Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 698 (1979)[1]

Situation of South-East Asian refugees

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Expressing its grave concern at the serious situation of refugees in South-East Asia, and the fact that large numbers of persons have left their country of origin in order to seek asylum elsewhere ;

2. Deploring the circumstances which have given rise to the movement of a large number of refugees from South-East Asia, and acutely concerned by the violations of human rights which continue to take place in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos ;

3. Noting, in particular, that these refugees have, in many cases, been refused even temporary asylum and have been sent back to the high seas, or to their country of origin, where they are often exposed to high risks ;

4. Concerned that the majority of these refugees are living in overcrowded conditions dangerous for their health ;

5. Noting that, since mid-1975, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has arranged for the resettlement of over 185 000 Indo-Chinese refugees, but that over 300 000 are still in need ;

6. Aware that the number of resettlement places available to the High Commissioner has increased since October 1978 from 53 000 to 125 000 but that this increase is in the present crisis insufficient to cope with the steady increase in the number of refugees ;

7. Welcoming the endeavours of these countries which have already accepted a certain number of refugees ;

8. Welcoming the proposal for the organisation of an international conference in the framework of the United Nations to deal with this problem ;

9. Taking note of the decision of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries of the European Community to ask the High Commissioner for Refugees to hold such a conference ;

10. Believing that the governments of the Council of Europe member states should do everything in their power to improve the lot of these refugees and take appropriate political action to diminish the risk of the situation deteriorating any further,

11. Invites :

11.1. all the governments of the Council of Europe member states :

a. to take positive action at national level in order to increase the number of places available for resettlement ;

b. to increase their contributions to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees ;

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1. See Doc. 4381, report of the Committee on Migrations, Refugees and Demography. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 28 June 1979.

c. to contribute towards a solution of the political problems in South-East Asia ;

d. to support the proposal of holding an international conference on South-East Asian refugees within the framework of the United Nations ;

11.2. the member governments of the European Community in particular, to make an immediate special effort to contribute food and other material aids to those countries offering a first home to the refugees of South-East Asia ;

12. Calls upon all members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to contribute, by their personal action, to the solution of this grave problem faced by all humanity.