

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Between the
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
And
The Director-General of the International Labour Office (ILO)

WHEREAS The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (hereinafter referred to as "UNHCR") is entrusted with responsibilities for refugees by its Statute annexed to General Assembly Resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950 and with responsibilities for displaced persons in refugee-like situations under subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS the International Labour Organisation (hereinafter referred to as "ILO") is entrusted with the promotion of social justice for working people everywhere and the improvement of their working and living conditions through the framing of standards, research and policy formulation and technical co-operation, in accordance with its Constitution; and

WHEREAS in regard to standards for the treatment of refugees as well as assistance to refugees there are areas of common concern in which the present co-operation between the two organisations should be further strengthened and developed;

NOW THEREFORE UNHCR and the ILO have agreed on the following:

International Protection

1. In the exercise of its international protection function, UNHCR is called upon to ensure that refugees are treated in accordance with recognized international standards, including standards concerning economic and social rights which are defined, *inter alia*, in the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Under Article 35 of this Convention, States are called upon to facilitate the duty of UNHCR to supervise the application of the provisions of the Convention. A corresponding provision is to be found in Article II of the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.
2. In areas such as access to employment, conditions of work, equality of treatment and acquisition or preservation of social security rights, the standards defined in International Labor Conventions also apply to refugees in so far as they are workers.
3. Both UNHCR and ILO recognise the basic importance of accepted international

minimum standards for the protection of refugees, particularly as regards economic and social rights. Both organisations will cooperate closely in the application of existing standards and in the framing of new standards in this field. In developing such new standards, the vulnerable situation of refugees will be given special consideration.

International Assistance

4. The voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement of large numbers of refugees and displaced persons of concern to UNHCR requires diverse inter-related socio-economic measures to facilitate their rehabilitation and/or integration into new communities in order to enable them to lead full and productive lives. In this connection and in the context of strengthening inter-agency cooperation within the UN system, UNHCR may seek the support and advice of ILO in areas of its competence.
5. ILO's fields of competence include, *inter alia*, employment creation, income-generating projects, self-employment and wage-earning opportunities, manpower and skills surveys, vocational training and skill development programmes, training and technical support to artisans, craft workers and small entrepreneurs, and the rehabilitation of the handicapped or disabled. Whenever appropriate and feasible, joint UNHCR-ILO projects for surveys, feasibility studies and assistance measures in the above fields will be established, subject to mutually agreed funding arrangements.
6. Whenever action appears desirable in the above-mentioned or other related fields of competence of the ILO, UNHCR field staff may seek technical advice and assistance from ILO field staff and consultations thereon should start as early as possible. The field staff of both organisations may submit recommendations to their respective headquarters for specific missions, studies, surveys, project preparation or implementation or other relevant action. UNHCR and ILO staff at headquarters may initiate similar consultations and appropriate action.
7. The focus of UNHCR-ILO cooperation in respect of international assistance to refugees and displaced persons will be in the field. ILO regional and area offices and country representatives (and, where appropriate, regional advisers/chief technical advisers), and UNHCR representatives and field staff should establish contacts for the exchange of information and views, and should render each other full assistance in the achievement of the objectives of this Memorandum.

UNHCR - ILO Coordination

8. Bilateral cooperation between UNHCR and ILO should take place within the framework of the overall United Nations inter-agency cooperation which, for the particular focus of this Memorandum of Understanding, aims at ensuring the

optimal utilisation of the resources available within the UN system for the benefit of refugees and displaced persons.

9. In this context, UNHCR and ILO will keep each other fully informed of matters of common interest, and regular consultations on policy and operations between the two organisations will be maintained at the headquarters level. For inter-agency liaison purposes, working level meetings will be arranged as and when required.
10. Representatives of UNHCR and ILO will meet from time to time in order to review and evaluate the effectiveness of their collaboration and to consider any improvements that may prove desirable in the light of experience gained.

Entry into Force, Amendments and Duration

11. The Memorandum of Understanding will enter into force upon its signature by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Director-General of the International Labour Office, and may be amended by mutual agreement. It will remain in force until such time as it is terminated by mutual agreement or by one organisation giving the other three months' written notice of termination.

United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees

Director-General
International Labour Office

Signed at Geneva on: 21 October 1983