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U.N. High Commissioner For Refugees To Suspend Economic Aid For Guatemalan Refugees In Two Mexican States Next Year

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Jan. 31 in Campeche (Mexico), Luis Fernando Ramirez, head of the Mexican Refugee Aid Commission, told reporters that in 1992 the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will suspend economic aid to about 19,500 Guatemalan refugees residing in Quintana Roo and Campeche states. Under a three- year program, the UNHCR has been providing agricultural infrastructure, education and health care services, valued at about \$1.5 million per annum. An estimated 90% of economic aid received by Guatemalan refugees residing in Mexico derives from Germany, Spain, and Sweden, among other European contributors. At present, a total of 41,000 refugees reside in the states of Tabasco, Campeche, Chiapas and Quintana Roo. According to Ramirez, nearly all refugees have expressed a desire to return to Guatemala, although those who wish to remain in Mexico are welcome to do so. (Basic data from EFE, 01/31/91)

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