

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-fourth session in October 1993, the Executive Committee highlighted the importance of addressing prevention, protection, and solutions on a comprehensive regional basis, and encouraged the High Commissioner to consult with States, international organizations, and regional bodies on possibilities for additional measures and initiatives in specific areas with complex problems of coerced population movements (A/AC.96/821, para. 19 (n)). These points were reiterated in General Assembly resolution 48/116.
2. This paper describes UNHCR's involvement in addressing certain refugee problems as part of a comprehensive regional approach, highlights the protection elements of such approaches, and indicates aspects for further discussion.
3. As the range of persons recognized to be in need of international protection has grown since UNHCR's inception, the scope of UNHCR activities has also changed from a primarily reactive approach largely focused on protection and assistance in countries of asylum to an approach in which protection, with asylum as an indispensable tool, provides the basis for a strategy of prevention, preparedness, and Solutions, with increasing emphasis on activities in countries of origin. New challenges have arisen, both for the protection of refugees and the solution of refugee problems, as forced displacement and the risk of further displacement have increased in the wake of national and communal tensions. Other migratory movements have grown larger and more complex, with serious consequences for the protection of refugees. In order to meet these challenges in specific regional contexts, comprehensive regional approaches (or "packages") have been conceived as a means of combining international protection for those who require it, the promotion of appropriate solutions -- especially voluntary repatriation -- and preventive action to remove or attenuate the causes of coerced displacement.

II. COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL APPROACHES

4. In the broadest sense, a comprehensive approach is one in which a variety of different but concerted measures are brought to bear in an effort to break the cycle of exile, return, internal displacement and exile. The ultimate goal of such an approach is to promote the overall stability of the society and respect for the rights of its citizens, including refugees and returnees, and thus to remedy the factors causing displacement. The maintenance of peace and security, the promotion of economic and social development, and respect for human rights must be considered essential elements of any fully comprehensive approach. More narrowly, the concept can be understood in terms of both the actors (governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as affected communities and individuals) and components (political, peace-keeping, humanitarian, human rights, developmental). For UNHCR, as one of the key actors in a comprehensive approach, the concept applies to the nature of the organization's action across a spectrum from protection and assistance to solutions and prevention, within a region or in response to a shared problem.
5. UNHCR's interest in comprehensive regional approaches is based on the need to adopt a global approach to problems of displacement, and the fact that the Office can, through its presence in Countries of origin as well as countries of asylum, play both an active and a catalytic role in promoting and implementing measures contributing to the prevention and solution of refugee problems. In such areas as early warning, preventive diplomacy, human rights promotion, and economic and social development, the Office may foster and, where appropriate, participate in activities in which other agencies take the lead. At the same time, UNHCR continues to ensure the international protection of refugees (as well as asylum-seekers whose claims have not yet been determined) and to monitor the safety of returnees, and to pursue assistance strategies that are consistent with broader developmental goals and meet the needs of beneficiaries without prolonging or encouraging displacement or exacerbating tensions between different groups. Assistance and, where necessary and feasible, protection for internally displaced populations may be critical components of the package of measures; by helping to stabilize their situation, they may reduce the risk of further displacement and contribute to the attainment of an overall solution.
6. The notion of "comprehensiveness" has varied according to the situation and the nature of the problem to be addressed. Given the diversity situations, there can be no universal blueprint. The nature of the measures will fluctuate, not least depending on whether the emphasis is on prevention, protection, or solutions, and all aspects may be present in varying degrees. The essence of comprehensive arrangements is that the various components should be interlocking and mutually reinforcing.
7. The internal 1992 Working Group on International Protection identified three indicators of situations appropriate for the adoption of comprehensive approaches to refugee problems and problems of refugees and large-scale displacement. These were:
 - (A) where an entire region or cluster of countries is affected by a common refugee problem or cause of flight, and where its solution implies a sub-regional or regional approach;
 - (B) where major obstacles to asylum and solutions (such as conflict or concentration of military power) are beyond UNHCR's capacity alone to influence or overcome; and
 - (C) where there is a need for UNHCR to serve as a bridge between national, regional and international initiatives to address refugee-related problems.

III. ELEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES

A. Addressing causes through prevention

8. The immediate causes of refugee movements may be readily identifiable as serious human rights violations, political and social disorders, or civil or international conflict. Specifically "refugee-producing" causes may combine with, or themselves be provoked by, seemingly endemic factors including underdevelopment and economic disruption, massive unemployment, population pressure -- perhaps aggravated by ethnic divisions -- and environmental conditions including drought, flood or famine. The tangle of factors may blur the distinction between "voluntary" and "involuntary" displacement. The outflow from a single country or region may include persons fleeing persecution, others fleeing armed conflict (which may itself include persecution), and still others seeking to escape economic deprivation; persecution may itself find expression in targeted economic measures. In order to identify the appropriate responses, a clear distinction must be made between refugees fleeing persecution and armed conflict, and migrants seeking to escape poverty.

9. The responsibility for addressing the root causes of refugee problems clearly lies in the first instance with Governments. To discharge this responsibility they may need to call upon the international community, including various multinational and international agencies and organizations. Given the wide range of causes identified, it should be evident that the capability for assisting Governments to deal with most of them is to be sought in entities other than UNHCR, and that with regard to prevention, in particular, the roles of other actors are paramount. The respective roles of UNHCR and other agencies, including the political organs of the United Nations, need to be defined in terms of the specific requirements of each situation. Protection-related elements which UNHCR may, as appropriate and necessary, contribute to a preventive strategy would include early warning, promotion of human rights -- including monitoring, training and institution-building, preventive diplomacy (particularly humanitarian diplomacy) and mediation.

10. With regard to preventive diplomacy, delineated by the Secretary-General in An Agenda for Peace (A/47/277-S/24111) as action to prevent disputes arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts, and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur, two aspects are of particular significance for UNHCR in connection with comprehensive approaches. One is the importance of impartially-provided humanitarian assistance in the increasingly frequent Situations where UNHCR finds itself working alongside United Nations peacekeeping operations in situations of internal conflict, sometimes as a part of an overall peace settlement. Secondly, peace-making can be facilitated by the humanitarian and non-political "space" created by humanitarian action on behalf of refugees and the displaced.

B. Promoting Solutions

11. The promotion of voluntary repatriation is UNHCR's entry point within any comprehensive approach for measures which constitute both a remedy for past displacement and prevention for the future. Such measures require the commitment and active engagement of the Governments directly concerned as well as other regional and international actors. As with prevention, the success of voluntary repatriation depends above all on the willingness and ability of Governments of countries of origin to discharge their responsibility for the protection of their people.

12. The protection elements in respect of voluntary repatriation will include:

- (A) Ensuring voluntariness and repatriation under conditions of safety and dignity;
- (B) Reintegration assistance;
- (C) UNHCR access;
- (D) The monitoring of amnesties or guarantees provided for returnees; and, increasingly
- (E) the promotion, in cooperation with the authorities, of a safe environment for returning refugees;
- (F) the integration of parallel peace and confidence-building measures into an overall regional, or international scheme of reconciliation, rehabilitation and stabilization; and
- (G) the strengthening of the implementation capacity of international and regional human rights systems.

13. UNHCR's operational activities in the country of origin are intended to be transitional, and complementary to the broader stabilization efforts. However, the duration of UNHCR's presence also depends on whether the specific protection as well as assistance needs of returnees have been met. The multifaceted arrangements which are needed to make voluntary repatriation possible, in terms of protection requirements and the modalities of assistance, are widely recognized. The reintegration component of comprehensive approaches is discussed in a Conference Room Paper on the subject (EC/1994/SC.2/CRP.12), which is being presented to the 17 May 1994 meeting of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters.

C. Refugee protection

14. The right to seek asylum and other fundamental protection principles, including observance of the provisions of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees and relevant regional instruments, remain essential elements of any comprehensive regional approach. Among the core measures of international protection, which require little additional explanation, are:

- (A) ensuring admission to safety;
- (B) respect for non-refoulement, including non-rejection at frontiers;
- (C) respect for basic human rights;
- (D) ensuring personal security and necessary material assistance;
- (E) UNHCR access to asylum-seekers, refugees, and returnees;
- (F) appropriate protection and assistance for women, children and vulnerable groups, including registration care and tracing for unaccompanied children; and
- (G) family reunion.

15. Additional UNHCR elements within comprehensive regional approaches may include variable approaches to asylum, including temporary protection, and protection and assistance activities on behalf of the internally displaced. Such activities may include humanitarian assistance programmes, security measures, and monitoring of the human rights situation of the displaced. As in the other phases, activities on behalf of the internally displaced require the consent and full cooperation of the authorities of the country of origin. The protection of internally displaced persons is considered in the note on protection aspects of UNHCR activities on behalf of internally displaced Persons (EC/1994/SCP/CRP.2).

IV. EXAMPLES OF COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES

16. The following examples of comprehensive regional approaches illustrate some of the indicators listed in paragraph 7 above. Their characteristics differ, but in each case, a region or cluster of countries was affected by a common problem; and major obstacles existed to asylum or solutions. In the cases examined, all of which concern large outflows, no two are alike, making direct comparisons difficult.

A. Central America: The International Conference on Central American Refugee

17. The International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) was convened in 1989. It followed the signing of the Esquipulas II peace agreement in 1987, in which signatory States formally declared that a solution to the refugee problem had to be an integral part of peace initiatives in the region. CIREFCA's Plan of Action is characterized by wide-ranging commitments on the part of the seven Countries concerned. In the search for durable solutions for the over 2 million refugees and displaced in the region, signatory states committed themselves to:

- (A) abandon a purely assistance-oriented approach by closing refugee camps;
- (B) integrate the uprooted within wider development programmes;
- (C) respect basic principles of humanitarian treatment for all categories of uprooted (refugees, returnees and displaced); and
- (D) engage in dialogue at the country level, especially with NGOs, with the aim of achieving national reconciliation.

18. Forced displacement was to be addressed without distinction among categories, and assistance to the displaced was to be linked to national development plans. The Conference set up specific follow-up mechanisms at the international, regional and national levels with the aim of involving all key 'actors and in building consensus. UNHCR and UNDP were entrusted with the technical support and follow-up to the Plan of Action which, in addition to their respective programmes in the seven Countries, was expressed mainly through the CIREFCA Joint Support Unit, funded and staffed jointly by the two agencies. The JSU played a key role in terms of technical support, resource mobilization and overall reporting throughout the process.

19. By the time it concludes in May 1994, after five years' duration, CIREFCA will have achieved many of its goals, especially in promoting and securing either voluntary repatriation or local integration as solutions for Central American refugees. The main Outstanding task concerns the ongoing repatriation and reintegration of Guatemalan refugees in Mexico. The process has not been fully successful in responding to the plight of the internally displaced, who make up at least half the target population. Moreover, the ultimate success of return and reintegration in Central America will depend on the implementation of effective development policies and practices which address the root causes of social conflict and population displacement in the region. Taking into account the extreme socio-economic fragility of the situation in Central America and the potential for future cross-border flows, UNHCR will emphasize preventive strategies in the post-CIREFCA period, in particular, stepped-up promotion and dissemination of refugee law and human rights training of implementing partners, as well as continuing support for the Secretary-General's peace initiatives in the region.

20. One of CIREFCA's most valuable contributions has been that the focus on refugee and related displacement issues of common concern opened a "humanitarian space" within a sensitive political dialogue at both the regional and national levels. Thus, the peace process and CIREFCA were mutually reinforcing.

B. South-East Asia: The Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees

21. Until 1989, the international response to the problem of Indo-Chinese refugees had been the combination of temporary asylum in countries in the region, and international resettlement. By 1987, first asylum countries faced sharply increased influxes, while resettlement possibilities dwindled. Increasingly, the reasons given by those fleeing related to poverty, rather than persecution. The UNHCR-sponsored Conference on Indochinese Refugees (June 1989) sought to define a new framework which would safeguard the protection of refugees, and enable the repatriation of non-refugee migrants, taking into account the concerns of countries of origin, first asylum, and resettlement.

22. The Conference adopted the Comprehensive Plan of Action, which included the following points:

- (A) the development of measures, including a mass media campaign within the country of origin, to deter clandestine departures for non-refugee reasons;
- (B) the acceleration and expansion of emigration through orderly departure procedures and other migration programmes;
- (C) the according of temporary refuge to arrivals in the region and unimpeded UNHCR access to these arrivals;
- (D) the establishment of refugee status determination procedures in countries of first asylum for those, persons arriving after a certain "cut-off date";
- (E) the continuation and expansion of resettlement for those Vietnamese who arrived before refugee determination procedures were established, and for those determined to be refugees;
- (F) the reaffirmation of the principle that rejected cases should return to their country of origin, and the confirmation that all efforts should be made to encourage them to do so voluntarily; and
- (G) the establishment of a Steering Committee for the coordination of action under the Comprehensive Plan of Action, and possible adaptation of the CPA itself.

23. Material assistance was provided to the returning Vietnamese, as well as to the communities of their return. Through this mix of measures and within a complex political context, the CPA represented a major multilateral effort to resolve the Vietnamese refugee problem. The plan also included a package of first asylum, refugee status determination, resettlement and return measures for Lao asylum-seekers.

24. The impact of the CPA has been to reduce steadily the outflow from Viet Nam: at the time of reporting, the number of arrivals in the region in 1994 stood at below 200. Approximately 60,000 people have repatriated voluntarily, and the number of returnees now outnumbers those remaining in camps in South-East Asia.

C. Cambodia: The comprehensive political settlement

25. In the framework of the Paris Peace Conferences, the Phnom Penh administration, the opposition alliance, and other concerned States adopted the Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodian Conflict. The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was established to fulfil a peace-keeping function and perform related civil duties, as well as to prepare for and monitor the elections. UNHCR was requested to organize the return and, in cooperation with other bodies, the reintegration of approximately 370,000 Cambodians living in camps on the Thai-Cambodian border.

26. Through the diplomatic and economic support of key states, and close inter-agency cooperation, peace was established in most of Cambodia, although the process was fraught with breakdowns and departures from agreements. UNHCR successfully administered the repatriation and, with other agencies, principally UNDP, and with donor backing, was able to offer alternative forms of repatriation assistance, including shelter materials, arable land, and cash. Other bilateral donors and funding and development institutions took the lead in reconstruction and development. De-mining and mine-awareness programmes constituted important elements of the repatriation/reintegration programme. Human rights education was complemented by a mass information programme. The approach was characterized by the achievement of a critical mass of support at the diplomatic level, which was able to carry with it the practical momentum needed.

27. The repatriation was an integral part of the overall United Nations mission, and the presence of this broader mission provided UNHCR with a wider network of resources in the establishment of a monitoring network, as well as for protection and assistance purposes. However, it also added political pressure to the repatriation process.

28. Peace in the post-election, post-repatriation phase has been fragile, with fresh displacements taking place: there is a marked increase in the number of new internally displaced, of whom approximately one-third are returnees. The inability to provide de-mined, arable land to all returnees and the attractiveness of the cash option has meant that a large number of returnees have no means of longer-term self-sufficiency. The inter-agency cooperation with regard to reintegration assistance did not result in satisfactory and sustained mechanisms. The departure of UNTAC has left gaps in security and administrative arrangements, and UNHCR's downscaling has reduced monitoring and follow-up capacity.

D. Former Yugoslavia: The comprehensive response to the humanitarian crisis

29. In November 1991, UNHCR was designated by the Secretary-General as the lead agency for the coordination of humanitarian relief in former Yugoslavia. In cooperation with UNICEF, WHO and ICRC, and with UNPROFOR support, UNHCR undertook a programme to provide for the protection and assistance of millions of refugees, displaced, and war-affected persons. UNHCR proposed the Comprehensive Response to the Humanitarian Crisis in the Former Yugoslavia on 29 July 1992, at the International Meeting on Humanitarian Aid for Victims of the Conflict in the former Yugoslavia. In calling for this response, UNHCR stated that a humanitarian approach alone could not lead to solutions, but could create favourable conditions for political action.

30. The elements of the Comprehensive Response to the Humanitarian Crisis in the former Yugoslavia are:

- (A) respect for human rights and humanitarian law;
- (B) the provision of protection and assistance to victims of the conflict who would otherwise feel compelled to move;
- (C) humanitarian access to those in need of protection and assistance;
- (D) special attention for those in need of medical evacuation, and for other vulnerable groups;
- (E) the provision of temporary protection;
- (F) the provision of material assistance; and
- (G) the organization of rehabilitation assistance and the creation of conditions conducive to return.

31. The package of measures was endorsed by the international community, and has become the basis for humanitarian action in the former Yugoslavia, which is regularly assessed in the various follow-up mechanisms. However, as its name makes clear, this was an effort to respond to the humanitarian crisis. It presupposed, and hoped to create greater impetus for, parallel political efforts to end war and persecution, and thus to permit a durable, and genuinely comprehensive, solution to the refugee problem.

32. In proposing the Comprehensive Response, UNHCR noted that it required the commitment and contribution of a number of parties, "including the States emerging from the Former Yugoslavia." In the absence of the complete commitment of all parties, many elements could not satisfactorily be implemented, notably the first one, respect for human rights and humanitarian law. Nor has the paramount requirement of any comprehensive approach -- peace -- been achieved.

33. The difficulties experienced by UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies in former Yugoslavia illustrate that conflict resolution is an indispensable element of, or a prerequisite for, any successful comprehensive approach. While assistance by the international community has helped prevent the mass starvation of approximately 2 million internally displaced and war-affected persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it could not prevent war- and persecution-related displacement. The limitations of the concept of providing protection to internally displaced, and to persons not yet displaced, where root causes were not addressed, have been highlighted. While States have shown a willingness to provide temporary protection to persons fleeing war and human rights abuses in the former Yugoslavia, some of the elements listed above could not be implemented in the absence of an overall political solution. Others could be implemented only partially and at high risk for humanitarian aid workers.

E. Mozambique

34. Following the signing of the General Peace Agreement in October 1992, the political and security situation in Mozambique has improved considerably, with general elections planned for October 1994 and actions taken by parties to initiate the demobilization of their armed forces. A contributing factor in the further stabilization of the situation is UNHCR's programme for the repatriation and reintegration of some 1.7 million Mozambican refugees in the region.

35. UNHCR has concluded agreements on the establishment of Tripartite Commissions to promote return with the Government of Mozambique and with six other Governments in the region (Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe). These Tripartite Commissions will be responsible for the regional management and planning of the repatriation, and will provide the legal framework in which the exercise takes place.

36. The reintegration arrangements, which are implemented in close coordination with the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Coordination (UNOHAC), donor States and NGOs, concentrate on seeking the self-sufficiency of returnees, the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure, public health services, and schools. Rather than concentrating exclusively on returnees, they target regions of return, where these inputs will benefit the entire community. They aim to help rebuild local, rural economies and improve the chances for sustainable economic development. To avoid uneven development, the reintegration assistance is implemented in the framework of wider national reconstruction plans. Memoranda of Understanding have been signed with UNICEF and UNDP in the context of an overall rehabilitation strategy, which should help ensure a smooth transition from immediate relief to intermediate and longer-term development.

37. In the case of Mozambique, the General Peace Agreement was initiated and mediated by concerned States. The existence of the Agreement opened the door to an approach which included the elements cited above, in particular, integrated assistance to

returnees, internally displaced and other needy groups, and the blend of reintegration and general rehabilitation and development programming.

38. Whereas the UNHCR programme in 1993 addressed the reintegration of some 600,000 spontaneous returnees, programmes in 1995 will also include capacity-building for increasing organized movements. It is possible that with the stabilization in Mozambique, migrant labourers will repatriate in large numbers, and will compound domestic unemployment. The programme does not explicitly address the regulation of migrant labour, although the anticipated increase in absorptive capacity will benefit the entire community in rural areas.

F. A proposed comprehensive approach for Europe

39. Since 1992, the High Commissioner has underlined the need for comprehensive policy development in Europe to address current refugee and migration issues. Prevention, protection and solutions provide a broad conceptual framework for such a comprehensive strategy. Its elements should include variable approaches to asylum, such as temporary protection; the adoption of immigration measures to counter the use of asylum procedures by would-be immigrants not in need of international protection; mass information campaigns of the type undertaken in Viet Nam, and later in Romania and Albania; development assistance targeted to the creation of employment opportunities in areas of actual or potential exodus; and the concerted and purposeful promotion of human rights. Above all, the disparate elements need to be brought together in a coherent manner.

40. European Governments and regional organizations increasingly refer to the necessity of comprehensive and concerted efforts to deal with refugee and asylum issues. In this connection, it is noted that UNHCR has been asked to prepare a report for the next General Assembly of the United Nations, pursuant to its Resolution 48/113 (December 1993) regarding the appropriateness of convening a United Nations Conference for the comprehensive consideration of the situation of refugees, returnees, displaced persons and migrants. In correspondence with the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the High Commissioner has agreed to hold a meeting early July 1994 to review this situation in the Newly-Independent States (NIS) with the participation of other interested organizations and States.

G. Concluding comments

41. The above examples illustrate that while UNHCR can play an advocacy or catalytic role in the development of comprehensive regional approaches, many of the principal actions will take place at the political level. In the absence of the political will of the protagonists in the particular region, and often with the added requirement of the support of the international community, neither preventive nor solution-oriented actions can be brought about.

42. Each example, then, illustrates the need for political will, which, in the successful cases, created a momentum for coordinated activities and financial support. The CIREFCA experience illustrates the impact of solution-oriented mechanisms to stimulate regional consensus-building and peace-building. Following the signing of the peace agreement, concrete action to solve the problems of refugees and the displaced contributed to the peace and stability of the region. The Comprehensive Response to the Crisis in the Former Yugoslavia addresses the displacement phase, with efforts to minimize the suffering of the population. However, the ongoing war and the failure of the parties to live up to their commitments have limited the aims and impact of this comprehensive approach.

43. The Cambodian repatriation as part of the implementation of the Paris Peace Agreement illustrates the practical potential for return and the dimensions of UNHCR and inter-agency involvement. The CPA in South-East Asia addressed the problem of a large, continuing Outflow of an increasingly migratory character and for which resettlement had for many years been the only available response. Despite the complexity of the political climate, the concern of the international community and the commitment of the country of origin, combined with significant multilateral support, enabled a solution to be found. The Comprehensive Approaches in Cambodia and Mozambique addressed long-standing situations where peace negotiations required many years of effort but where, ultimately, repatriation formed part and parcel of the solution.

44. Clearly, where severe violations of rights and/or economic deprivation are important contributing factors to forced displacement, a solution-oriented comprehensive approach must encompass a larger and more complex set of actions. Where the conflict has ended or a solution is in sight, UNHCR's role in facilitating or promoting voluntary repatriation will necessarily be linked to, or dependent on, activities in support of rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, and peace-keeping. UNHCR's participation may mean inclusion in, or association with, joint commissions to determine and oversee guarantees integral to the safe return of refugees, and monitoring of these returns, directly and through implementing agencies. In addition, UNHCR is well-placed to play a role with national authorities, as well as regional and human rights mechanisms. UNHCR has a strong input in the returnees' reintegration in their national community, which is essential for a genuinely durable solution, and also a significant "preventive" factor in terms of future stability. The line between reintegration assistance and development can be thin, and close collaboration with development bodies, lending institutions, and bilateral donors is essential to make UNHCR's component integrated and consistent with plans for the country as a whole.

45. Where conflict forms part of the dynamic of displacement, the existence or restoration of peace is the most fundamental ingredient to the success of a truly comprehensive approach. Experience indicates that a broad political settlement, or at least some winding down or subsidence of the crisis must have occurred, and some willingness on the part of the parties to cooperate must be in evidence, before further positive measures can be injected by extra-national or extra-regional actors. In the absence of the complete commitment of the country or countries of origin, in the first instance, and of the international community, a comprehensive approach is unlikely to succeed.

46. To assess and ensure the adequacy of proposed solutions, the international community should support the continued presence of follow-up mechanisms. The transition period may be lengthier than anticipated, and the absence of continued support may undo the solution.

47. The 1992 internal UNHCR Working Group on International Protection noted that comprehensive "packages" should include adequate measures to address the economic and social as well as political aspects of the refugee problem. It concluded that UNHCR should play a creative and positive role in devising comprehensive responses to refugee problems, together with States concerned and regional and multilateral organizations as appropriate, which ensure that basic protection principles, including the right to leave and return to one's country, asylum, non-refoulement and non-discrimination are respected, and that the principles of State responsibility, international solidarity and burden-sharing are accepted.

48. Valuable lessons can be learned from past comprehensive approaches. The need for pro-active political measures cannot be overstated. In addition to the commitment of the country or countries of origin, the international community must lend its efforts and political will to peaceful settlements. The fact that flows have, in many cases, been composed of a mixture of refugees and internally displaced, and in some cases, migrants, mean that the response must address that range of factors. Since many of these factors are deeply rooted and have long defied the collective wisdom and political will of the international community as a whole, the success of any comprehensive approach cannot be guaranteed, but past successes, though modest and flawed, demonstrate the value of the effort. A considerable degree of coordination, as well as substantial practical support, will be required. Finally, efforts which have combined preventive measures, protection measures, and successful solutions require follow-up mechanisms to ensure that their momentum is sustained. Without these, the cycle of displacement may begin anew.

Disclaimer: © UNHCR