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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
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UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS:
REPORT FOR 1993-1994 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND
BUDGET FOR 1995

PART IV. THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

Section 3 - Canada

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

IV.3 CANADA

Country Overview

Characteristics of the refugee population

1. According to statistics provided by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 263,600 asylum claims were submitted in Canada between 1984 and 1993. In 1993, 20,500 claims were filed, down from some 37,700 in 1992. Of the claims reviewed by the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) and concluded in 1993, 55 per cent were recognized, compared to 61 per cent in 1992 and 69 per cent in 1991.

2. The three largest groups of asylum-seekers filing claims with the IRB during 1993 were nationals of Sri Lanka, Somalia and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

3. In Canada, convention status refugees are admitted under the Convention Refugee programme. Under "designated classes", persons in a 'refugee-like' situation are admitted. The "special measures" programme concerns non-refugee 'landings' for eligible citizens from designated countries, including the republics of former Yugoslavia. 'Landings' refer to permission granted abroad or within Canada to stay to establish permanent residence.

4. Total humanitarian admissions in Canada were as follows:

	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993*</u>
Refugees	28,700	21,800
Designated Classes	23,200	8,000
Special measures	<u>900</u>	<u>3,600</u>
<u>Total</u>	52,800	33,400

* preliminary

Programme objectives and priorities

5. Country programme objectives established by the UNHCR Branch Office in Canada for 1994 and 1995 remain similar to those of previous years.

Local settlement

6. UNHCR continues to advocate a refugee resettlement programme responding to refugee protection needs rather than to Canadian immigration criteria. Efforts will be focused on the resettlement of refugees under humanitarian programmes such as Canada's women-at-risk programme, currently under review. In addition, UNHCR supports the reinstatement of Canada's handicapped refugee admission programme.

Voluntary repatriation

7. UNHCR continues to facilitate and promote family reunification and voluntary repatriation. The Office will provide refugees with counselling, information and assistance regarding educational opportunities and material assistance.

Arrangements for implementation/related inputs

8. CARE Canada continues as the implementing partner for UNHCR's local settlement project in Canada. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) will continue to repatriate persons determined by UNHCR to be eligible for voluntary repatriation assistance.

General Programmes

(a) Variations in planned activities in 1993

9. Projections show that in 1993, 6,300 refugees arrived as government sponsored refugees and another 4,600 were privately sponsored.

10. During the year, federal and provincial Governments, local authorities and NGOs addressed the needs of refugees resettled in Canada. UNHCR provided assistance on a temporary basis, mainly to refugees and asylum-seekers in severe need.

11. Sixty-three persons, mostly Chileans, were assisted in voluntary repatriation in 1993. The numbers remained close to the 1992 figure despite an increase in the number of requests. Although the phasing out of the South African Repatriation operation generated a slight increase in the number of inquiries from applicants wishing to register to return before the 31 August deadline, the number of returnees continued to be low largely because of security problems in South Africa.

(b) 1994 planned implementation

12. The Canadian resettlement quota in 1994 for government-sponsored refugees was set at 7,300, with 850 of those from Africa, 2,000 from the Middle East, 1,050 from Asia and the Pacific, 550 from Latin America, 2,450 from Europe, and a reserve quota of 400 refugees. The Canadian Government's policy of not imposing a ceiling on the number of refugees sponsored privately by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) remained unchanged, and some 6,000 are expected to arrive in 1994.

13. Subsequent to the announcement of the new Canadian Minister of Citizenship and Immigration early in the year that refugee claimants would be eligible to work in Canada while awaiting a decision on their applications, additional changes affecting refugees and immigrants were announced in the spring. A federal welfare programme will be restricted to sponsored refugees, and fees for immigration services have been increased substantially. The new minister also appointed a committee of experts to review key elements of Canada's immigration and refugee programme, including the possibility of appealing rejected cases based on merit, improvements in the post-claim review procedure, and clarification of the criteria for humanitarian and compassionate review.

14. In 1994, UNHCR continues to work closely with the federal Government and provincial authorities in Canada to bring resettlement operations in line with UNHCR policy and refugee needs. The Office is also working closely with the Canadian Council for Refugees, which makes recommendations to the Government and to private sponsor groups on resettlement policy, procedures and priorities.

15. UNHCR is communicating refugee resettlement priorities through an ongoing outreach programme to Canadian NGOs, sponsor groups, university students and other interested persons. UNHCR is also liaising with various government authorities to expedite processing for family reunification cases.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

Local settlement

16. In 1995, UNHCR will continue working to harmonize Canada's refugee policy with UNHCR's perception of refugee needs and resettlement priorities. It is expected that the Canadian Government's resettlement quota for refugees processed outside Canada will be similar to 1993 and 1994 levels - approximately 7,000 for government-sponsored refugees and an unlimited number for privately sponsored refugees. UNHCR will support the Government's policy of moving towards a more liberal and humanitarian interpretation of the refugee definition under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees as a basis for refugee admission. UNHCR also hopes to continue to work closely with federal authorities to remove certain admissibility criteria and adopt expedited resettlement processing procedures for emergency protection cases. In addition, UNHCR will support the reinstatement of Canada's handicapped refugee admission programme.

17. UNHCR will encourage private sponsor groups to support such initiatives as the five-year women-at-risk programme and to sponsor vulnerable cases. Furthermore, UNHCR will work to enhance public awareness of its resettlement programme. The Office will also continue its educational activities and training of staff of NGOs, church groups, sponsor groups, university students and the general public through workshops, conferences and seminars focusing on the global refugee situation and the role of resettlement in Canada.

Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

(a) **Variations in planned activities in 1993**

18. A Refugee Law Training Officer post was created mid-year as planned to provide training to immigration officers throughout Canada, but remained unfilled throughout the year. As a result, salaries and related costs as well as non-staff costs in Canada during 1993 were considerably lower than revised estimates.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

19. Revised estimates for 1994 remain at the initial level for staff and non-staff costs.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

20. Estimates for programme delivery and administrative costs in 1995 are similar to 1994 estimates, as no significant changes are planned for the office in Canada.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN CANADA

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994		1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES				
39.8 a/	-	-	VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION	-
421.8	546.9	435.6	LOCAL SETTLEMENT	440.2
0.2 a/	-	-	RESETTLEMENT	-
-	-	566.9	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Annexes I a and II a	554.1
461.8	546.9	1,002.5	SUB-TOTAL OPERATIONS	994.3
429.0	569.3	84.6	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Annexes I b and II b	90.2
890.8	1,116.2	1,087.1	GRAND TOTAL	1,084.5

a/ obligation incurred against overall allocation