



Canada's new refugee determination system: a painstaking redesign to help those most in need.

applies as well to claims from people convicted of serious crimes, those who already enjoy refugee status, or those who have a refugee claim pending in countries that are not threatening them with *refoulement* (removal to a country where the claimant fears persecution).


Working internationally for refugee protection

'Canada's record as a sanctuary for the oppressed and persecuted is second to none,' says J B Bissett, executive director of Immigration. 'Its international role is carried out, in part, through a significant resettlement Programme. Canada's service to refugees was formally recognised when in 1986 the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees awarded this country the Nansen medal.'

In fact, since the Second World War, more than 500 000 refugees have come to Canada to rebuild their lives. Each year, the government and

individual Canadians sponsor the entry of thousands of refugees from camps abroad. No other country with an equivalent number of refugee claimants has extended as many rights and guarantees as those granted to people seeking refugee status in Canada.

'While Canada's role as a resettlement country is widely recognised, its level of financial support to refugees in Third World countries is also significant,' says Bissett. Canada is a leading contributor to international humanitarian bodies such as the Red Cross and the UN High Commission on Refugees. Resettlement assistance and food aid are also provided to refugees around the world.

In addition, Canada works actively on the diplomatic front to promote better standards of human rights observance and to support the search for durable solutions to international refugee problems. 

Canadian studies in Britain

In January 1989 the Refugee studies Programme at Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford University, together with the Centre for Refugee Studies at York University, Ontario, organised a symposium on 'The Refugee Crisis: British and Canadian Responses'. The Oxford group was awarded an Institutional Research Grant for research about Canada by a team of academics in a British higher education institution leading to publication. The grant is administered by the Academic Relations Section of the Canadian High Commission, London. The project represents one kind of initiative supported by the Canadian Studies in Britain programme which encourages the development of teaching, research and publication about Canada in Britain; and collaboration with Canadian Universities. Further information is available from the Academic Relations Officer at Canada House.

'The Refugee Crisis: British and Canadian Responses' - an international exercise in consultation and collaboration

written by
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Symposium Organiser.

In 1982, the Refugee Studies Programme (RSP) was established as part of the International Development Centre at the University of Oxford. It aims to provide an independent forum where experience can be shared by academics, refugees, agency workers, and representatives from host governments, in the hope that understanding of the issues confronting refugees, their hosts and the international community may be promoted.

Earlier this year from January 4th to the 7th, an International Symposium on 'The Refugee Crisis: British and Canadian Responses' was co-organised by the Refugee Studies Programme (RSP) and the Centre for Refugee Studies, York University, Canada. The Symposium was supported financially by a grant from the UK Home Office and the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa.

Timothy Renton, Minister of State represented the British Government. Dr Stanley Knight, Assistant Deputy Chairman, Convention Refugee Determination Division of the new Immigration and Refugee Board, represented Canada.

The purpose of the Symposium was to get refugees, government officials and humanitarian agencies from both Britain and Canada talking to one another, to share experience and to exchange perspectives on issues related to the refugee crisis. The Symposium was attended by a wide range of academics, practitioners and government officials; from the UK and Canada there was representation from fifty-one non-governmental organisations (NGOs), twenty-seven academic institutions, eleven central and local government departments and eleven different media organisations.