

CCR Resolutions

The Canadian Council for Refugees celebrated its annual conference in Toronto on November 24-26. We have selected below some of the resolutions passed during the closing session.

Somali Refugees

Be it resolved that:

The Canadian Council for Refugees shall strongly urge the Government of Canada to render immediate assistance in the following ways:

1. To take immediate steps to resettle Somali refugees in Canada so that families can be reunited;
2. To extend speedy processing to Somali refugees now in Canada to enable them to sponsor their families;
3. To increase direct aid in the form of food and medical supplies to the growing numbers of Somali refugees in Ethiopia; and
4. To use all available diplomatic means to ensure the safety of those fleeing and to prevent forced repatriation of Somali refugees to a situation in which the most basic of human rights will clearly not be extended for as long as the present regime or its chosen successors remain in power in Somalia.

New Determination System

Be it resolved:

1. That a special programme be instituted immediately, given the

January 1, 1989 implementation date of the new determination system, to resolve the future of the claimant backlog;

2. That such programme accept for landing all claimants in the backlog for whom there is no alleged security/criminality issue, under relaxed and specially targeted criteria;
3. That claimants involved in alleged security/criminality issues be given a detailed review hearing on these issues as part of the special programme;
4. That all claimants in the backlog in Canada on or before the programme announcement date be eligible for the special programme;
5. That any person already in Canada who has indicated or in future, prior to the date announcement of the programme, indicates to the Immigration Commission their intention to make a claim at inquiry, will be considered included in the claimant backlog;
6. That persons awaiting an inquiry in the USA who indicated to the Commission prior to the announcement of the programme their intention to make a claim at the "in Canada" inquiry when held, will be considered part of the backlog;
7. That claimants already rejected by the Minister of Immigration or by the Immigration Appeal Board,

whether under removal order or not, be considered part of the backlog;

8. That claimants in the backlog not accepted under the special programme be allowed to have their refugee claim determined on its merits either under the old or new determination system.

Protection

Be it resolved that the Canadian Council for Refugees:

1. Reaffirm its opposition to the system contained in the *Immigration Act, S.C., 1988, Chapter 35*, which does not guarantee protection for refugees in Canada for procedures which conform with fundamental principles of natural justice;
2. Press its members to participate in the Canadian Council of Churches' educational and fundraising activities with regard to the court challenge.

Safe Country

Be it resolved:

1. That the Canadian Council for Refugees respond to the Minister of Immigration by declaring that no country can be inherently

"safe" to all refugees of a given nationality or class and that therefore all claimants must have a determination on the merits in Canada of their case, in order to ensure that proper protection to the refugee can be assured;

2. That the members of the Canadian Council for Refugees be encouraged to adopt this position in their own organizations, communicate it to the Minister with a copy to the Canadian Council for Refugees, the Toronto Refugee Affairs Council, Toronto, and La Table de concertation de Montréal;
3. That the Canadian Council for Refugees request the Minister to repeal immediately the sections of the Immigration Act concerning intermediate country ineligibility.

Legal Aid

Be it resolved that:

1. All provinces provide legal aid for refugee claimants;
2. The legal aid be available both at the inquiry and the refugee claim;
3. The federal government contribute to the provincial cost of provision of legal aid for refugee claimants.

U.S. Arrivals

Be it resolved that:

1. All refugee claimants from the U.S., and elsewhere, be allowed entry to Canada pending the scheduling of their inquiries;
2. Refugee claimants be given the benefit of a speedy inquiry and refugee claims procedure;
3. Refugee claimants residing or sojourning in the U.S. who wish to remain in the U.S. pending their inquiries be allowed to do so;
4. Entry of refugee claimants from the U.S. be allowed pending the

Recommendations from CCR's Workshop on "Women at Risk" Programme

1. That the Executive of the CCR communicate to the Government of Canada:
 - a) support for the continued selection of women under the "Women at Risk" programme and regular refugee programmes – government assistance, joint assistance and private sponsorship of women and their children who are heads of household.
 - b) a recommendation to increase the total intake of refugee women to more adequately reflect the resettlement needs of the global female refugee population.
 - c) that increased resources be allocated to ensure the involvement of women refugees in the design and development of creative and innovative resettlement programmes.
2. That the Working Group on Refugee Women:
 - a) in co-operation with the UHCR and the federal government develop and implement a monitoring system which will:
 - i) identify the particular needs and problems of women refugees with particular concern for regional differences;
 - ii) identify the resources utilized by the refugee women and their support groups to access effective and culturally sensitive services.
 - b) continue to develop strategies which will identify needs and appropriate solutions with respect to the adjustment of refugee women.
 - c) promote at all levels, government, NGO and UNHCR, the development of strategies and resources to ensure a humane and equitable adaptation process for all women refugees in Canada. Special emphasis should be placed on issues of language training, health services, family counselling, support networks, employment and day-care.

scheduling of their inquiries both under the present law and under the new law;

5. The law be amended to provide for entry from the U.S.D. pending the scheduling of inquiries for all those who wish to avail themselves of this provision;
6. Before any such amendment, the discretion of immigration officers to allow entry from the U.S. prior to the scheduling of refugee claims be exercised in favour of refugee claimants who wish to enter Canada.

Overseas Protection

Be it resolved that:

1. The CCR create a task force on overseas protection to report on the refugee claim procedure and selection at Canadian visa offices abroad.