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May 14, 2010

Dear Honorable Delegates and Participants,

**Welcome to our "Forced Displacement, Protection Standards and Supervising the 1951 *Convention* and its 1967 *Protocol* and Other International Instruments" international conference!**

We are pleased that you are able to join us at York University for our international conference on the supervision of the 1951 *Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* and its 1967 *Protocol* and other refugee rights treaties and instruments. We look forward to your participation at our international conference and, especially, your active involvement in the discussions that will be held in our breakout sessions and in the general plenary sessions.

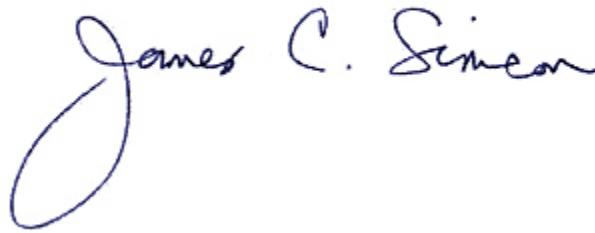
As you know, the subject matter of our international conference was thoroughly canvassed during the UNHCR's Global Consultations on international protection that were held in 2001, nearly a decade ago. It was, in fact, the subject of one of the Expert Roundtables that was held at Cambridge, United Kingdom. The results of those meetings were published in Part 10: Supervisory Responsibility, including, Walter Kalin's Chapter, "Supervising the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees: Article 35 and Beyond," in *Refugee Protection in International Law: UNHCR's Global Consultations in International Protection*. (eds.), Erika Feller, Volker Turk, Frances Nicholson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. We are very fortunate in having with us at this international conference Dr. Volker Turk, who is not only one of the editors of this volume, but now the Director of the Division of International Protection at the UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. We are very grateful for his presence with us at our international conference that deals with a subject which he has researched and written on extensively and that he has thought much about over the years. Dr. Volker Turk has kindly agreed to present our official opening international conference keynote address.

We are also very fortunate, indeed, to have with us other leading authorities and practitioners within the field of international refugee law. We are most grateful for all the distinguished figures in the field of international refugee law for joining us here at York University in our new York Research Tower that also houses the Ontario Government Archives. In particular, we are most grateful that Professor Guy Goodwin-Gill, Senior Research Fellow, All Souls College, University of Oxford, is not only with us but has agreed to serve as the Chairperson of our international conference. We should also like to thank our two other keynote speakers Mr. Justice Nicholas Blake, President, Upper Tribunal, UK Immigration and Asylum Chamber, and Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn, UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We do, of course, want to make your time at our international conference as productive as possible in seeking to address the various legal issues and concerns that will be raised with respect to the supervision of international refugee rights instruments. However, we also want to make your stay here as comfortable and enjoyable as possible. Please do not hesitate to get in contact with one of our international conference organizers if you require anything during your stay at York University.

Once again, thank you for joining us at our international conference and for your contribution in helping to search for viable and practical solutions to strengthening the international refugee protection regime in order to provide greater protection to the world's most vulnerable people, those who are forcibly displaced and seeking international protection.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James C. Simeon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning of the first name.

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