



news release

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CANADA CONTRIBUTES \$1.5 MILLION FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall, and the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, Mary Collins, today announced that Canada is providing \$1.5 million in humanitarian assistance for women and children victims of sexual violence and other atrocities of war in the former Yugoslavia. These new funds will be channelled to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

"Canadians are shocked by the appalling practice of rape and sexual assault of women and children in the former Yugoslavia," said Mrs. McDougall. "While the solution ultimately lies in bringing the conflict to an end, it is imperative that we continue to help relieve the suffering of innocent victims, especially women and children."

The Canadian contribution of \$1 million to UNHCR, and \$0.5 million to UNICEF is in addition to the \$250,000 contributed to UNHCR last December, specifically for rape victims. The funds will be used to support programs and activities addressing the needs of women and children who have been subjected to rape, sexual abuse and other trauma. The programs provide medical supplies, mobile rape-trauma counselling services, as well as food, clothing and shelter materials.

Canada is actively supporting the United Nations Commission of Experts in its investigations of war crimes. "As we prepare to mark International Women's Day in 1993, it is abhorrent that we must still deal with repulsive acts of violence against women and children," said Mrs. Collins. "Canada strongly believes those responsible for breaches of humanitarian law must be brought to account before the international community."

This contribution brings Canada's humanitarian assistance to the former Yugoslavia to \$26.75 million. Further assistance is under active consideration in response to appeals from international humanitarian agencies.

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