

OUR OWN POLICIES WITH RESPECT TO WOMEN REFUGEES ARE BEING REVIEWED. EARLIER THIS YEAR, PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES TO ENHANCE PROTECTION FOR WOMEN REFUGEES WERE ISSUED BY CANADA'S IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE BOARD WHICH IS CHARGED WITH DETERMINING THE STATUS OF ASYLUM SEEKERS.

THE GUIDELINES ENSURE THAT CANADIAN REFUGEE STATUS DETERMINATION IS DONE WITH SENSITIVITY AND WITH DUE ATTENTION TO SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES--SUCH AS SEXUAL VIOLENCE--WHICH FACE WOMEN ASYLUM SEEKERS IN THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN. THESE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES CAN, IN CERTAIN CASES, CONSTITUTE PERSECUTION.

WE ARE GREATLY ENCOURAGED THAT A NUMBER OF OUR PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEASURES TO DEAL WITH THE NEEDS OF WOMEN ASYLUM SEEKERS AND TO PREVENT AND COMBAT SEXUAL VIOLENCE WERE INCLUDED IN THE CONCLUSIONS ADOPTED BY THE UNHCR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING IS ONE MEANS OF PROTECTION. OUR EFFORTS IN THIS AREA HAVE HELPED TO MAINTAIN CONDITIONS OF SAFETY AND DIGNITY FOR REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS IN EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD.

IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT PEACE-KEEPING IS NOT A SOLUTION TO ANY CONFLICT--IT IS AN INTERIM MEASURE ONLY. THE ONUS IN THESE SITUATIONS IS ON THE COMBATANTS, WHOSE WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE FACILITATES POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO REFUGEE CRISES.

SOLUTIONS

MR. CHAIRMAN,

CANADA TAKES ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE 1951 CONVENTION RELATING TO THE STATUS OF REFUGEES SERIOUSLY; SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR II, WE HAVE RESETTLED OVER 650,000 REFUGEES IN OUR COUNTRY.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT NO ONE COUNTRY ALONE CAN DEAL WITH ASYLUM SEEKER FLOWS. WE WOULD GO FURTHER AND SAY THAT IT IS INDEED ASKING MUCH FOR ONE ORGANIZATION SUCH AS THE UNHCR TO FULFIL ITS MANDATE ALONE.

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S FIVE-POINT PARTNERSHIP MODEL, WHICH SHE PRESENTED AT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, RECOGNIZES THIS FACT. ANY COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY MUST NECESSARILY INCLUDE THE POLITICAL ARMS OF THE UN AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS; HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE UN SYSTEM; NGOS; DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS; AND GOVERNMENTS.

SOLUTIONS TO REFUGEE SITUATIONS WILL BE MORE EASILY OBTAINED BY PURSUING OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES WHICH FOCUS ON PRACTICAL, FLEXIBLE, CONSTANT COORDINATION WITH PARTNERS BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE UN SYSTEM, PARTICULARLY THE DHA. WE NOTE IN THIS REGARD USEFUL PRECEDENTS SUCH AS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CENTRAL AMERICAN REFUGEES.

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