



No. 33

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
26 May 1969

CANADIAN ADHERENCE TO REFUGEE AGREEMENTS

Canada today announced official acceptance of international standards for the protection of refugees and of the approved international and universal definition of the term "refugee".

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, and the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, the Honourable A. J. MacEachen, announced Canada's adherence to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, to the 1965 Protocol to that Convention, and to the Hague Agreement on Refugee Seamen.

The Convention, adopted by the United Nations in July 1951, is the major international instrument for the protection of refugees. It establishes a common definition of the term "refugee", lays down specific standards for the treatment of refugees in the country of sanctuary or residence and contains safeguards against their expulsion. It does not detract from a country's right to control admission.

The Protocol, adopted by the United Nations in 1967, recognizes the universal nature of the refugee problem and its indefinite duration. Originally the Convention mainly covered persons displaced as the result of the two world wars and in its definition limited its scope to persons made refugees "as a result of events occurring before January 1, 1951" - in effect to persons in Europe.

The Hague Agreement on Refugee Seamen, concluded in 1957 under the auspices of the International Labour Organization, deals with the problem of refugee seamen on merchant ships who, owing to lack of documents permitting them to return to any country, are sometimes unable to set