

the United Nations Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which Ottawa ratified in 1987.

In its 1986 annual report, Amnesty International has once again referred to human rights violations by many governments around the world. The report gives details of the organization's research in 129 countries responsible for these violations. It addresses the issue of refugees who are often forced to leave their countries to avoid persecution. This fact is quite evident in many regions of the world; there are refugees in exile in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, America and Europe. Amnesty International's report underscores that governments have become more restrictive toward those who seek political asylum due to their increasing numbers and to pressing economic conditions. Amnesty International is concerned that host states, particularly in Europe and North America, tend to consider asylum requests as unfounded. It contends that governments have the obligation to ensure that legitimate political refugees seeking asylum are not turned back. Nevertheless, Amnesty International points out that even though humanitarian actions towards refugees are vital, they can have only limited success as long as the human rights violations, underlying this massive wave of refugees, are not stopped.¹

Current Canadian Position

In a speech given at the Technical University of Nova Scotia on 23 August 1987, the Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark referred to the Human Rights issue. He pointed out : "(...) Canada, of course,

¹ Amnesty International Report 1987, London : Amnesty International publication, 1987.