



**ORGANIZATION OF  
AFRICAN UNITY**  
Secretariat  
P. O. Box 3243

منظمة الوحدة الأفريقية  
السكرتارية  
ص. ب. ٣٢٤٣

**ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE  
AFRICAIN**  
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Addis Ababa \* \* \* \* \* اديس ابابا

CM/1032 (XXXIV)

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS  
THIRTY-FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION  
ADDIS ABABA  
6 - 15 FEBRUARY, 1980

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE  
REPATRIATION OF RHODESIAN REFUGEES



CM-1032

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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE  
REPATRIATION OF RHODESIAN REFUGEES

A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. As a result of the war in Southern Rhodesia there are approximately 250,000 Zimbabwean refugees in neighbouring and other African states, as well as other countries of the world. In the neighbouring Frontline States, where the bulk of the refugees is situated, the breakdown is as follows:

Mozambique	-	160,000 (estimate)
Zambia	-	60,000 (estimate)
Botswana	-	26,000 (estimate)
Tanzania	-	1,000 (estimate)

2. As a result of the Lancaster House Agreement on Zimbabwe, the UN - more especially UNHCR - prepared a contingency plan for the voluntary repatriation of Zimbabwean refugees from their various countries of asylum. This operation will be broken down into two parts: the actual movement from the countries of asylum to Zimbabwe, followed by relief for the refugees once they are back home.

3. UNHCR officials had exploratory discussions on two occasions (3 December 1979 and 4 January 1980) with both wings of the Patriotic Front as well as the British authorities on the voluntary repatriation exercise. From the talks and further exploratory discussions with the Frontline States, it became obvious that the Patriotic Front and those countries give high priority to the return of as many refugees as possible before the elections take place.

4. Finally, the UK Government accepted UNHCR's offer to take on the overall co-ordination of repatriating refugees to Southern Rhodesia.

5. In the whole exercise, the OAU Bureau for refugees (BPEAR) was not associated — a treatment which led to a protest from the General Secretariat.

B. ACTUAL OPERATION:

1. A UNHCR office, headed by a British national, has now been established in Salisbury in order to co-ordinate the return of the refugees.

2. Entry points from the Frontline States that will be used include:

Plumtree for Botswana

Chirundu and Victoria Falls for Zambia

Umtali for Mozambique

3. Also six reception centres inside Rhodesia have been established for the returnees. A voluntary organisation called Christian Care has agreed to provide relief assistance to the returnees once they are in the centres. Once inside the country, those persons having homes to go to will be provided with assistance to travel back to their areas as soon as possible, leaving behind in the reception centres only those persons who have been totally displaced and as a result will have to be eventually rehabilitated in their home areas or other parts of the country.

4. Before the elections, it is hoped to move about 20,000 refugees from Botswana by rail through Plumtree; 8,000 from Zambia by air from Ndola to Salisbury and Bulawayo and 10,000 from Zambia by road and rail through Chirundu; and an estimated 60,000 by rail from Mozambique through Umtali. A number of persons will also be assisted to return possibly by air from Tanzania as well as from other African and non-African countries.

5. The remaining refugees will be repatriated after the elections, possibly leaving behind in the countries of asylum a number of students presently at schools there who will be absorbed back into their country at a later stage, in order not to disturb their studies.

6. The first group of refugees, approximately 1,000 from Botswana, were transported back to Rhodesia on Monday 21 January 1980. It is hoped that the repatriation of the remaining groups to be moved before the election dates from the various Frontline States will take place as rapidly as possible.

7. The actual cost of the repatriation and relief operation only is estimated as approximately US\$22 million. Long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction work for both the returnees as well as displaced persons within the country will be planned in co-operation with the newly established government of the country after the elections (see Section D).

C. LOGISTICAL AND OTHER PROBLEMS:

1. Due to the time constraints of the election dates, it has been difficult to establish an elaborate operation as fast as UNHCR would have like in order to repatriate all the refugees before the elections.

2. Logistical difficulties such as the establishment of good road and rail links as well as the provision of actual transportation has meant that the operation has not started as quickly as one would have hoped.

3. Additional factors in the delay in carrying out the operation include the obstructive approach of White Rhodesian regional administrators and immigration officials and lack of funds available to refugee agencies.

Some of the obstructionist behaviour of Rhodesian Officials include false allegations (since denied by WHO) of the outbreak of Cholera in Chimoio district of Mozambique aimed at halting the repatriation of Rhodesian refugees in Mozambique. Even the alternative solution of repatriating the refugees by Air has been rejected on the grounds that it is too costly.

4. This delay tactics on the part of the British administration and Rhodesian officials gives the impression that there is a deliberate attempt to prevent the refugees who are supporters of the Patriotic Front from participating in the forthcoming elections in Rhodesia.

D. LONG-TERM PROGRAMME:

1. Preliminary talks have been held in New York on a long-term UN plan for the resettlement and rehabilitation of refugees returning from countries of asylum as well as displaced persons presently inside the country. The combined total is approximately 1 million people.

2. At the discussions it was noted that:

- a. any long-term rehabilitation programme for refugees and displaced persons should be seen as an essential aspect of the overall development strategy of a new government, which would of course be responsible for the implementation of such a programme;
- b. it would possibly be necessary to have a UN Inter-agency mission to ascertain what are the needs within the various economic and social sectors of such a programme and how they could be best co-ordinated.

3. A number of Western countries have made generous donations both for the repatriation of the Rhodesian refugees and for resettling and rehabilitating the refugees. It is recommended that OAU Member States should not be left out in this humanitarian exercise.





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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Thirty-Fourth Ordinary Session

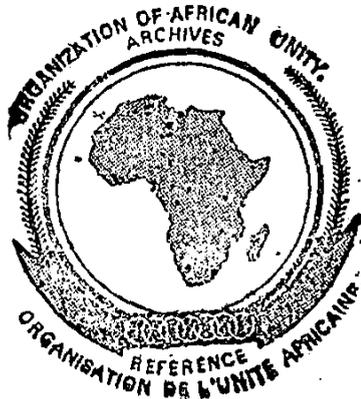
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

6 - 15 February, 1980.

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Special Communications of the Thirty-Fourth Ordinary Session  
of the Council of Ministers of the OAU from H.E. Mr. Joachim  
Alberto CHISSANO, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mozambique.



Special Communications of the Thirty-Fourth Ordinary Session  
of the Council of Ministers of the OAU from H.E. Mr. Joachim  
Alberto CHISSANO, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mozambique

The British authorities still continue to create difficulties on the return of refugees.

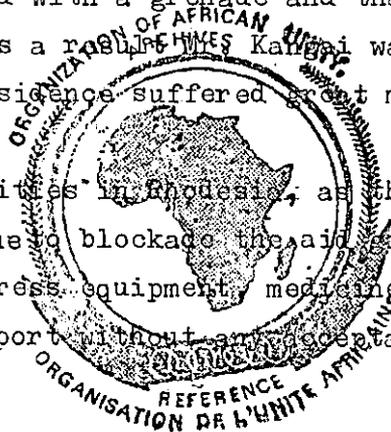
After having formally agreed on a number of 1000 refugees who should return to Zimbabwe per day they have now reduced this number to 500.

At the moment they are making every pressure so that this number should be reduced to 300.

The funds promised by the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees are not sufficient to grant the return of all refugees to Zimbabwe. So far, the People's Republic of Mozambique has received no amount from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees for this purpose and all the movement of refugees is supported by funds given by our government. Some of the refugees when arriving to their destination in Rhodesia are put in jail under the pretext that they are trained persons.

Acts of intimidation by Rhodesian army and Muzorewa auxiliary forces are increasing day by day. To give only a few examples: on the night of the 5th of this month the residence of President Robert Mugabe was attacked with a grenade and that Mr. Kumbesai Kangai with a bazooka. As a result Mr. Kangai was gravely wounded and President Mugabe's residence suffered great material damages.

The British authorities in Rhodesia, as they have been doing so far still continue to blockade the aid given to the Patriotic Front 36 tons of paper, press equipment, medicines and food stuff are retained at Salisbury airport without any acceptable justification.



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As a result acts of intimidation from the fourth of January up to now the death casualties amount to 100 freedom fighters and 50 civilians.

Muzorewa continues his electoral campaign based on intimidation and terror against Patriotic Front Forces, Commonwealth observers and Frontline States.

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1980-02-06

# Report of the Secretary-General on the Repatriation of Rhodesian Refugees

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