UNHCR's REFWORLD – CASE LAW COLLECTION USER GUIDE

For more information about the content and browse/search capabilities of Refworld, please see the "Frequently Asked Questions" page.

For comments/feedback or suggestions on Refworld's content, please contact SDPIS at refworld@unhcr.org. Full contact details can be found on the "Contact" page of Refworld online.

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction to Refworld

UNHCR's Refworld (www.refworld.org) is the leading source of information enabling high quality refugee status determination. Refworld is a collection of relevant and up-to-date public-domain documents from UNHCR and its information partners throughout the world. Refworld contains country of origin/asylum information reports, policy documents, documents relating to international and national legal frameworks, and other reference documents. The information has been carefully selected and compiled from UNHCR's global network of field offices, governments, international, regional and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and judicial bodies. Refworld contains over 108,000 full-text searchable documents.

1.2 Case Law Collection

The Refworld Case Law collection currently comprises over 7,300 decisions/judgments from over 160 national and international courts, administrative tribunals and other judicial bodies. The collection focuses on asylum/refugee law and human rights issues, and covers more than 45 national jurisdictions, and a substantial number of international judgments and decisions from the United Nations, the European Court of Human Rights and other international and regional courts.

As Refworld is mainly an English-language information tool, majority of the available case law is in English. However, hundreds of decisions/judgments are also available in French, Spanish, German and Portuguese.

2. CASE LAW SELECTION METHODOLOGY

2.1 Precedent-Setting and Country Guidance

Whilst the Case Law collection focuses mainly on asylum/refugee law and human rights issues, it also contains a selection of key jurisprudence dealing with international humanitarian and international criminal law, immigration and counter-terrorism. This includes, for example, an exhaustive collection of trial and appeal judgments from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Case law is selected for its precedent-setting value. As such, the collection comprises key decisions/judgments from the highest national instances (e.g. UK House of Lords, US Supreme Court, High Court of Australia, Conseil d'état (France)), regional (e.g. European Court of Human Rights, Inter-American Court of Human Rights, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights) and international bodies (e.g. UN Committee Against Torture, UN Human Rights Committee), but also first appeal instances, particularly where decisions provide country guidance (e.g. Cour nationale du droit d'asile (France), Refugee Status Appeals Authority of New Zealand, UK Asylum and Immigration Tribunal, US Board of Immigration Appeals).

2.2 Geographical and Language Diversity

Currently, 45 national jurisdictions and several regional and international bodies are being monitored. Although most national jurisprudence in the Refworld collection emanates from industrialized countries with established asylum systems, the Refworld team is actively seeking to achieve a wider geographical diversity.

The selection of case law is heavily influenced by the volume and availability of case law from a particular jurisdiction, as well as by the language of the publication. Since Refworld is principally an English-information tool, the majority of decision/judgments are in English, although other language versions are included, where available. As such, Refworld comprises a comprehensive selection of case law from English-speaking, and particularly common law, jurisdictions, including:

- Australia
  - High Court
  - Federal Court
  - Federal Magistrates Court
  - Refugee Review Tribunal
  - Immigration Review Tribunal
  - Family Court
  - Administrative Appeals Tribunal
- Canada
  - Supreme Court
  - Federal Court
  - Federal Court of Appeal
  - Immigration and Refugee Board
  - Provincial / Territorial Superior Courts
- New Zealand
  - High Court
  - Court of Appeal
  - Supreme Court
  - Refugee Status Appeals Authority
- United Kingdom
  - Privy Council
  - House of Lords
  - Court of Appeal
  - Court of Session
  - High Court (England and Wales)
  - High Court (Northern Ireland)
  - Asylum and Immigration Tribunal
- United States of America
  - Supreme Court
  - Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
  - Court of Appeals for the First Circuit
  - Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
  - Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
  - Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

- o [Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit](#)
- o [Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit](#)
- o [Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit](#)
- o [Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit](#)
- o [Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit](#)
- o [Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit](#)
- o [Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit](#)
- o [District Courts](#)
- o [Board of Immigration Appeals](#)
- o [Attorney-General](#)

2.3 Resources

The [Case Law](#) collection is daily updated (UNHCR Headquarters working day). The Refworld team has one full-time person dedicated to monitoring and updating national and international case law of interest.

The various methods employed for identifying and selecting pertinent case law include the regular monitoring of: judicial bodies' websites (e.g. [HUDOC database](#) for European Court of Human Rights judgments); publicly-available and subscription-based legal databases (e.g. the [British and Irish Legal Information Institute](#), Lexis/Nexis, Lawtel); news and publications from established organizations dealing with human rights and refugee law issues (e.g. Asylum Aid, Human Rights Watch, Liberty, Redress); academic literature and law reports (e.g. Refugee Survey Quarterly, International Journal of Refugee Law, Immigration and Nationality Law Reports).

Case law is also sourced from the issuing body either through direct communications (i.e. electronic notifications) or through case law bulletins (e.g. Refugee Status Appeals Authority of New Zealand), particularly in jurisdictions which produce a substantial volume of case law (e.g. Australian Refugee Review Tribunal). In addition, UNHCR's network of field offices and regional legal advisers identify and, where necessary, translate national and regional case law of particular relevance.

Since September 2007, the Refworld team is including documents in additional languages in the database. These other language versions are accessible through the English version of the document, by clicking on the "Other languages" or "Related Document" options.

3. ACCESSING AND SEARCHING THE CASE LAW COLLECTION

3.1 Browsing the Case Law Collection

There are various ways of browsing the Refworld collection, including by country/region of interest, document type, Publisher or topic. The Refworld Case Law Collection is available under "[Case Law](#)" when browsing by "[Document Type](#)". Please note that when browsing, results will appear in reverse chronological order, i.e. the most recent document first.
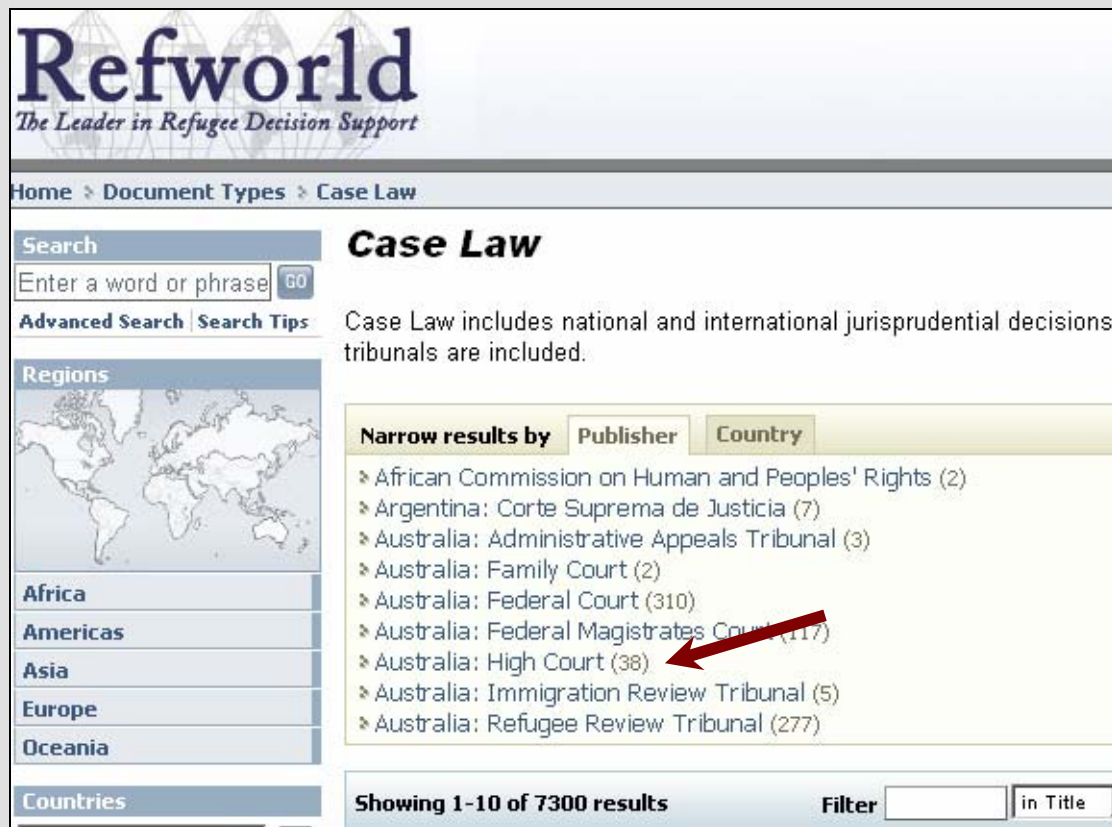
3.1.1   By Document Type

You can browse by "Document Type" through the left-hand side of the navigation menu available on Refworld (www.refworld.org). For accessing the integrality of the collection, simply click "Case Law". You will obtain a list of all the available case law in reversed chronological order.

You can, subsequently, narrow the results by choosing a "Publisher" (list of all instances by jurisdiction in alphabetical order) or a "Country" (list of all countries of asylum and origin in alphabetical order) using the tabs at the top of the "Case Law" page. Click on a link in the "breadcrumb trail" (which appears on the top of the page and begins with "Home >") will automatically take you back to that page.

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*Example***:**

To browse all the judgments by the High Court of Australia, please click "Australia: High Court":

To further narrow the results to cases involving Afghan claimants only, click on "Afghanistan":

Case Law > Australia: High Court
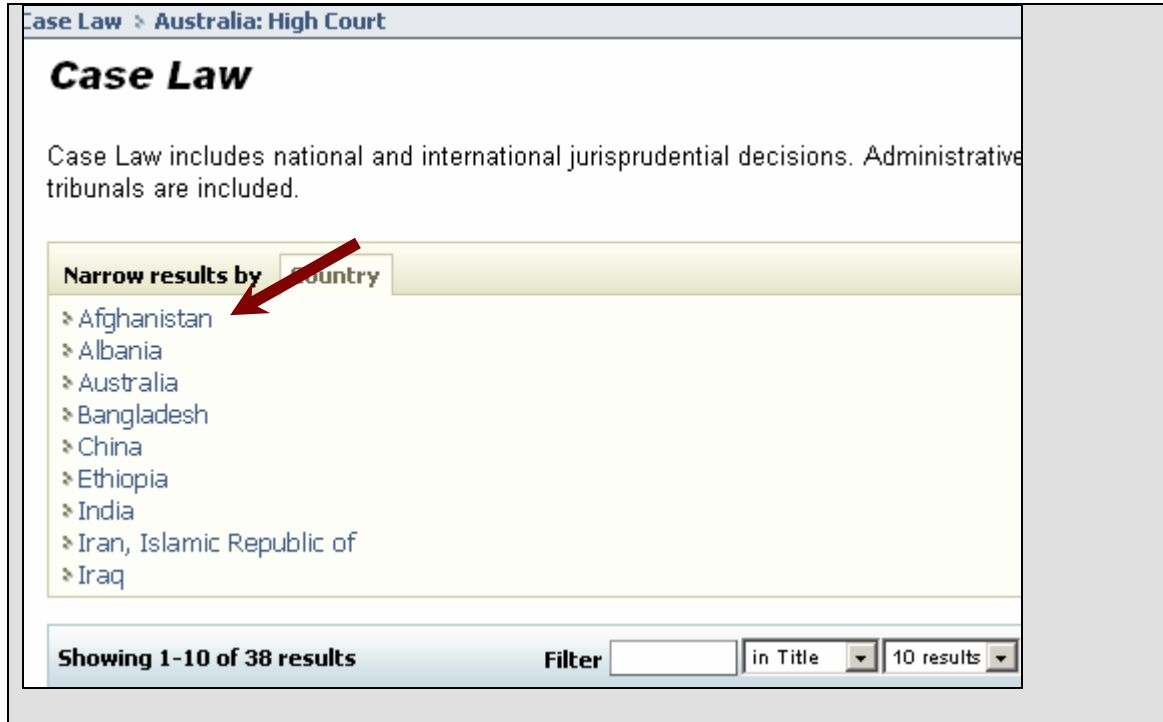
Case Law

Case Law includes national and international jurisprudential decisions. Administrative tribunals are included.

Narrow results by | Country

> Afghanistan
> Albania
> Australia
> Bangladesh
> China
> Ethiopia
> India
> Iran, Islamic Republic of
> Iraq

Showing 1-10 of 38 results   Filter [   ] | in Title ▼ || 10 results ▼

You can further narrow your browsing results by using the "Filter" options. For further information on how to use the "Filter" options, please refer to the section 3.1.4 below.

3.1.2 By Publisher

If you are looking for documents from a particular court, it is easiest to access the Refworld collection by Publisher. The complete listing of more than 300 Refworld sources is available in alphabetical order or by "Publisher Category" (type of organization).

Please note that "publishers" include governments, non-governmental organizations, United Nations and other international organizations, judicial bodies, and others. To access the case law from a particular instance in a jurisdiction, simply click on the appropriate name. Please note that the national/international jurisdiction appears first, followed by the name of the particular judicial body. Thus, the Supreme Court of Canada will be listed as "Canada: Supreme Court", and the European Court of Human Rights, as "Council of Europe: European Court of Human Rights".

You can narrow the results by choosing a "Country" (list of all countries of asylum and origin in alphabetical order) from the tabs in the navigation menu at the top of the particular publisher's page. To further narrow your results, use the "Filter" options (see section 3.1.4 below).

Example:

For browsing all the available Inter-American Court of Human Rights case law involving Peru, click on "Peru" from the Country list.

Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACrtHR)

The Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which is an autonomous judicial institution of the Organization of American States established in 1979, and whose objective is the application and interpretation of the American Convention on Human Rights and other treaties concerning this same matter. Website: www.corteidh.or.cr/

Narrow results by	Type	Country

> Haiti
> Honduras
> Mexico
> Nicaragua
> Panama
> Peru
> Suriname
> United States of America
> Venezuela

Showing 1-10 of 77 results   Filter [____] [in Title ▼] [10 results ▼] [Sort by date ▼] [GO]

3.1.3   By Topic

You also have the option to browse, through the left navigation menu of Refworld, documents by Topics covering a wide array of subject areas. These include aspects of international refugee law, international humanitarian and human rights law, specific groups, durable solutions, and domestic legal regimes. Topics (keywords) are identified manually for each decision/judgment in Refworld. Click on a particular topic from the list (organized in alphabetical order), or use the list of topic categories ("chapters") to view a more detailed listing of sub-topics.

Please note that, when browsing, the number of documents available under a certain category (whether a particular publisher, topic, etc.) is indicated in brackets immediately following that particular category.
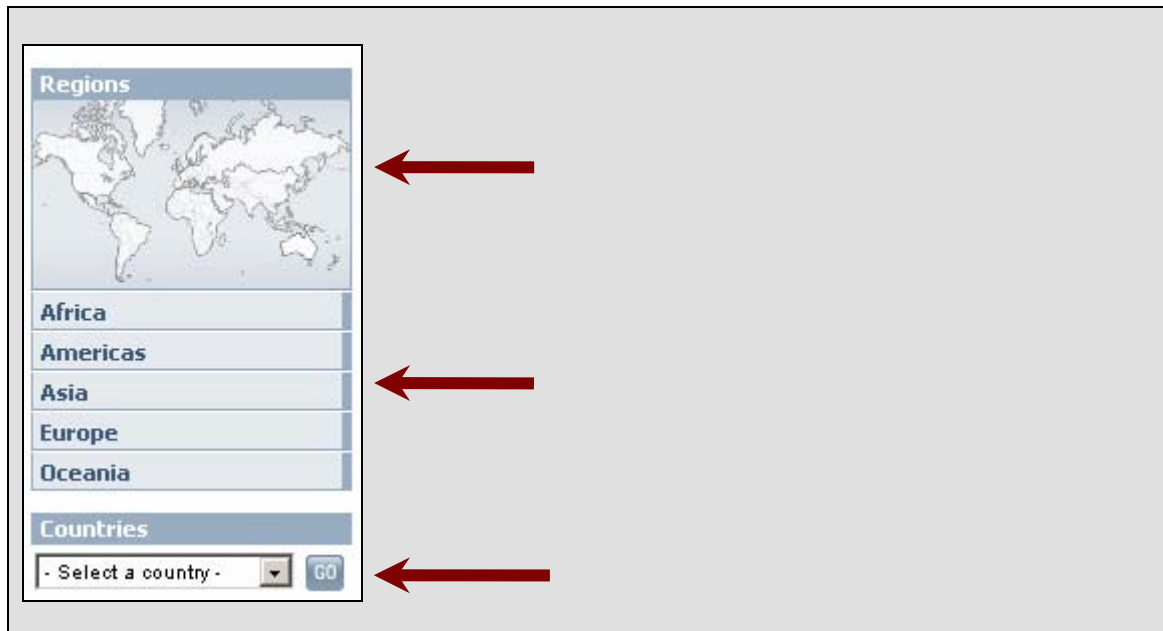
*Example***:**

For browsing all the available documents on genocide under the "International Crimes" category, click on "Genocide". The number of documents relating to "genocide" is 298, as indicated in brackets.

To further narrow your results, use the "Filter" options (see section 3.1.4 below).

3.1.4   By Region or Country

You can select a particular region or country through the left navigation menu of Refworld by clicking on the world map, the region names, or by using the country drop-down menu. By selecting a region/country, you will have a display all information in Refworld relating to that region/country, from all sources in reverse chronological order. Note that the top right of the Refworld homepage gives quick access to the top countries of origin. The ranking of these countries is regularly updated on the basis of UNHCR and government statistics.

To browse all available documents relating to a specific country, select the country from the list of countries. You can further narrow your results by using the tabs to choose a category of information (i.e. country, legal, policy or reference), a publisher or type of document. "Case law" is listed under (document) "Type".

Example:
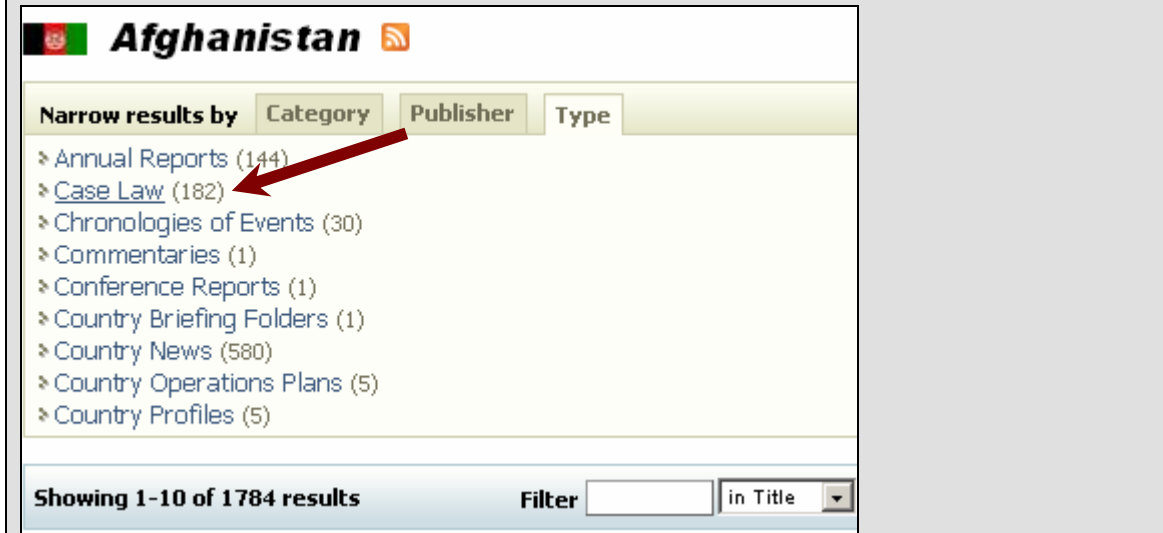
In addition an "A - Z Index" is available on Refworld, which combines all publishers (sources), document types (types of information) and topics (keywords) in one list, in order to further increase usability. In addition, the "Site Map" is also useful in assisting you to browse Refworld.

3.1.5 *"Filter" Options*

As outlined above, it is possible to browse the Refworld collection by type of document, publisher/source, topic/keyword, region or country. Using the filter bar that appears above document listing in the search and browse modes, you can further refine your results.

Currently, it is possible to filter by year of publication, terms in the document title or document text (full text). The "filter bar" is not case sensitive i.e. a term starting with an upper or lower case will produce the same results. When filtering the browsing results by using an expression or phrase, write such expression or phrase in between double quotation marks (e.g. "state protection" or "article 8").

Additional filtering options, including modifying the number of results per page and ordering results by date or relevance, are also available. To return to the full set of documents, use the breadcrumb trail.

Example:

For obtaining all case law from the Federal Magistrate Court of Australia dealing with "Falun Gong", select the Federal Magistrate Court of Australia from the list of

"Publishers", then enter "Falun Gong" in the box in the filter bar and choose "in full text" from the drop-down menu and click "Go".

3.2 Searching the Case Law Collection
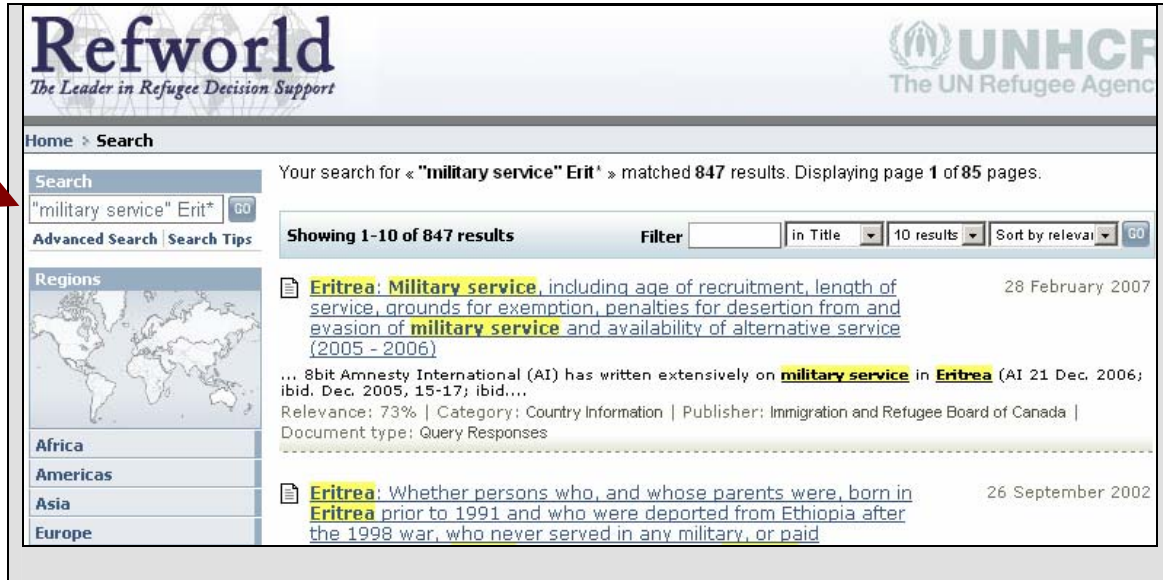
3.2.1   Simple Search

In the left navigation menu of the Refworld website, you will find at the top left a very powerful, fast and reliable full-text search box. When using the basic search box, it is preferable to limit yourself to two or three relevant terms. It is not necessary to use "connectors" i.e. "and", "or", etc.

Please note that:
- when searching for documents containing two or more keywords, enter the keywords with a space between them (e.g. Iran homosexuals);
- when searching for documents containing a particular expression or phrase, place double quotation marks around the group of words (e.g. "traditional harmful practices");
- when searching for documents excluding a specific word, place a minus sign immediately before the word to be excluded without leaving a space after the minus sign) (e.g. -Uighurs);
- when searching for documents excluding several words, place a minus sign before the list of words separated by commas (with no spaces after the minus sign and the commas) and put in parentheses (e.g. -(iran,kurds));
- when searching for documents containing words starting with a particular sequence of letters, enter the letter sequence followed by an asterisk (e.g. search for the term ref* to find refuge, refugee, refugees, refer, etc.);
- when searching for documents containing a word with different spellings, enter the specific word substituting the letter(s) which differs in the alternative spellings with a question mark (e.g. tal?ban to find taliban or taleban)

Example:

To find documents on military service in Eritrea or concerning Eritreans, enter in the Search Box: "military service" Erit*

In order to obtain relevant results, choose specific terms rather than general ones. Contrary to when browsing, search results will be by default displayed in order of relevance. A filter bar is included through which you can further re-fine your search results, by searching for words in the title/full-text or a specific year of publication, and/or display your results by date.

Example:

You could further refine the above search. By writing "Eritrea" in the filter box and choosing "Title" from the drop down menu, the results are limited to documents containing "Eritrea" in their title, thereby reducing the number of documents from 847 to 139.

For more information on how to efficiently use the simple (full-text) search, please see the "Search tips" page.

3.2.2   Advanced Search

The "Advanced Search" will give you extended options to refine or expand your search. To this effect, one or more of the available search "fields" can be used.

Please note that when using the "Title" field to look for a specific document, the connecting words (also referred to as "noise" words, such as "and", "or", "a", "of"etc.) should not be included. For example, if you are searching for the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, you only need to enter in the "Title" field: Cartagena Declaration Refugees <u>or</u> Cartagena Declaration <u>or</u> Cartagena Refugees.

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*Example***:**

In order to search for case law on Iranian homosexuals in need of international protection since January 2007, you would fill in the fields below. Please note that when searching results from a specific date to the present, the "end date" field does not need to be filled.

Find results

with **all** of the words	homosexual*
with the **exact phrase**	particular social group
with **any** of the words	
without the words	
with **all** of the words in **title**	
in **category**	All categories
from **publisher**	All publishers
with **document type**	Case Law
from **start date**	January ▼ 2007 ▼ to **end date** ▼ ▼
Country of origin	All countries ▼
Country of asylum	All countries ▼
Language	All languages ▼
Citation	[GO]

The results of the above search can be further refined by, for instance, selecting a publisher (in this case the UK Asylum and Immigration Tribunal), and writing "CG" in the "Citation" field (which will reduce the results to only Country Guidance cases). In this example, the results will be reduced from four to one as a consequence.

3.3 Other Useful Features

3.3.1 Document View

Documents included in Refworld are either in html-format (⬚) or in pdf-format (⬚). In order to view documents in pdf-format, you will need to have Acrobat Reader installed on your computer.

Every time you open a document in Refworld (in whatever format), you will see a table/box at the top of the page, which includes the core data relating to that document (title, publisher, publication date), as well as additional information such as the citation or document symbol, other language versions where available, related documents when applicable, and comments or remarks. The table/box also includes a feature ("cite as") which can be used when you would like to cite a document that you found in Refworld.

When opening a document in html-format, at the top you will have the option to change the font size of the viewed document ("text size") or to e-mail the document to yourself or someone else that might be interested ("email this document"). When you want to print or save the document, please make sure to use the "printable version" option, as it will provide you with a clean copy of the document, without the Refworld frame. You can search for words in the document, by using the Ctrl-F option.

Example:

Text size A A A A   ✉ Email this document   🖨 Printable version

Title	Suresh v. R.
Publisher	Canada: Provincial / Territorial Superior Courts
Country	Canada	Sri Lanka
Publication Date	28 January 1998
Reference	IMM-117-98
Cite as	*Suresh v. R.*. Canada: Provincial / Territorial Superior Courts. 28 January 1998. Online. UNHCR Refworld, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b636c.html [accessed 19 January 2009]

When opening a document in pdf-format, you will similarly have the option to e-mail the document to yourself or someone else that might be interested ("email this document"). In addition, you can open the document in a new browser window, so that you will have more space to view the document, without the Refworld frame. To print or save and to search within documents in pdf-format, you should use the Adobe Reader toolbar.

Example:

✉ Email this document   ⧉ Open in new browser window

Title	Security Council resolution 1862 (2009) [on resolving the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea and the withdrawal of Eritrean forces from the area of conflict]
Publisher	UN Security Council
Country	Djibouti	Eritrea
Publication Date	14 January 2009
Citation / Document Symbol	S/RES/1862(2009)
Other Languages / Attachments	Arabic	Chinese	French	Russian	Spanish
Cite as	UN Security Council, *Security Council resolution 1862 (2009) [on resolving the border dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea and the withdrawal of Eritrean forces from the area of conflict]*, 14 January 2009. S/RES/1862(2009). Online. UNHCR Refworld, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/49744ed52.html [accessed 19 January 2009]
Comments	Adopted unanimously, 6065th meeting; Issued in: Resolutions and decisions of the Security Council, 1 August 2008-31 July 2009 - S/INF/64 - (SCOR, 63rd year).

3.3.2   Other Language Versions

Wherever available, other language versions of a particular decision/judgment will also be made available, either as a "Related document" or as an "Attachment".

If the additional language version is in one of the languages available in Refworld, particularly English, French, and Spanish, a separate record will be added and the additional language version will appear as a "Related document".

Example:

Key and Others v. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, 2008 FC 838 available in English at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4961e79a2.html; and in French at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4961e8592.html.

	✉ Email this document ⊟ Open in new browser window
Title	Key et al. c. Le Ministre de la citoyenneté et de l'immigration
Publisher	Canada: Federal Court
Country	Canada | United States of America
Publication Date	4 July 2008
Citation / Document Symbol	2008 CF 838
Related Document	Key and Others v. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
Cite as	Key et al. c. Le Ministre de la citoyenneté et de l'immigration. 2008 CF 838. Canada: Federal Court. 4 July 2008. Online. UNHCR Refworld, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4961e8592.html [accessed 23 January 2009]
Comments	Demande de contrôle judiciaire.

If the decision/judgment is not in one of the above listed languages, it will be added as an attachment and will figure in the "Other Languages / Attachments" field of the English version. Such attachments are accessible by clicking on their title. Please note that "Attachments" are not searchable.

3.3.3   Case History / Summaries / Other Comments

Wherever possible, the case history or the precedential value (e.g. whether the decision was affirmed, overturned, etc.) of a decision/judgment will be reflected in the "Comments" field. Occasionally, short summaries of a decision of a particularly interest will also appear in the "Comments" field or as an "Attachment".

Example:

The summary of New Zealand Refugee Status Appeals Authority decision in *Refugee Appeal No. 76044* (11 September 2008) is available as an attachment at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48d8a5832.html.

Title	Refugee Appeal No. 76044
Publisher	New Zealand: Refugee Status Appeals Authority
Country	New Zealand	Turkey
Publication Date	11 September 2008
Citation / Document Symbol	No. 76044
Other Languages / Attachments	Summary from RSAA Monthly Abstract Publication (MAP) - September & October 2008
Cite as	*Refugee Appeal No. 76044.* No. 76044. New Zealand: Refugee Status Appeals Authority. 11 September 2008. Online. UNHCR Refworld, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48d8a5832.html [accessed 13 January 2009]
Comments	The Refugee Status Appeals Authority reaffirmed in this decision New Zealand jurisprudence on the internal protection alternative, holding that even were it

Decisions/judgments referred to in the case history in the "Comments" field are accessible by clicking on their title.

*Examples***:**

AN & SS (Tamils - Colombo - Risk?) Sri Lanka CG [2008] UKAIT 00063 available at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48c51e502.html.

Cite as	*AN & SS (Tamils - Colombo - Risk?) Sri Lanka v. Secretary of State for the Home Department.* CG [2008] UKAIT 00063. United Kingdom: Asylum and Immigration Tribunal / Immigration Appellate Authority. 6 July 2008. Online. UNHCR Refworld, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48c51e502.html [accessed 13 January 2009]
Comments	Heard at Field House, on 11-13 February 2008. This determination updates and supersedes PS (LTTE - internal flight - sufficiency of protection) Sri Lanka CG [2004] UKIAT 297. PR (medical facilities) Sri Lanka CG [2002] UKIAT 4269 is, owing to its antiquity, no longer to be treated as country guidance on the availability of medical treatment for returnees. The guidance in PS and LP (LTTE Area - Tamils - Colombo - Risk?) Sri Lanka CG [2007] UKAIT 00076, however, has been considered and approved by the European Court of Human Rights in NA v United Kingdom, handed down on 17th July 2008.

SZ and JM (Christians - FS Confirmed) Iran CG [2008] UKAIT 00082 available at
http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/491af9092.html.

Cite as	*SZ and JM (Christians - FS Confirmed) Iran v. Secretary of State for the Home Department.* CG [2008] UKAIT 00082. United Kingdom: Asylum and Immigration Tribunal / Immigration Appellate Authority. 12 November 2008. Online. UNHCR Refworld, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/491af9092.html [accessed 13 January 2009]
Comments	Conditions for Christians in Iran have not deteriorated sufficiently to necessitate a change in the guidance in FS and Others (Iran - Christian Converts) Iran CG [2004] UKIAT 00303 Iran. For some converts to sacrament-based churches the conditions may be such that they could not reasonably be expected to return and their cases must be considered on HJ (Homosexuality: Reasonably Tolerating Living Discreetly) Iran [2008] UKAIT 00044 grounds. It remains to be seen whether the proposed inclusion of apostasy in the amended criminal code will make a material difference. The amendments to the code are part of a wholesale change in the criminal law and not solely aimed at converts. The proposals are still before Parliament. 'Proselytising' and 'evangelising' are not terms of art and distinctions should not be drawn between them.

A related decision, whether from a lower or higher instance, can also appear as a "Related Document" and is accessible by clicking on its title.

Example:

Panchalingam Nagalingam v. Canada (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration), 2008 FCA 153 available at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4967223b2.html.

Title	Panchalingam Nagalingam v. Canada (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration)
Publisher	Canada: Federal Court of Appeal
Country	Canada	Sri Lanka
Publication Date	24 April 2008
Citation / Document Symbol	2008 FCA 153
Related Document	Panchalingam Nagalingam c. Canada (Ministre de la citoyenneté et de l'immigration)
Cite as	*Panchalingam Nagalingam v. Canada (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration).* 2008 FCA 153. Canada: Federal Court of Appeal. 24 April 2008. Online. UNHCR Refworld, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4967223b2.html [accessed 13 January 2009]
Comments	On appeal from the Federal Court of Canada: 2007 FC 229, [2008] 1 F.C.R. 87.

3.3.4 Court Interventions / Amicus Curiae

Where available, UNHCR court interventions or *amicus curiae* briefs are cross-referenced with the court's decision in the particular case. The relevant court intervention will be listed as a "Related Document" and will be accessible by clicking on its title.

Example:

R v. Asfaw [2008] UKHL 31 available at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4835401f2.html.

Title	R v. Asfaw
Publisher	United Kingdom: House of Lords
Country	Ethiopia | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Publication Date	21 May 2008
Citation / Document Symbol	[2008] UKHL 31
Related Document	Regina (Respondent) and Fregenet Asfaw (Appellant). Case for the Intervener (UNHCR)
Cite as	*R v. Asfaw*. [2008] UKHL 31. United Kingdom: House of Lords. 21 May 2008. Online. UNHCR Refworld, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4835401f2.html [accessed 13 January 2009]

A complete listing of UNHCR court interventions is available by browsing to "Court Interventions / Amicus Curiae" under "Document Type".

3.4 Personalization Features / Information Alerts

3.4.1 Personalization Features

Refworld offers the possibility to create a personal profile, through which you can further optimize and personalize your Refworld experience. The personalization features enable you to maintain your Refworld profile, save searches, create folders with specific documents, and receive weekly Refworld updates that match your interests.

It is easy and quick to initially create a profile through the register/login box on the top right side of the Refworld homepage. When registering, you can indicate your interest in receiving Refworld weekly updates regarding specific countries, specific publishers/sources, and specific document types. You will then automatically receive by e-mail a weekly update of new documents in Refworld that match your interests. To unsubscribe to certain items, simply return to your profile and deselect the items for which you no longer wish to receive alerts.

Once logged in, you can take advantage of the "personalization bar" (marked in green), which can be used to save searches you have done either through the full-text search or by using the "Advanced Search". In addition, all documents in a document listing (both when searching and when browsing) will have a check-box in front of them. You can select as many documents as you like, and add them to your folders of choice, also through the green personalization bar.

Through the link to "Your Profile" in the header of the Refworld website (marked in green), you can at all times edit your profile and preferences, access your folders and saved searches, and manage or delete them.

For more information, see the "Refworld Personalization" page.

3.4.2 Information Alerts

The Refworld team regularly sends out e-mail notifications regarding recently released papers of interest, in order to increase awareness of UNHCR recommendations, guidelines and related documents. If you are not already on the distribution list, you may request to be added by sending an e-mail to refworld@unhcr.org.

An overview of all distributed information alerts is available through the Refworld "Information Alerts" page.

3.5 Advantages of Using Refworld

Refworld is a user-friendly collection of relevant and up-to-date public-domain documents from UNHCR and information partners throughout the world, aimed at enabling well-informed and prompt refugee status determinations. As its collection, currently almost 110,000 documents, encompasses country reports, UNHCR country and thematic positions, international and national case law, regional and national legislation, research papers, training manuals, etc., it is a "one stop shop" for refugee status adjudicators and others. For a description of the various types of documents in the Refworld collection, please see the Annex to this Guide. It also contains a directory of "External Links" dealing with refugee, asylum, human rights and related topics.

Refworld is internet-based, thus accessible from anywhere in the world. Unlike other subscription-based country and legal information services, Refworld is free of charge.

Refworld is updated every (UNHCR Headquarters) working day. Therefore, new UNHCR papers, country reports, documents from various UN sources, case law, legislation and such are added on a daily basis. Please see the "Latest Refworld updates" page of Refworld online for the most recent additions.

4. FORTHCOMING DEVELOPMENTS

The Refworld team is actively working with UNHCR field offices and regional bureaux, as well as information partners and government counterparts, with a view to achieving improved **geographical coverage of both national case law and legislation**.

Significant efforts are made to capture current precedent-setting national case law and newly enacted laws relating to asylum/refugee law and human rights in countries of asylum, as well as new or in force national legislation (particularly penal, civil and human rights legislation) in the countries of origin, with particular focus on the 15 top countries of origin.

To this effect, the Refworld team is actively seeking **new partnerships** with non-governmental or international organizations with a proven record in refugee/asylum law and international protection in general.

Future improvements include **search enhancements** such as proximity, phonetic or fuzzy, thesaurus expansion and spell checking. For languages other than English, seamless searching of accented words and diacriticals will be supported. Browsing enhancements will include topics tabs for countries, publishers, categories and document types and extension of topic browsing to include publishers, countries and document types. The "Advanced Search" will incorporate topics as well.

ANNEX: Additional Information Sources on Refworld

1. SPECIAL FEATURES

Refworld contains several "Special Features", developed by UNHCR staff with expertise in a particular area. They are thematic guides that provide quick access in a structured manner to key documents and related parts of Refworld.

For example, the Special Feature on "Refugee Status Determination" shortlists the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and other legal instruments, the UNHCR Handbook and Guidelines on International Protection, as well as the key policy documents relating to refugee status determination, country-specific information tools, and related UNHCR and external weblinks.

There are currently 10 Special Features, including on "Internally Displaced Persons", "Migration" and "Statelessness". For an exhaustive list, please see the "Special Features" page of Refworld. The Special Features are also accessible through the Refworld homepage.

2. LEGAL COLLECTION

In addition to the Case Law Collection, Refworld's wider "Legal collection" comprises a substantive selection of over 3,200 national legislation documents from almost 200 countries and autonomous administrative regions/territories. The national legislation collection encompasses asylum/refugee law, as well as immigration, human rights, criminal/penal, constitutional and other relevant laws.

Also available is a significant collection of asylum/refugee law and human rights related bilateral and multilateral treaties/agreements, regional legislation (mostly from the European Union), legal analyses and case law compilations, court interventions/amicus curiae and conclusions on international protection.

3. COUNTRY COLLECTION

The "Country collection" consists of documents from a wide variety of carefully selected sources, including UNHCR and other UN bodies/agencies, governmental and non-governmental organizations, international and regional organizations, academic institutions, etc., monitoring and reporting on country situations. The collection focuses on the human rights situation in countries of origin, and contains, *inter alia*, annual reports, country news, country reports, state party reports, concluding observations and other documents providing country of origin information. Some of Refworld's strategic information partners are listed on the "Partners" page.

4. POLICY COLLECTION

The "Policy collection" contains mainly UNHCR policy documents, although contributions from other sources, such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, European Commission and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, are

continually added to the collection. The majority of the documents in the collection consists of country-specific asylum policy, and includes country positions, protection policy papers and positions, thematic guidelines and statements on international protection.

5. REFERENCE COLLECTION

Finally, the "Reference collection" consists of primarily thematic documents from a variety of publishers and gives access to documents such as maps, handbooks, training manuals and research papers.