

Aware of the fact that the majority of refugees are children and women,

Bearing in mind that unaccompanied refugee minors are among the most vulnerable and at risk of neglect, violence, forced military recruitment, sexual assault and other abuses and therefore require special assistance and care,

Mindful of the fact that the ultimate solution to the plight of unaccompanied minors is their return to and reunification with their families,

Noting the revised Guidelines on Refugee Children issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in May 1994 and the development of an emergency kit to facilitate coordination and to enhance the quality of responses to the needs of unaccompanied minors by the Office of the High Commissioner, the United Nations Children's Fund and non-governmental organizations,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the Office of the High Commissioner in the identification and tracing of unaccompanied refugee minors, and welcoming its effort in reunifying family members of refugees,

Welcoming the efforts exerted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the reunification of family members of refugees,

Noting the efforts of the High Commissioner to ensure the protection of and assistance to refugees, including children and unaccompanied minors, and that further efforts need to be exerted to this effect,

Recalling the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child⁸⁶ and the 1951 Convention⁸⁷ and the 1967 Protocol⁸⁸ relating to the Status of Refugees,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;⁸⁹

2. *Expresses its deep concern* at the continued plight of unaccompanied refugee minors, and emphasizes once again the urgent need for their early identification and for timely, detailed and accurate information on their number and whereabouts;

3. *Expresses the hope* that adequate resources will be provided for programmes of identification and tracing of unaccompanied refugee minors;

4. *Calls upon* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in cooperation with other relevant United Nations bodies, to incorporate policies that aim at preventing refugee family separation into its programmes, conscious of the importance of family unity;

5. *Calls upon* all Governments, the Secretary-General, the Office of the High Commissioner, all United Nations organizations, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned to exert the maximum effort to assist and protect refugee minors and to expedite the return to and reunification with their families of unaccompanied refugee minors;

6. *Urges* the Office of the High Commissioner, all United Nations organizations, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned to take appropriate steps to mobilize resources commensurate to the needs and interests of the unaccompanied refugee minors and for their reunification with their families;

7. *Condemns* all acts of exploitation of unaccompanied refugee minors, including their use as soldiers or human shields in armed conflict and their forced recruitment into military forces, and any other acts that endanger their safety and personal security;

8. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the United Nations Children's Fund and other United Nations organizations and international organizations to mobilize adequate assistance to unaccompanied refugee minors in the areas of relief, education, health and psychological rehabilitation;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution.

*82nd plenary meeting
12 December 1996*

51/74. New international humanitarian order

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 49/170 of 23 December 1994 and other pertinent resolutions⁹⁰ relating to the promotion of a new international humanitarian order and international cooperation in the humanitarian field,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General⁹¹ and the previous reports⁹² containing the comments and views of Governments, the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations,

Noting that a number of Governments have not yet submitted their comments with regard to the above-mentioned resolutions,

⁹⁰ Resolutions 36/136 of 14 December 1981, 37/201 of 18 December 1982, 38/125 of 16 December 1983, 40/126 of 13 December 1985, 42/120 and 42/121 of 7 December 1987, 43/129 and 43/130 of 8 December 1988, 45/101 and 45/102 of 14 December 1990 and 47/106 of 16 December 1992.

⁹¹ A/51/454.

⁹² A/37/145, A/38/450, A/40/358 and Add.1 and 2, A/41/472, A/43/734 and Add.1, A/45/524, A/47/352 and A/49/577 and Corr.1.

⁸⁶ Resolution 44/25, annex.

⁸⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 606, No. 8791.

⁸⁹ A/51/329.

Noting with deep concern the growing scale of humanitarian emergencies involving widespread suffering, loss of life and uprootedness,

Noting the corresponding increase in the burden on the international community in providing emergency relief for protracted periods while durable solutions remain evasive, to the detriment of stability and security and thereby adversely affecting economic and social development,

Bearing in mind the urgent need to ensure respect for and promotion of the principles and norms relating to humanitarian emergencies,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General for his continuing support for the efforts to promote a new international humanitarian order;

2. *Urges* Governments and governmental and non-governmental organizations that have not yet done so to submit their comments and views to the Secretary-General regarding the promotion of a new international humanitarian order;

3. *Requests* Governments to make available to the Secretary-General, on a voluntary basis, information and expertise on humanitarian issues of special concern to them, in order to identify opportunities for future action;

4. *Invites* the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues to continue and to strengthen further its activities in cooperation with the governmental and non-governmental bodies concerned, including local and regional capacity-building to respond to humanitarian problems and the search for more effective measures to increase international cooperation in the humanitarian field;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to remain in contact with Governments and non-governmental organizations, including the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues, in order to report in a comprehensive manner on the progress made by them to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session.

*82nd plenary meeting
12 December 1996*

51/75. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the activities of her Office⁹³ and the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the work of its forty-seventh session,⁹⁴

⁹³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 12 (A/51/12).*

⁹⁴ A/51/12/Add.1 and Corr.1; see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 12A*.

Recalling its resolution 50/152 of 21 December 1995,

Reaffirming the fundamental importance of the 1951 Convention⁹⁵ and the 1967 Protocol⁹⁶ relating to the Status of Refugees, in particular their implementation in a manner fully compatible with the object and purpose of those instruments, and noting with satisfaction that one hundred and thirty-two States are now parties to one or both instruments,

Commending the High Commissioner and her staff for the competent, courageous and dedicated manner in which they discharge their responsibilities,

Paying tribute to those staff members who have endangered or lost their lives in the course of their duties, and emphasizing the urgent need for effective measures to ensure the security of staff engaged in humanitarian operations,

Distressed at the widespread violations of the principle of non-refoulement and of the rights of refugees, in some cases resulting in the loss of their lives, and seriously disturbed at reports indicating that large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers have been subjected to refoulement and expulsion in highly dangerous situations,

1. *Strongly reaffirms* the fundamental importance and the purely humanitarian and non-political character of the function of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees of providing international protection to refugees and seeking permanent solutions to the problem of refugees and the need for States to cooperate fully with the Office in order to facilitate the effective exercise of that function;

2. *Calls upon* all States that have not yet done so to accede or succeed to and to implement fully the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees and relevant regional refugee instruments, as applicable, for the protection of refugees;

3. *Reiterates* that everyone, without distinction of any kind, has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution, and calls upon all States to uphold asylum as an indispensable instrument for the international protection of refugees and to respect scrupulously the fundamental principle of non-refoulement, which is not subject to derogation;

4. *Urges* States to ensure access, consistent with relevant international and regional instruments, for all asylum-seekers to fair and efficient procedures for the determination of refugee status and the granting of asylum to eligible persons;

5. *Deplores* the fact that in certain situations refugees, returnees and displaced persons of concern to the Office of the High Commissioner have been subjected to armed attack, murder, rape and other violations of or threats to their personal security and other fundamental rights, and calls upon States to

⁹⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 606, No. 8791.