

month interval, what was a serious outflow of refugees has turned into a major exodus. The flow of overland refugees has continued in the serious proportions that have existed for some time. However, the flow of boat refugees, which averaged 1,500 in the period May 1977 – March 1978 and which then increased to a level of 5,000 or 6,000 by August of this year, has since September reached the proportions of 10,000, 15,000, and perhaps even 20,000, a month.

Faced with the magnitude of the problem, it is quite evident that the High Commissioner, despite the effectiveness of his programs, cannot cope with the task with the resources at his disposal. It is also obvious that the burden on the countries of first asylum is becoming too heavy and that it must be lightened and more equitably shared. Furthermore, the options for permanent resettlement must be considerably increased and diversified. In short, given the form and magnitude of the population outflow, it is essential that the problem be taken in hand by the international community as a whole in a broadly-based co-operative effort. It is no longer adequate to address ourselves in a sporadic way to certain manifestations or symptoms of the problem, even when they represent as serious and as immediate a crisis as the *Hai Hong* incident. If we each seek individual remedies, the problem in its totality will remain. Furthermore, a continuation of recurring unco-ordinated appeals for assistance runs the risk in the long term of exhausting the good will of governments and individuals or, worse, of causing them to lose interest in the whole problem.

That is the challenge we must meet together. We consider that the High Commissioner in his note of November 29 has given us all the elements for an international plan of action to face that challenge. We agree with the High Commissioner that, first and foremost, we must aim at securing rescue at sea and first asylum. Human lives must not be lost as a result of the inability to provide a temporary asylum for refugees. To this end, it is necessary that the number of countries of first asylum in the region be increased and that guarantees be made to them of permanent resettlement in third countries. The High Commissioner should establish temporary camps throughout the region that will serve as reception and transit centres for the refugees as they arrive. We are fully aware, however, that the success of the High Commissioner in establishing temporary-asylum camps in the region will depend directly on guarantees of permanent resettlement. We believe that, in the present circumstances, it is imperative to explore thoroughly all possibilities for permanent resettlement, both within the region and in other parts of the world. It is essential that more countries open their doors to the refugees from Indochina. What a few countries alone cannot resolve surely could be resolved by the concerted efforts of a larger number of countries that have the means to contribute to a solution. Apart from the direct consequences for the refugees thereby received, this action would have a favourable impact on the parliaments and governments of the receiving countries and would reinforce their resolve to participate in a global effort. It is also essential that the fullest and most expeditious use be made of present resettlement possibilities. In this context, we should support all measures taken in concert by resettlement countries to move refugees quickly from countries of first asylum to countries of resettlement. Canada, for its part, has already undertaken a redeployment of its processing staff for the Indochina refugee program. In the case of the 600 *Hai Hong* refugees, though we should have