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Refugee Resettlement Plan Approved, But Donor Nations Avoid Specific New Commitments To Finance Plan

by Deborah Tyroler

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On May 31 at a conference on refugees sponsored by the United Nations in Guatemala City, several European governments and the US approved a plan by the five Central American nations, Mexico and Belize, for resettlement of about two million people driven from their homes in the region result of violence and economic disaster. However, donor nations avoided any specific new commitment to finance the plan. They reportedly emphasized that the five nations cannot hope to resolve the refugee crisis until governments make peace with rebel groups, and demonstrate greater respect for human rights. The governments were also urged to cooperate more closely with church groups and relief agencies. Under the new refugee plan, donor countries will meet with the Central American governments in the fall for what the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Jean-Pierre Hocke, called "a preliminary stocktaking" to decide which aid projects they will finance. Meanwhile, the Central American governments will work with aid organizations and government ministries in drawing up a list of projects for refugees and displaced people. (Basic data from New York Times, 06/04/89)

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