

Our embassy in Beirut closed down in 1985 as a result of the unstable situation in Lebanon. A new embassy was opened in Damascus, Syria, and immigration operations for Syria, Lebanon and Jordan were centered there.

The Dominican Republic was taken off the list of countries whose citizens may visit Canada without a visa. Most of the applications are handled without difficulty by our embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Canada continues to contribute actively to the resettlement of refugees and oppressed or displaced persons in numerous parts of the world. The Annual Refugee Plan to admit 11 000 refugees or members of categories under direct State sponsorship in 1985 was oversubscribed: government-assisted refugees totalled 11 408 during the past year. Of this number, 4 373 were from South Asia; 3 206 from Latin America; 2 494 from Eastern Europe; 802 from Africa; and 533 from the Middle East. Another 3 763 were admitted under private sponsorship.

Canada's efforts to remedy the refugee problem included numerous diplomatic efforts on the bilateral and multilateral levels, studies of the political and other underlying reasons for refugee movements and a search for lasting solutions, such as voluntary repatriation, local integration and third-country resettlement.

Canada is also involved in the Anti-Piracy Program in the Gulf of Thailand, and in the DISERO and RASRO programs of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. These plans offer resettlement for Indo-Chinese rescued in the China Sea, and guarantee their resettlement in a third country. In 1985-86, 173 refugees were resettled in Canada under these two programs.

Private international law

The Department offers a variety of services to facilitate legal proceedings involving Canadian and foreign jurisdictions on the basis of conventions or by arranged procedures. Social security benefits, maintenance orders, judgments and other related matters have become subjects of international co-operation because of the greater mobility of individuals. As many of these subjects come under provincial jurisdiction, the Department maintains contact with the provinces to establish and administer the necessary reciprocal arrangements. It has published a booklet entitled *International Judicial Co-operation in Civil, Commercial, Administrative and Criminal Matters* to assist Canadian lawyers and law enforcement officials with international legal problems.

Canada has conventions on legal proceedings in civil and commercial matters with 19 countries. These conventions provide for the service of legal documents on a reciprocal basis and for the taking of evidence in civil cases either in Canada for use abroad or in a foreign country for use in Canada. The Department is able to arrange for the service of legal documents abroad to convention countries and thus be of assistance to Canadian lawyers. The Department has also been successful in serving legal documents abroad in non-convention countries on the basis of reciprocity. Solicitors who wish assistance in serving legal documents abroad should contact the Legal Advisory Division of the Department.

Canada has extradition treaties with some 41 countries and extradition arrangements with Commonwealth countries pursuant to the Commonwealth Fugitive Offenders Scheme. The Department, in conjunction with the Department of Justice, is responsible for updating these treaties and entering into new agreements. New treaties have been negotiated with Belgium, France and the Netherlands but these are not yet in force. Part II of the *Extradition Act* was proclaimed to be in force and effect with India on October 31, 1985. It does not have retroactive effect. The question of Canada entering into a bilateral extradition treaty with India is under active consideration by the Department.

The Department continued to be involved in the international aspects of a number of civil kidnappings or "childnapping" cases involving disputes between a mother and a father over custody of a child. The Department has attempted to obtain reports on the well-being of the children involved and, where possible, has helped arrange for their return to Canada. In part because of the acute personal distress caused by such disputes, there has been considerable public interest in the role of the federal and provincial governments. The Department, of course, cannot represent a parent whose child has been abducted before a foreign court or give advice on foreign law.

Canada is a party to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. Its main purpose is to ensure judicial co-operation in achieving the prompt return of a child wrongfully removed from the custodial parent to the country from which he or she was abducted.

Access to information and privacy

The Co-ordinator for Access to Information and Privacy was responsible for processing all formal requests for access to government records controlled by the Department in accordance with the Access to Information and Privacy legislation.

Immigration and refugees

Visas issued during the 1985 calendar year

Post or area	Immigrant visas	Visitor visas
WESTERN HEMISPHERE		
United States	10 345	79 434
The Caribbean	3 855	20 082
South & Central America	6 567	14 677
Sub-total	20 767	114 193
AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST		
Africa	2 404	14 395
Middle East	2 555	7 119
Sub-total	4 959	21 514
EUROPE		
Western Europe	12 219	31 278
Eastern Europe	4 201	31 787
Sub-total	16 420	63 065
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC		
Bangkok	7 679	2 864
Hong Kong	10 080	18 101
New Delhi	4 843	19 934
Other posts	8 062	31 350
Sub-total	30 664	72 249
TOTAL	72 810	271 021

Note: In 1985 24 894 visitor visas were issued at Canadian posts where there are no immigration facilities. (Data preliminary and subject to revision). Furthermore, British missions also issued 1 387 visitor visas on Canada's behalf during the year. These data are not available on a fiscal year basis.