

The themes discussed were: expansion of the role of non-governmental bodies and of their co-operation; governments' role in combating torture; multilateral or model convention prohibiting torture; expansion of role of inter-governmental bodies; and possibility of setting up an advisory group.

The main practical result of the views exchanged during the two days of the symposium was the decision to set up a liaison group between non-governmental bodies to co-ordinate action against torture.

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TERRITORIAL ASYLUM ¹

The United Nations Conference on Territorial Asylum was held in Geneva from 10 January to 4 February 1977, with delegations from 92 countries participating. It did not complete its work and recommended the General Assembly consider at its 32nd session the question of convening at an appropriate time a further session of the Conference.

By the end of the Conference on 4 February 1977, only five articles had been adopted by the Commission of the Whole; and of these, only one, article 1 (Grant of asylum) had been fully considered by the Drafting Committee. The remaining four articles, initially adopted by the Committee of the Whole and referred to the Drafting Committee were:

Article II defining the persons in respect of whom the Convention is to apply;

Two articles, one defining standards of conduct of asylees in countries of asylum, and the other extending the benefits of the Convention to family members of an asylee;

Article III (*non-refoulement* and non-rejection at the frontier).

¹ Extract from the bulletin of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, No. 1, February 1977.

MISCELLANEOUS

Normally, after consideration by the Drafting Committee, articles must be reviewed again by the Committee of the Whole and then put before the Plenary where a two-thirds majority vote is needed for approval.

At the closing session, the President of the Conference said:

“...The Conference now ending gave rise to the most far-reaching exchange of views on asylum that has taken place at the governmental level in recent years... .

What is clear from the Conference is that this area of international law has become a focus of widespread and keen interest; everywhere the relations between the claim of the individual seeking asylum to be granted refuge and the sovereign prerogatives of the State—the issue which was at the heart of so much of the discussion—is being assessed and discussed... . The value of having so many States from all regions and groups of the international community come together to consider and define their attitudes in this important matter has been substantial.
