



UNHCR welcomes positive elements in the Canadian refugee reform, as Bill C-31, *Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act*, receives Royal Assent

Ottawa, June 29, 2012 — Today as Bill C-31, Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act received royal assent, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) welcomes the positive elements introduced with the refugee reform and the important amendments brought to Bill C-31 during the legislative process.

UNHCR supports Canada's refugee reform and its commitment to achieving faster and more efficient asylum procedures. In particular, UNHCR recognises the introduction of an appeal mechanism and welcomes measures to facilitate the reintegration of failed asylum claimants in their country of origin. UNHCR believes that these legislative changes reinforce Canada's long standing humanitarian tradition of providing protection and assistance to tens of thousands of refugees each year.

UNHCR appreciates the constructive dialogue on Bill C-31, most notably with respect to detention issues and the non-revocation of permanent residence for refugees on the grounds of "changed circumstances in the country of origin".

UNHCR looks forward to working with the authorities in the same collaborative spirit during the regulatory and implementation processes.

For more information:

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Backgrounders:

UNHCR's primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. In its efforts to achieve this objective, the Office strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another State, and to return home voluntarily. The UN refugee agency, which has won two Nobel Peace Prizes, was established by the UN General Assembly in 1950 and works in partnership with governments, regional organizations, international and non-governmental organizations.

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