

Informed People Think Critically

Learn more about security alternatives, human rights, international migration and refugee regimes:

Amnesty International, Refugees Rights:

<http://web.amnesty.org/pages/refugees-index-eng>

Canadian Council For Refugees:

www.web.ca/~ccr

Citizenship and Immigration Canada:

www.cic.gc.ca

Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org

International Organization for Migration:

www.iom.int

KAIROS Refugee and Migration Program:

www.kairoscanada.org/e/refugees/index.asp

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

www.ohchr.org/english

Project Ploughshares: www.ploughshares.ca

UNHCR: The United Nations Refugee Agency:

www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home

War on Terrorism Watch:

www.waronterrorismwatch.ca

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

129 St. Clair West
Toronto, ON
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www.kairoscanada.org



KAIROS Resources For Order

- **“Borderless”** is a 25 minute video that gives voice to the struggles and dreams of undocumented workers in Canada. Geraldo, a Costa Rican construction worker, and Angela, a second-generation Caribbean domestic worker, struggle against labour exploitation. Against the odds, they work to build a future for families painfully separated by restrictive immigration laws. Directed by Gemini nominated filmmaker Min Sook Lee.

- **“God’s people: A People on the Move”** is a ten part fact sheet series on globalization and migration. The series addresses such timely topics as Refugee Rights/Migrant Rights; Canada and Human Displacement; and Living without Status. Each fact sheet includes an easy-to-read introduction to a topic, a bible study guide, and action ideas. Price: \$6.00.

- **“Welcoming Uprooted People Post 9-11”** is a booklet of popular education exercises intended to raise awareness about the root causes of displacement, dispel common myths about refugees, and motivate action towards increasing acceptance of refugees and immigrants. Price: \$9.00 (five or more, \$5.00).

To order KAIROS resources please telephone 1-877-403-8933 x221 or email orders@kairoscanada.org.

Rethinking Security



Illustration by Rini Templeton

Refuge, Power & Privilege

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

Questioning Security

In recent years concerns about security have become global priorities. Security challenges are at the centre of media reports and government policies. But who, and what, defines security?

There are different ways of looking at security. Mainstream notions focus on protective walls and military might. Human security, on the other hand, puts people at the centre of security approaches and highlights the root causes of insecurity. Human security puts safe access to food, water, land, education, and health services before territory and borders.

Canadians should ask themselves what messages underlie the security news they hear. Security language is not neutral and is regularly used to advocate specific political positions, sensationalize for strategic purposes, and create a culture of fear and prejudice.



Canadians should also ask:

- How necessary are increased police, immigration and security intelligence powers?
- Can acts of militarized violence really make the world safer?
- To what extent are security politics about preserving economic privilege and current power structures?

Security and Refugees

Security agendas that emphasize borders have profound impacts on the movement of vulnerable people. Rich countries from the global North are, for example, increasingly reluctant to accept asylum seekers and migrants into their territory. Policies that prevent persecuted people from coming to safety are unfair and unjust. Refugees are neither terrorists nor criminals, but rather people threatened by insecurity in their home countries.

When legal migration choices narrow, people desperate to change their circumstances increasingly fall prey to smuggling or trafficking. The dangers are compounded for women and children.

Canadian Context

Like other rich countries of the global North, Canada introduced new immigration restrictions after the 9-11 attacks. Barriers with consequences for asylum seekers include:

- When Canada signed the Safe Third Country Agreement with the US, it virtually closed its land border to asylum seekers. Asylum claims at the border have dropped 50% since this agreement came into force in 2004.
- New funding for enforcement post 9-11 placed asylum seekers at greater risk of detention. One year after 9-11, detention numbers had grown 41% from 1997 levels.

Human Rights

Human rights entitle every member of the human family to dignity. Human rights are guaranteed by national and international law.

States are required to uphold the human rights of people on their territory, regardless of those people's citizenship. In Canada the Supreme Court has recognized that non-citizens are protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Refugee rights are, therefore, human rights and there is no justification for the persistent low regard of refugee rights.

Prejudice against non-citizens did not begin with the attacks of September 11th 2001. Canadians can fight prejudice by thinking critically about security language and politics that focus on dividing people and denying access to those seeking safety.

Key Messages

- **Human security places people at the centre of security policy and action.**
- **Refugees are neither terrorists nor criminals. Asylum is not a security threat. Refugees are vulnerable people - not perpetrators.**
- **Crossing an international border does not negate a person's human rights. Refugee and migrant rights are human rights.**