refugee emergency, as well as to the many voluntary agencies and, in particular, the League of Red Cross Societies which was awarded the Nansen Medal for 1957 for its outstanding achievement in providing assistance to the Hungarian refugees.

Appendix 1 APPENDIX I

Country	Financial Contribution paid up or promised in American Dollars	Number of Hungarian Refugees within each country of	1st July 1957	Number of Hungarian Refugees within each country of	1st September 1957
Federal Republic of Germany					
—	14.500 (a)	14.500 (a)			
Argentina	—	900	1.150		
Australia	44.671,39	9.600	11.730		
Belgium	—	4.700	5.270		
Brazil	15.000,—	900	1.260		
Cambodia	8.571 (b)	—	—		
Canada	676.843,75	32.850	36.000		
Chile	—	250	280		
China (Republic of)	50.000 (c)	—	—		
Columbia	—	200	220		
Costa Rica	—	3	3		
Cuba	45.000,	—	8 10		
Denmark	30.000,	—	840 840		
Ecuador	—	1	1		
Spain	—	15	20		
United Slates of America	5.000.000,—	33.640	35.410		
Ethiopia	10.000,—	—	—		
Finland	—	1	1		
France	100.000,—	8.510	8.470 (a)		
Guatemala	5.400,—	—	—		
Indonesia	10.000, (c)	—	—		
Iraq	—	1	1		
Ireland	—	540	540		
Iceland	—	60	60		
Israel	—	2.030	2.070		
Italy	—	1.520	1.400		
Laos	2.857,14	—	—		
Liberia	6.000,—	—	—		
Luxembourg	5.000,—	160	170		
Morocco	4.283,57	—	—		
Nicaragua	—	4	4		
Norway	41.999,16	1.430	1.430		
New Zealand	14.001,68	920	980		
Pakistan	(no estimato yet to hand) (c)	—	—		
Netherlands	2.694.735, (d)	3.270	3.270		
DominicanRepublic	—	580	580		
Rhodesia et Nyassaland (Federation)	10.025,82	6	30		
United Kingdom	42.005,05	15.400	14.370 (a)		
Sweden	96.830,02	5.760	6.180		
Switzerland	1.081.775,70	10.560	10.690		
Tunisia	2.857,14	—	—		

Country	Financial Contribution paid up or promised in American Dollars	Number of Hungarian Refugees within each country of	1st July 1957	Number of Hungarian Refugees within each country of	1st September 1957
Turkey	—	510	340		
Union of South Africa	—	1.320	1.330		
Uruguay	—	30	30		
Venezuela	—	320	440		
Council ofEurope	2.900,12	—	—		
Privateources	709.271,32	—	—		
	10.710.027,86 (e)	151.339	159.080		

(a)Unfirmed estimate.

(b) Contributionpromised but not yet paid up.

(c) Estimated value of promised contributions in kind,

(c for profit or loss on exchange operations.

Appendix 2 APPENDIX II

Status of contributions from Governments to UNREF — 1957

Up to 10th September, 1957, official notification has been received from Governments of their intention to make contributions to UNREF in 1957 of the amounts stated.

Country	Promises S	Pledges S	Payments S
Austria			
		6,000	
Belgium		82,500	117,500
Canada	17,000		191,464*
Denmark			72,390
Dominican Republic			5,000
France			257,143
Germany	200,000		
Italy		3,000	
Luxembourg			3,000
Netherlands			96,000
New Zealand	70,000		
Norway	70,000		14,000
Sweden			115,987
Switzerland			116,822
Turkey		4,286	
Royaume-Uni		56,000	224,000
United States of America.		726,686	600,000**
	357,000	872.472	1,819,306
		3,048,778	
U. N. A. special contribution.			410,507

* First payment on 1957 UNREF contribution.

** Appropriation for first part of 1957.

Appropriation for second part of 1957 and 1958, 82,233,000.

Out of the special Swedish contribution paid in 1956, $1,288,281 is available for the 1957 programme.

Appendix 3 APPENDIX III

Resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council -650 (XXIV). Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

A - The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, with the attached reports of the United Nations Refugee Fund Executive Committee on its fourth, fifth and sixth (special) sessions[2],

Takes note of the report prepared by the High Commissioner for transmission to the twelfth regular session of the General Assembly.

989th plenary meeting,

24th July 1957.

B - The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling that the General Assembly, in its Resolution 727 (VIII), of 23rd October 1953, decided to review, not later than at its twelfth regular session, the arrangements for the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, with a view to determining whether the Office should be continued beyond 31st December 1958;

Noting that the United Nations Refugee Fund Executive Committee, in paragraph 79 of the report on its fifth session[3], unanimously decided to recommend that the Office of the High Commissioner be continued for a further period beyond 31st December 1958;

Recognizing that the need for international action on behalf of refugees will persist after that date;

Appreciating the valuable work which has been performed by the Office of the High Commissioner in this regard,

1. Considers that the Office of the High Commissioner should be continued for a period of five years from 1st January, 1959;

2. Recommends that the General Assembly review, not later than at its seventeenth regular session, the arrangements for the Office of the High Commissioner, with a view to determining whether the Office should be further continued.

989th plenary meeting,

24th July 1957.

C - The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing the value of the United Nations Refugee Fund programme in achieving solutions for the problems of refugees;

Noting the progress achieved in the implementation of the programme;

Recognizing the importance of achieving permanent solutions for the refugees in camps as quickly as possible;

Considering that the closure of the refugee camps will be practicable only to the extent that adequate funds are made available;

Having considered the report of the United Nations Refugee Fund Executive Committee on its sixth session (special) and, in particular, Resolution No. 6[4]adopted at that session,

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2. E/3015 and Add. 1 and 2.
3. E/3015/Add. 1.
4. E/3015/Add. 2, Annex.

1. Endorses the request made to the High Commissioner in that resolution to the effect that he should intensify his programme to the fullest extent possible in order to achieve permanent solutions for the maximum number of refugees remaining in camps, without losing sight of the need to continue to seek solutions for the problems of refugees outside camps;

2. Recommends that the General Assembly authorize the High Commissioner to make an appeal to States Members of the United Nations and of the Specialized Agencies for the purpose of raising funds needed for closing the refugee camps.

989th plenary meeting,

24th July 1957.

Appendix 4 APPENDIX IV

Area of Emigration	Country of immigration													
	Total Uan.1956 to 31 Dec. 1956	**Argentina**	**Australia**	**Brazil**	**Canada**	**Chile**	**Israel**	**New Zealand**	**Rhodesia**	**Union of South Africa**	**United States**	**Uruguay**	**Venezuela**	**Others**
Austria	10,087	10	1,081	44	1,012	14	5	3	3	—	6,751	—	13	1,151
Germany	8,958	1	393	16	484	3	9	—	2	—	7,875	—	8	167
Greece	1,628	—	49	10	60	15	7	18	5	1	1,287	—	7	169
Italy (incl. Trieste)	2,275	4	452	16	105	12	—	1	2	5	1,187	3	48	440
Netherlands	90	—	68	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	11	—	—	—
Hong Kong	1,142	6	362	203	24	74	100	1	—	—	79	—	6	287
Others	12,351	5	536	34	211	16	5,237	21	12	19	5,401	12	29	818
TOTAL														
1 January- 31 December 1956	36,531	26	2,941	323	1,896	134	5,358	55	24	25	22,591	15	111	3,032