

be established in France. Moreover, the High Commissioner has arranged with PICMME for joint representation in Hong Kong to provide for the care and maintenance and resettlement of refugees from China. The High Commissioner also maintains liaison with international and inter-governmental organizations and with voluntary agencies interested in refugees.

The High Commissioner takes all possible measures within his competence to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees, or their assimilation within the countries in which they have found refuge. When repatriation or assimilation are not possible, the High Commissioner encourages projects which will provide for the resettlement of refugees in other countries. The High Commissioner's Office also assists refugees in obtaining satisfactory travel documents.

In accordance with the Statute under which the High Commissioner operates,² he may not appeal to governments for funds, or make a general appeal, without the prior approval of the General Assembly. The High Commissioner requested the sixth session of the General Assembly to authorize him to appeal for funds to provide emergency aid to the most needy groups of refugees for which he was responsible. He estimated that \$3 million would be necessary during the year 1952 to prevent great hardship and tragedy among these refugees. The General Assembly authorized the High Commissioner to appeal for funds and he is now engaged in communicating with governments and non-governmental organizations on this subject.

Canada abstained on the resolution authorizing the High Commissioner to appeal for funds as no commitment could be given with respect to the Canadian attitude towards such an appeal prior to consideration by the Government, and it was believed that to vote for the resolution might constitute a moral commitment. Moreover, it was feared that another general appeal might render less effective responses to previously authorized pleas for assistance, and that a general relief fund for refugees might, in certain areas, encourage national governments to rely on international assistance. The United States and some other countries also abstained on this resolution. Consideration is now being given to the action which Canada should take on the appeal for funds which has been launched.

Another of the High Commissioner's functions is to promote the conclusion and ratification of international conventions for the protection of refugees. The High Commissioner is, therefore, encouraging countries to sign or adhere to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees which was completed at a conference, in which Canada participated, held in Geneva in July 1951. The Convention establishes minimum rights for refugees, including rights concerning wage-earning, employment, education, public relief and religion. It also establishes a procedure for the issuance of travel documents to refugees. Eighteen countries have now signed the Convention and some signatory states have indicated their intention to ratify it at an early date. The Convention enters into force on the 90th day after the deposit of the sixth instrument of ratification or accession. The Canadian Government has not yet decided what action should be taken with respect to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, but this matter is receiving consideration.

²General Assembly Resolution 428 (V).