



Recommendation 953 (1982)¹

23rd Report on the Activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (1 January 1980 - 31 December 1981)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering the 23rd Report on the Activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1 January 1980-31 December 1981) ([Doc. 4911](#)) and the report of its Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography in reply ([Doc. 4947](#)) ;
2. Appalled by the continued increase in the number of refugees and displaced persons in various parts of the world ;
3. Welcoming the recent conclusion of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, which, while emphasising the exceptional character of temporary refuge, considered that, in situations of large-scale influx, asylum seekers should be admitted at least on a temporary basis ;
4. Encouraged by the fact that an increasing number of states have adopted the procedures for determining refugee status in accordance with the relevant recommendation of the UNHCR Executive Committee, and hoping that an effort will be made to reach speedy decisions on applications by shortening as far as possible determination procedures ;
5. Convinced that more attention should be given to the living and working conditions of refugees in countries both of temporary and permanent asylum ;
6. Appreciating the support given by member governments of the Council of Europe to the High Commissioner, expressed through financial contributions, political encouragement and a generous response to resettlement appeals ;
7. Reaffirming, as in its [Recommendation 907 \(1980\)](#), the need for states to co-operate with the High Commissioner in the exercise of this protective function, inter alia :
 - 7.1. by ensuring that refugees are fully protected against forcible return to a country where they have reason to fear persecution ;
 - 7.2. by taking all necessary measures to ensure personal safety of refugees and asylum seekers, in particular by protecting them against physical violence and piracy attacks on the high seas ;
 - 7.3. by acceding to the international instruments relating to refugees and ensuring the effective implementation of these instruments ;
8. Aware of the political and financial needs of the High Commissioner in performing his fundamental humanitarian tasks ;

1. Assembly debate on 2 October 1982 (14th Sitting) (see [Doc. 4947](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography). Text adopted by the Assembly on 2 October 1982 (14th Sitting).



9. Expressing its great appreciation for the work of the Office of the UNHCR, the results of which have warranted in 1981 the high recognition of the Nobel Peace Prize,
10. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the governments of the member states :
 - 10.1. to continue to assure and, whenever possible, to strengthen their support for the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on behalf of refugees and displaced persons, in particular by maintaining high standards for the international protection of refugees and displaced persons ;
 - 10.2. to facilitate the action of the High Commissioner in promoting durable solutions to the refugee problem, inter alia by granting permanent asylum wherever possible, and by continuing to provide and, where necessary, to increase resettlement opportunities ;
 - 10.3. to fight recent developments in the policies of several countries tending to assimilate the situation of the refugee with that of the ordinary alien or migrant worker and to apply too restrictively the criteria for refugee status ;
 - 10.4. to take account, in their policies, of the recent conclusion of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, which, owing to the present state of the refugee problem, considered that in situations of large-scale influx, asylum seekers should be admitted at least on a temporary basis ;
 - 10.5. to make an effort to clarify and to shorten, as far as possible, procedures for determining refugee status, in order to obtain a speedier decision, without at the same time dispensing with essential procedural guarantees ;
 - 10.6. to continue to assure and, whenever possible, to increase their level of participation in the financing of UNHCR's activities, with a view to enabling it to fulfil its humanitarian programmes ;
 - 10.7. to ratify as soon as possible the European Agreement on the Transfer of Responsibility for Refugees, opened for signature in October 1980 and, up to now, ratified by Norway, Portugal and Sweden, and to pay due regard to Recommendation No. R (81) 16 on the Harmonisation of National Procedures relating to Asylum, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 5 November 1981.