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**WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

PROGRAMME UNIT ON JUSTICE AND SERVICE

Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service

DIRECT DIAL: (022) 91\_\_\_\_\_

Ginebra, el 17 de junio 1988

Queridos amigos,

Incluyo una copia del resumen de sus informes del año 1987 que preparé en inglés. Como lo hice el año pasado mando a las agencias de cooperación y a otros interesados los informes completos en español (los que Uds. prepararon). Pero como hay personas interesadas que no entienden el español, también distribuyo este resumen en inglés.

En este informe, encontrarán un resumen de la situación financiera del año 1987 en lo cual pueden ver cuales son las agencias que apoyan su trabajo.

Les agradezco mucho por sus informes de este año. La mayoría de ellos presentan una información muy útil con respecto a la situación de los refugiados en sus respectivos países y sobre el servicio que Uds. proveen a refugiados.

Espero que su trabajo vaya bien y que los pueda visitar en un futuro proximo.

Fraternalmente en el Señor,

Elizabeth G. Ferris



OVERVIEW

Central America

1987

## LATIN AMERICAN REFUGEE PROJECTS

## REFUGEE SERVICE

COMMISSION ON INTER-CHURCH AID,  
REFUGEE AND WORLD SERVICE

## WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES





## OVERVIEW

### Central America



In Central America, refugees continued to flee violence in their homelands - Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. Increases in the number of Nicaraguan refugees led to the escalating politicization of refugee issues in the two principal host countries - Honduras and Costa Rica. In Honduras, the increasingly visible activities of the contras led to serious protection problems among indigenous Nicaraguan refugee groups as the contra forces sought to recruit refugees into their forces. The Salvadoran refugees in Honduras continue to live in closed camps, although no major armed incursions were reported in the camps, persistent reports of harassment, intimidation and occasional refoulement cases surfaced throughout the year. In October 1987, 4,500 Salvadoran refugees from Mesa Grande returned to their communities in El Salvador. For months, the refugees had indicated their desire to return to their homeland, publicizing their demands and pressing UNHCR and governments to facilitate their return. The repatriation itself went quite smoothly and for the first few months there were few reports of major problems for the returnees. However, by early 1988, reports of intimidation, disappearances, and killings became more common, raising fears about the safety of the returnees.

Although refugees in Colomoncagua camp in Honduras have not expressed interest in returning to El Salvador, agency officials and refugees report an increase in harassment and pressure by the Honduran military. As the human rights situation in Honduras deteriorates and as the country experiences the effects of the on-going contra presence, pressure is growing within the government for all refugees to leave the country.

Costa Rica, presently host to 40,000 documented refugees, has experienced an increase in public opposition to the presence of the refugees. Newspaper articles openly attack the refugees while some government officials refer to as many as 90,000 undocumented refugees in the country. In Mexico almost 20,000 Guatemalan refugees live in the camps in Campeche and Quintano Roo, while perhaps 80,000 continue to live in the border regions although only 22,000 receive assistance. Refugees in Mexico, particularly northern Mexico, face serious protection problems.

Earlier pressure on the Guatemalans to repatriate abated in 1987. Although some Guatemalans did return to their home communities, resistance by local political leaders frequently made their re-integration difficult.

Everywhere in Central America there is both hope and skepticism about the peace process. The initial euphoric period after the signing of the Peace Agreement between the five Presidents gave way to a more sober assessment as negotiations bogged down. By early 1988 there was renewed optimism as a result of agreements for a cease fire in Nicaragua.

The refugee situation in Central America is inextricably linked to the complex political situation in the region. Massive U.S. support for the contras has meant that the war against the Nicaraguan government has been long and civilian casualties have been high. In some Central American countries, fear of being drawn into the conflict has become translated into resentment against



the refugees. The deteriorating political situation in Panama has made it much more difficult for the refugees living there. In all countries in the region - including Mexico and Panama - difficult economic situations have contributed to popular resentment with the refugees, making it more difficult for the agencies and the churches seeking to respond to their needs.

### South America

Refugees continue to leave Chile. Each new wave of repression is followed by an increase in the number of refugees arriving in neighbouring Argentina. There the refugees find not only difficult economic conditions but also growing xenophobia. In parts of the country serious security problems accompany the refugees. At the same time that Chilean refugees continue to leave the country, other Chileans return and need assistance in adjusting to the political and economic climate which awaits them.

Although both Argentina and Uruguay now have democratic regimes, returnees to these two countries also face serious problems in adapting to a difficult economic and a changed political situation. The refugee situation in South America, although relatively small in number, and receiving little international attention, is serious for the agencies and churches struggling to cope with the reality of welcoming refugees in a difficult climate.



The Churches and Latin American Refugees  
Comisión Argentina para  
Refugiados y Migrantes

The sections below present summaries in English of the work of the refugee projects in 1986. Complete reports in Spanish are available from this office and will be sent on request.

Through CICARWS' Refugee Service, church-related projects in Latin American countries are supported. Table 1 provides details of the financial support provided to the projects in the region. We are happy to report a significant increase in the amount of funds transferred to church partners through CICARWS. But the fact that insufficient funds have been raised to support these programmes makes it more important than ever that the activities of the churches be widely communicated.

The churches in Latin America have been in the forefront of responding to the needs of refugees. Given the important role played by the Catholic church and related agencies, virtually all of the WCC-related refugee projects described here work with other denominations.

Furthermore many of the church programmes described here are multi-faceted; refugee service may be related to human rights work or to service to returning refugees. These connections are important to nourish as they serve to educate the churches about the relationship between refugees and the root causes. In several of the countries in which churches work, service to refugees is not only largely thankless work, but also dangerous.

During 1987, we have tried to improve communications with both local partners and partner agencies, to increase awareness about the Latin American refugee situation, and to pursue more effective advocacy in Latin American refugee issues. Furthermore, within the somewhat complex bureaucracy of the World Council of Churches, closer relationships have been established with other



desks and sub-units. In CICARWS, the implementation of the area approach is leading to a process of collective reflection and programming. Latin American refugee concerns can no longer be viewed in isolation from other CICARWS and other sub-unit initiatives. Thus, internally we are moving toward a much more comprehensive and integrated approach toward Latin America.

One indication of how this works in practice is the fact that responsibility for coordinating the ecumenical response to Diaconia - El Salvador's programme of assistance for returning Salvadoran refugees was coordinated through the Latin American refugee desk.

We are also encouraging our Latin American partners to meet together, to share experiences, and to develop common strategies. In May 1987 ecumenical partners working with refugees met in Buenos Aires for the first time. It was a rewarding and enlightening experience for all the participants and they agreed to meet again in 1988 to deepen their reflection and increase their coordination. A report of that Consultation is available through this office. But perhaps more important than the recommendations and conclusions of the Consultation was the fact that the meeting provided an opportunity for church refugee workers to feel that they are not working in isolation, that their problems are shared, and that they can draw strength from one another. Ultimately, of course, this is what the ecumenical movement can bring to refugee service.





Comisión Argentina para los Refugiados  
(CAREF)

Executive Secretary: Alicia Peiro

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Description:

CAREF began its work in September 1973 through the efforts of three churches: Iglesia Evangelica del Rio de la Plata, Iglesia Evangelica Discipulos de Cristo and the Iglesia Evangelica Metodista Argentina. Through CAREF, the churches sought to respond to the urgent needs of refugees fleeing the aftermath of Salvador Allende's brutal overthrow. From 1973-1986, CAREF served 16,400 refugees - 96% of whom were Chilean. CAREF's activities and orientations have reflected the needs at different points in time. There have been times, for example, when CAREF's main task was to guide refugees who came to Argentina to be resettled in third countries. For a time, CAREF worked to assist some 245 Indochinese refugees who were resettled in Argentina.

In addition to its work with refugees, CAREF is presently working to assist Argentinians who are returning home as well as Uruguayans needing assistance. In 1985, CAREF assisted 503 refugees; in 1986, 562 refugees.

The situation for refugees in Buenos Aires is serious. Economically, conditions are difficult: housing is very expensive, and jobs are scarce. UNHCR has sharply reduced its assistance increasing pressure on CAREF. In 1985 UNHCR reduced its stipend which was inadequate to meet even the most minimum for needs of refugees. Moreover, the refugees presently arriving are young, militant, angry and often those men who lack skills and job experience. Another group of concern are women refugees who arrive alone or with children. This has created a situation of considerable pressure on CAREF.

CAREF's programmes for refugees include:

- 1) Assistance to refugees (with UNHCR), specifically: emergency aid, durable solutions, resettlement in other countries, family reunification, repatriation, and scholarships.
- 2) Labour programmes to facilitate the insertion of refugees into the job labour force.
- 3) Training. Support and scholarships for training which will lead to employment.
- 4) Integral health
- 5) Preparation for returning to Chile.



- 6) Argentine returnees and foreigners living in Argentina
- 7) Assistance in special situations.
- 8) Press and diffusion.

Moreover, CAREF seeks to increase public awareness, and to coordinate its work with Human Rights organizations.

In 1987, CAREF served 275 cases, 523 persons, of whom 10 were Paraguayans, 4 Peruvians, 2 Sri Lankans and the rest Chileans. In cooperation with UNHCR, the CAREF team implemented social service programmes of emergency assistance, support for refugees' insertion into Argentine life, study scholarships and psycho-social rehabilitation for those affected by the repression. Complementary projects carried out with WCC funds included labour scholarships and assistance to special and vulnerable cases.

On the political level, the military crisis of Holy Week 1987 led to much concern on the part of the refugees and many questions for CAREF staff. The crisis illustrated the insecurity in which many refugees live today in Argentina.

A new initiative for CAREF in 1987 was increased attention paid to vulnerable groups, particularly minor children and single women. Counselling of young people was carried out in an integral manner and in coordination with other Argentine groups and organizations. The major problems facing single women with children are housing and employment. Landlords generally do not wish to rent facilities to these women and without childcare, it is difficult for the women to find jobs. CAREF is trying not only to provide counselling, but also to secure housing where refugee women can live in security.

In 1987, CAREF introduced a small pilot project in the area of labour scholarships in which refugees are given a chance to work for a period of time in order to acquire experience which will help them with future employment. The programme was successful on a pilot level and CAREF plans to expand the programme in 1988.

A new area for CAREF in 1987 was the development of initiatives in the area of press and awareness-building. A first priority was reaching out to the churches. CAREF developed materials including a proposal for pastoral accompaniment for refugees which was distributed to member churches. The churches used the material as a basis for discussion. In addition, CAREF organized its files, compiled and systematized its contacts with other organizations, and prepared a study on CAREF's work since 1973.

CAREF remains interested in the idea of producing a video tape on the experiences of Chilean refugees in Argentina.

CAREF also assumed the major responsibility for organizing the May meeting of ecumenical organizations in the region and served as a focus for communication and coordination with partners in South America. In addition, CAREF staff participated in a number of national, regional, and international meetings, including a regional meeting on Chilean refugee women.



Financial Statement (in US\$)Income

1) Salaries for the staff	17,710.-
Misc. expenses: photocopies, publications, taxes, etc.	8,445.-
	<u>26,155.-</u>
2) Emergency aid to refugees (housing, food, health, clothing, transportation, documentation)	5,091.-
Emergency aid for special cases	5,898.-
Complementary assistance to UNHCR programmes, e.g. tools for work,	2,354.-
loans to refugees and special cases	1,345.-
Scholarships for secondary students	962.-
Scholarships for job training	935.-
	<u>22,807.-</u>
sub-total CAREF programme	
3) Press and diffusion (salaries, cost of publications and pamphlets)	3,825.-
4) Return to Chile programme (visit to Chile to establish contacts)	412.-
5) Meetings (in Uruguay, Paris, and Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Lima, and Santiago)	1,796.-
expenses	
	<u>54,995.-</u>

In 1987, CAREF received US\$ 75,000 from the World Council of Churches. CAREF was able to end the year with a surplus, in part because of the decline in the Austral. In addition to these funds, CAREF administered US\$ 78,800 of UNHCR funds.

In 1987, 73 Chilean refugee cases, 131 persons, received UNHCR and governmental recognition as refugees. Added to the earlier population served by the office, 306 cases or 635 people were served by the various programmes implemented by CAREF.

The continued deterioration of the country's economic situation, particularly the sharp drop in international prices for Argentinean exports, the closing of markets due to protectionism and practices of dumping, have made it impossible for Argentina to resolve the problem of its foreign debt. Inflation, rising unemployment, and declining social service expenditures create an extremely difficult situation for the refugees.

CAREF implements various UNHCR programmes, including complementary assistance in Argentina, orientation, social services, local integration, legal assistance, lower secondary education and higher secondary education.



Comité Ecumenico de Acción Social (CEAS)

Legal Counsellor: Juana Juri  
Administrator: Armando Camin  
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2 piso  
5500 Mendoza  
Argentina  
Tel: 252.861

Description:

Chilean refugees coming to Argentina almost always come via Mendoza. Mendoza with some 60,000 Chileans, has traditionally been closely linked to Chile. However, the traditional openness in Mendoza is eroding as a result of the deteriorating economic situation and the type of refugees who presently are arriving. Each new repressive act in Chile is followed by refugees leaving the country. Most of these refugees are young men with a history of political militancy and little education or job-related skills. Most can be categorized as having a "high degree of danger for their security", for having directly confronted the repressive forces of their government. When they arrive in Mendoza, they desperately need security, both legal protection and subsistence. In cooperation with UNHCR CEAS provides a number of different types of assistance to the refugees, including:

- Social services in Argentina
- complementary aid for refugees living in Argentina
- the promotion of resettlement in Argentina
- support for higher education (including post-secondary courses, technical-vocational training, and university courses)
- support for secondary and technical-vocational education
- support for voluntary repatriation
- local integration of Latin American refugees

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CEAS implements various UNHCR programmes, including complementary assistance in Argentina, orientation, social services, local integration, legal assistance, lower secondary education and higher secondary education.

However, UNHCR funds are not sufficient to provide even minimal assistance to new refugees. Thus in December 1987, a refugee family with two children received A 308.- (US\$ 65.80) per month for the first few months after their arrival of which 53% was covered by UNHCR, 31% by WCC, and 16% by other contributions. Until 1986, UNHCR covered 100% of this assistance.

The first priority of CEAS' work is to provide legal protection to the refugees. The CEAS legal staff counsels and accompanies the refugees through the various legal steps. These legal processes include counselling, advocacy with political authorities, helping refugees who are detained, securing necessary documentation, providing special assistance to security problems, and explaining the legal situation of the country to the refugees.

CEAS helps refugees find housing, initially in hotels and later elsewhere. In 1987, 17 houses were rented (and two other rental agreements were renewed). These houses, furnished by CEAS, provide the best alternative for the refugees in that they provide an "ambiente" similar to a family home. CEAS also provides assistance with food, clothing and medical service for the refugees. In 1987 dental service was begun with a last-year dental student providing free dental care and CEAS paying for the cost of medicine and materials. In 1987, CEAS social workers expanded and improved their counselling of refugees, seeking both to reduce the anxiety of the refugees and to encourage them to become aware of other resources.

Much of the time of CEAS staff is spent in counselling refugees about employment, education, and personal problems. In 1987, 15 housing projects were implemented although five of these have not yet completed their housing construction. For many refugees, the chance to own a small house, even in the most basic conditions, is central to achieving a durable solution.

In 1987, CEAS organized groups of refugee students to meet together and support each other as a way of enabling refugee students to do better in school. Given their many educational and social problems, these groups and the individual counselling have helped to prevent students from dropping out of the programme.



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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	US\$	Aust.
1986 Balance	10,345	4,409.62
Funds received in 1987 from WCC	42,500	
Total	52,845	

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## Expenditures and exchange rates

March 1987	7,500	11,700.--
June 1987	10,000	17,600.--
November 1987	10,000	39,000.--
December 1987	7,500	35,100.--

Total dollars changed to A 35,000.-

Balance in dollars 31.12.1987 17,845.-

Funds available in Australes	107,859.62
Expenditures	105,664.86
Balance in Australes 31.12.1987	2,194.76

Comisión Argentina para  
Refugiados y Migrantes

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# Expenditures of WCC Funds

Infrastructure Expenses		Australia	
Office expenses		13,483.35	
Rent & related expenses		16,538.21	
Bank charges		2,184.78	
Salaries		30,778.61	
Transportation		5,724.43	
sub-total			68,709.38
Direct Aid to refugees			
Supplementary assistance for food		9,315.50	
Supplement for durable solutions		10,156.20	
Special assistance for study		4,183.78	
sub-total			23,655.48
Contribution for remuneration of one social worker			12,393.00
Contribution for meeting of Chilean refugee women			907.00
			<u>105,664.86</u>



In addition CEAS administered A 318,127.93 from UNHCR, 16,647.10 from Project Counselling Service (employment scholarships, 5,252.12 from the Ecumenical Group for the Third World, and 8,678.79 from World University Service. WCC funds thus covered about 23% of the total funds mobilized by CEAS.



Fundación de Ayuda Social de las Iglesias Cristianas (FASIC)

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Description:

FASIC was created in 1975 to help Chileans affected by the political repression in Chile. Since then FASIC has developed important human rights programmes and serves as a reliable source of information for both international and national organizations.

Although the Chilean government continues its policies of repression and intimidation, many Chileans have chosen to return home from exile. Between 1976 and 1986, 3.196 people have returned under UNHCR auspices - approximately 2.500 of whom have come in the last four years.

The number of Chileans living in exile is estimated at between 30.000 (Chilean government) and 200.000 (Comisión Chilena de Derechos Humanos). There are no governmental programmes to facilitate the re-insertion of exiles into Chilean life.

FASIC initiated its programme of return in April 1978 and presently offers several kinds of assistance to returnees, including:

1. In conjunction with PAS, publication of timely information for Chilean exiles contemplating return in a bi-monthly bulletin. Chile Retorno (see below).
2. Other informational services include the production of ¡Volver!, an audio-visual designed for both exile communities and for Chileans who have remained in Chile to raise their awareness of the problems facing returnees.
3. FASIC also provides financial assistance for immediate needs of returnees, including honouring legal advice, health/transportation, food, education, clothing, and emergency assistance.
4. FASIC provides psychological assistance to returnees experiencing emotional stress through its Programa Medico-Psiquiatrico and Talleres de Terapia.



In 1987, 447 cases, 1,135 persons were assisted in FASIC's return programme. Of these, 312 cases (787 persons) were initiated in 1987, the others entered in 1986. In comparison with 1986, this represents an increase of 42% in the number of cases seen. The returnees came from 39 different countries and were mostly young (62% under 40 years of age) and with technical or professional qualifications. Around 60% of the returnees initially lived with family members - an indication of the serious housing problem facing the returnees.

FASIC offers a number of services to facilitate the re-insertion of the returnees into Chilean life, including orientation and information about various organizations and institutions having programmes for returnees in Chile. As well as assistance with legalization of documents, subsistence food allowances, transportation, health care, and studies.

FASIC offers a programme of study scholarships for young returnees, for both those returning on their own or with their parents. Many of the young returnees face problems with the language, different ways of study and many spend their first year in Chile re-validating their studies carried out abroad. FASIC's scholarship programme, designed to help students with their studies at the technical and/or university level was begun in March 1987. 50 young returnees applied for scholarships, of whom 33 were given scholarships (13 men, 20 women.) 12 carried out technical studies in professional institutes, 21 on the university level.

Social work continued to be a major part of FASIC's programme, including both individual and family counselling in the areas of diagnostics, orientation, counselling and supervision of returnees in the process of re-insertion. In 1987, FASIC provided social assistance to 480 cases, 1,168 persons through 1,760 interviews.

In terms of economic support for individuals and families returning, FASIC provided assistance with transportation (to 36 cases), subsistence for up to 2 months (202 cases), housing (35), health, including laboratory analysis, X-rays, medical and dental visits (131 cases), education, including occasional support for school fees (42 cases) and documentation (17 cases).

In addition, FASIC carried out an active programme of awareness-building about the problems of return through participation in meetings, and press interviews both in Chile and abroad.

Through its Family Reunification programme, carried out in conjunction with UNHCR, 450 cases, 939 persons, benefitted from the project. 204 cases (436 persons) received assistance through the programme (e.g. subsistence, visa fees, airport taxes, etc.). 147 cases (306 persons) were able to be reunited with their families abroad in 25 countries. During the year, 164 cases (341 persons) registered for the programme. At the end of 1987, 36 cases (93 persons) remained pending. The principal beneficiaries for this programme are either generally young (22-35 years old) wives with 2 or 3 minor children seeking to be re-united with a husband holding refugee status abroad or elderly relatives with serious financial and/or psychological problems.



PAS

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OFICINA PLANIFICACION DE LA IGLESIA EPISCOPAL  
COSTARRICENSE (OPIEC)

Director,  
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General Coordinator: Edmundo Desueza  
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Description:

OPIEC has been working with refugees since 1973. At the end of 1981, the emphasis shifted from emergency assistance toward development of self-sufficiency projects. Given the fact that refugees are staying for long periods of time in the country, this was viewed as essential for the refugees. OPIEC's emphasis shifted away from emergency assistance towards development of self-sufficiency projects. OPIEC's Service to Refugees goes far beyond technical assistance and materially aid to refugees. The concern with the pastoral and spiritual dimensions of the refugee's lives is evident on a daily basis. Refugees come to the office for advice, to read the materials available in the documentation centre and to pray together. They meet to study the Bible and to reflect on the meaning and consequences of exile. This dynamic process of theological reflection complements the other parts of OPIEC's work.

Programmes:

OPIEC has three main areas of work:

- 1) Social Assistance, 2) Production, and 3) Social Pastoral Work and three support units: A Documentation Centre, Administrative Support and Coordination.

In its social assistance work, OPIEC serves primarily the most unstable refugee population that is, refugees who are sick and not working in a productive project or have moved from zone to zone in search of better conditions. Through a diagnostic interview, appropriate help is given, whether pastoral counselling or emergency economic assistance. Moreover OPIEC provides help in securing necessary documents, resettlement cases, distribution of food, and training projects. When possible, refugees are incorporated into productive projects which are collectively organized in such activities as tailoring, poultry-raising, small dairy cooperatives and hairdressing. OPIEC offers advice in designing and implementing the projects as well as a system for evaluating their success and problems.



Given the limited number of opportunities for refugees to work in productive projects, OPIEC's programme of production is becoming more important. In these projects, including dairy production and farming, refugees are aided in setting up the work, including feasibility studies and in implementing their projects. Training workshops are offered in basic agrarian techniques and in administration and planning. An agronomist visits the projects to offer advice.

In its pastoral social work, OPIEC works with refugees to explore the meaning of exile. In this work OPIEC organizes monthly eucharist celebrations with refugees - both in San José and in 12 communities - as well as celebrating rites of baptism, marriage, and specific occasions. Through these groups and workshops (with up to 80 participants), refugees come to see the theological implications of their situation and are working to develop a theology of exile. Close cooperation with Catholic agencies is an essential component of this work.

In forming a Documentation Centre, OPIEC is collecting information - books, periodicals, documents - for the use of its staff, refugees and other organizations working with refugees. Through its coordinating function, OPIEC works closely with the other national and international voluntary agencies and with the various governmental refugee-related entities and with UNHCR.





Centro de Coordinación de Proyectos Ecuménicos (CECOPE)

Director: Raul Macín

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Description:

The ecumenical programme of aid for Latin American refugees in Mexico began in 1976. CECOPE provides a unique service by extending assistance through refugees self-help groups in which refugees themselves decide on priorities and needs. All funds received for refugee assistance go directly to the refugees while all overhead expenses are paid by CECOPE with funds from its other programmes. The Refugee Aid Committee meets on the first Wednesday of the month to discuss problems experienced by refugees and to decide on allocation of funds and is made up of representatives of refugee organizations and groups working in Mexico. Refugees are supported during their time of exile in Mexico to defend human rights.

In addition to working with refugee organizations, CECOPE also supports programmes for Latin American refugees on both its northern and southern borders. In Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez, CECOPE works with the Centro de Información y Estudios Migratorios (CIMEM) which is directed by José Luis Pérez Canchola (Tijuana) and by Enrique Monasterio (Ciudad Juárez). These provide legal defence for refugees and visits to prisons where Central Americans are detained as well as advocacy and public education on the plight of refugees. Along the southern border, CECOPE supports the work of the Comité Cristiano de Solidaridad of the Diócesis of San Cristobal de las Casas in Chiapas. Moreover, CECOPE plays an active role in advocating legal defence of refugees in conjunction with CECOPE teams in Tampico and Monterrey.

In 1987, CECOPE continued to support refugee organizations from many different countries, including El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Haiti, Colombia, Chile, and Peru. Due to the political sensitivities, these agencies are not listed, but they include human rights organizations and solidarity groups working among refugee communities. Some of the organizations work to support the struggle back in the country of origin. All are involved in one way or another with denouncing and publicizing human rights violations.

Financial assistance is given for three categories: to refugee organizations, personal (for individual refugees in need of assistance) and special (for trips, emergencies, legal documentation). Assistance given in the three categories is described in the financial section below.

CECOPE also organized and participated in the I Jornadas por los Derechos Humanos en América Latina which was held in cooperation of UAM (the Autonomous Metropolitan University) and the Academia de Derechos Humanos from 30 March-3 April. The Jornadas included panel discussions with presentations by both organizations active with human rights and personal testimonies. The conference was well covered in the press and the testimonies will be published by UAM. It was agreed to convene similar Jornadas on human rights issues every year.



CECOPE also actively participated in the organization of the departure of the Ship of Peace which left Acapulco for Nicaragua on 30 October with 500 tons of supplies.

In September, CECOPE participated through José Luis Pérez Canchola in a meeting on refugees along the northern border which was held in Reynosa, Tamaulipas.

In addition to its financial support for refugees and refugee organizations, CECOPE continued to support the work of the Comité Cristiano de Solidaridad and to coordinate efforts with CIEM in the northern frontier. The situation of refugees in both border zones is acute. In both regions, refugees are subjected to intimidation and extortion, in both the threat of deportation is a serious one. In the south, poverty, malnutrition, and disease are the norm among the refugees. In the north, protection problems are the most serious problem. CIEM works to help individual refugees imprisoned by Mexican officials for approaching the US border. By drawing attention to the plight of such individuals and the abuse that goes on, CIEM has helped to make Central American refugees a public issues on both sides of the border.



## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## CECOPE

Income

Beginning Balance	US\$	4,928,882	
WCC Transfers		Exchange Rates	<u>Mexican Pesos</u>
US\$ Income			
4,500	11.03.87	1,069.80 = US\$ 1	4,814.100
4,500	09.06.87	1,293.75 = US\$ 1	5,821,875
9,500	31.08.87	1,472.20 = US\$ 1	13,985,900
6,000	3.12.87	1,757.30 = US\$ 1	10,543,800
			<u>40,094,557</u>

Expenses

January-February	3,600,000
March-June	7,850,000
July-August	3,600,000
September-December	9,740,000
	<u>24,800,000</u>

Comisión Argentina para  
Refugiados y Migrantes

Closing balance: 15,294,557

Funds distributed to refugee organizations	4,080,000
Personal assistance to individual refugees (25 each month)	10,000,000
Special assistance (airfares, conferences)	4,720,000
Support for CIEM, Tijuana	6,000,000



Panama : HAPP - IEMPA

HAPP (Lutheran Diocese of Costa Rica  
and Panama)  
IEMPA (Evangelical Methodist Church of Panama)

Supervisor:

Rev. Secundino Morales

Address:

Apartado Postal 445  
Panamá 9A  
Republica de Panamá  
Tel: 27-3027

Description:

The Panamanian churches' involvement with refugees dates from 1975 when an agreement between the governments of Chile and Panama brought 110 Chilean political prisoners and their dependents to Panama. After several different cooperative ventures had been tried, in late 1983 the Methodist and Lutheran Churches organized the human rights programme in response to continued requests for aid from "unofficial" refugees. The programme for refugees was incorporated into the general human rights programme of HAPP-IEMPA.

Presently the Panamanian government recognizes 1,200 refugees and exiles while perhaps another 8,000 refugees are not recognized by the government. The Panamanian government has implemented a closed door policy toward refugees in stated response to the "migratory bomb". Governmental social assistance funds have been cut and refugees face serious problems in finding jobs and in lack of labour stability when they do find jobs, as well as problems of documentation.

HAPP-IEMPA provides a number of services to refugees including:

- a) Legal assistance. This included work with respect to all kinds of documentation, power of attorney, different paperwork for different governmental agencies, permission for small productive projects, representation before different court systems, etc.
- b) Assistance for small projects. - Given the often desperate economic situation, support for small productive projects is essential. This included purchase of tools, repairs, etc. The great majority of these activities were carried out in the subsistence level.
- c) Emergency Aid. This is given for serious unforeseen needs in which urgent, immediate assistance is needed and includes medical, housing, food or travel assistance.
- d) Help in communication. This aid is given to refugees to enable them to communicate in exceptional situations, such as repatriation cases, sickness or death of parents, communication with resettlement countries.



e) Information or orientation. This includes providing repatriation, processing in national offices, resettlement employment, etc.

In 1987, the work of the office became much more difficult as a result of the political crisis. The refugee population was very insecure, the authorities adopted a more closed attitude towards refugees, and obtaining necessary documentation became more difficult. One of the HAPP-IEMPA staff was detained for 39 days and accused of threatening the state's security and being a dangerous element. His release was obtained only after the very active intervention of the HAPP-IEMPA staff.

The difficulties in obtaining visas have increased substantially. Similarly, there were a number of difficult cases of refugees who did not obtain refugee status and required legal and other assistance from HAPP-IEMPA. The Panamanian churches see these individuals as particularly vulnerable and in need of assistance.

In the second half of 1987 and partly in response to the deepening political crisis, HAPP-IEMPA developed new criteria for its services to refugees, emphasizing aid to refugees through refugee organizations. Relationships with the Committee of Chilean Political Exiles and with the Salvadoran refugee group were strengthened. Efforts were made to establish systematic relationships with the Guatemalan population. These organizational relationships have enabled HAPP-IEMPA to protect itself somewhat from being taken advantage of by people seeking every pretext to further their own political goals.

Comisión Argentina para  
Refugiados y Migrantes

#### Observations

The office has been able to maintain a small non-governmental structure and to maintain the Christian presence in refugee work. Informal agreements have been worked out with governmental institutions and with ICM. The organisms of the Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran churches recognize this programme as the only non-governmental programme working with refugees. Refugee groups see the programme as a real alternative when government assistance is not possible. The programme has provided a discreet alternative and real attention for refugees. Moreover, the programme has provided assistance for officially non-recognized refugees, enabling many to regularize their status.

The difficulties have resulted from the government's efforts to centralize refugee activities which has impeded collective solutions. Moreover, legislation which does not provide the refugees with a regular legal status is an obstacle to the work. The continued closed door policy is an ongoing problem as is the high rate of unemployment.



**Financial Statement 1987\***

(US\$)

**Income**

WCC Refugee Service	US\$ 5,000.-
Other WCC, NCCCUSA	12,493.75
Partial reimbursement for documentation of refugees	375.-

<b>Total</b>	<b>17,868.75</b>	<b>36,370.27</b>
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**Expenses**

Emergency Assistance and support for small projects	US\$ 2,323.69
Documentation, fines, paper-works, etc.	1,724.40
Salaries	17,200.45
Legal Services	1,861.41
Equipment & office supplies	224.57
Transportation	1,995.81
Educational materials	98.47
Utilities, telephone	
Administration & petty cash	
Miscellaneous	488.30

<b>Total</b>	<b>26,799.66</b>
<b>Balance, 30 Sept. 1987</b>	<b>9,570.61</b>



\* This financial statement covers the 1 January-30 September 1987 period and includes BOTH the human rights and refugee programmes. Service to refugees is an integral part of the overall human rights programme of HAPP-IEMPA.



### Servicio Ecuménico de Reintegración

Coordinator: Luis Saldías

Address: Colonia 1870

Montevideo

Uruguay

Tel: 40.11.16 al 19

Telex: CLACJ UY 23106

In 1984, the Uruguayan military dictatorship begun to move toward democracy and it became clear that many Uruguayans would return from exile. The churches began to mobilize to help Uruguayans in exile who wanted to return. These early efforts were quickly overtaken by events. By early 1985, thousands of Uruguayans were returning or planning to return and SER, Servicio Ecuménico de Reintegración, was born. SER is actively supported by six churches or ecumenical organizations: Iglesia Evangélica Metodista en el Uruguay, Iglesia Evangelica del Rio de la Plata, the Arzobispado de Montevideo, Iglesia Waldense, Servicio de Paz y Justicia, and the Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes (YMCA). The ecumenical experience has proven to be a very positive one. The churches each have a delegate in the Executive Commission which until recently, met weekly to analyze and approve projects.

The governmental statistics indicate that during the past 15 years, 350,000 Uruguayans have left the country of whom SER estimates 10% were political exiles. Of that number, approximately 15,000 have returned (roughly 25%). The number of returnees has dropped dramatically and staff feel that few additional exiles will return. Presently SER is not accepting new projects for consideration but rather is working to consolidate the projects already in operation. SER sees its work as continuing through the end of 1988.

Since its inception, SER has worked with three groups of people damaged by the repression "liberados" (former political prisoners), returned political exiles, and with a much smaller number of relatives of the disappeared. An estimated 8,000 people have been helped - either directly or indirectly - by SER.

In the initial phases of its work SER provided emergency assistance and concentrated its efforts in supporting projects for labour re-insertion. In December 1986, after having reviewed 440 project proposals, SER stopped accepting new applications except for consolidation of existing projects.

In 1987, the main thrust of SER's work was the consolidation and evaluation of the projects. By the end of 1987, SER had received 448 proposals, approved 250 projects of which 151 (60%) were considered active, the rest having been cancelled or suspended. About half of these projects were by returnees, the remainder were former political prisoners or relatives of disappeared. About 53% of the still functioning projects were in production enterprises (crafts, agriculture, etc.) and 47% provided some kind of service (kiosks, restaurants, mechanics, etc.). About 33% of the project-holders were women. 82% of the projects were micro-enterprises (employing 1-4 persons) with cooperatives making up about 4% and small businesses about 18%. The projects provided over 400 jobs and of the 151 active projects, 80% were able to pay the national



minimum wage (about US\$ 70.-) or more.

Also in mid-1987, SER began a preliminary study of the reasons for the cancellation of the 73 projects, finding the following reasons: mergers (2), medical problems (8), bankruptcies (9), "stages" (22), and "diverted" (32). "Stages" refers to those projects which served a useful purpose at one time to the project-holders but were closed either at SER's initiative or when the individual moved on to something else. "Diverted" refers to those case where funds intended for the projects were diverted to other ends. A recent evaluation by SER shows that of the projects still functioning, about 70% are functioning well.

During 1987 the phase of consolidation, 58% of the projects received grants to consolidate SER, or expand their operations. This support is intended to help projects consolidate their gains.

During 1987, SER sponsored a number of meetings and seminars, the most important of which was the National Meeting of Projects which brought together project-holders from all over the country for three days in October. Both the national meeting and the smaller, more specific meetings enable project-holders to consider ways of coordinating their work and pooling their resources. For example, the 15 projects working in agriculture and livestock production are in the process of opening a joint stand in the fruit and vegetable market of Montevideo. Craft producers are working to establish the locale for a joint sales shops in Montevideo, called La Tinaga. Other special projects which might be developed in 1988 include a farm in central Uruguay and establishment of a day care centre in Montevideo.

SER has benefitted greatly from the support of various institutions. The YMCA and the Methodist Church of Argentina together contribute about US\$ 11,500 in services and support to SER while some 20 volunteer professionals donate their time.

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PROJECT 205-7206

REGIONAL: LATIN AND CENTRAL AMERICA 1987

I N C O M E

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>DONOR AGENCY</u>	<u>RECEIPTS</u> <u>US\$</u>
Opening Balance		44,214
AUSTRALIA	ACC/DWCA	7,181
CANADA	ACC/PWRDF	15,294
CANADA	UCC/DWO	9,752
FINLAND	Finnchurchaid	40,000
GERMANY	Diakon.Werk	30,000
GERMANY	KED ?	136,935
NETH ERLANDS	ADB	20,564
NETHERLANDS	Stichting	49,239
NEW ZEALAND	CWS	5,885
NORWAY	Norw.Ch.Aid	18,684
SWEDEN	Ch. of Swed. Aid	125,000
SWEDEN	Swed.Free Ch. Aid	117,821 *
USA	Presbyterian	10,000
USA	Week of Comp.	4,600
VARIOUS		2,554
Total		<u>637,723</u>



\*designated for Haiti

E X P E N S E S

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>LISTED 1987</u>	<u>TRANSFERRED</u> <u>US\$</u>	<u>RECIPIENT</u>
ARGENTINA	100,000	80,000	CAREF
ARGENTINA	50,000	42,500	CEAS
CHILE	65,000	55,000	FASIC
CHILE	5,000	5,000	PAS
COSTA RICA	90,000	85,000	OPIEC
HAITI		120,000	Egl.Meth.
MEXICO	60,000	24,500	CECOPE
PANAMA	20,000	7,000	HAPP-IEMPA
URUGUAY	100,000	70,000	Igl.Ev.Met.
Aged/Handicapped; OPH, Pastoral Care (reg.)	70,000	8,484	
Other Countries/ Fares	50,000	17,001	
Total	<u>610,000</u>	<u>514,485</u>	

COMMITMENT REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1987

8018 4/14



## EXPENSES

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>LISTED 1987</u>	<u>TRANSFERRED</u>	<u>RECIPIENT</u>
		<u>US\$</u>	
USA	50,000	20,000	E1 Rescue
Total	<u>50,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>	