

Humanitarianism: Why is Philippines so generous and accepting to refugees compared to other countries like Egypt Indonesia etc.?



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The article entitled "**THE PHILIPPINES AS HAVEN FOR REFUGEES**" from the [Presidential Museum and Library | Presidential Museum and Library](#) should adequately answer the question.

An excerpt: "**Owing to its background as a country that struggled for its own independence**, it included the authority for the President of the Philippines to offer asylum to stateless persons or other refugees; this strong commitment was ratified further by the country being a signatory of the [1951 U.N. Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees](#) and of the 1967 Protocol, thus enabling the Philippines to become a refuge to many kinds of refugees in many instances in the past."

Emphasis is mine.

Bonus:

Here's also an interesting piece from Rappler: [TIMELINE: Philippine laws and policies on refugees](#).
Written by [Zebadiah Cañero](#).

Here are laws and policies set by the previous government. See how they covered the groups of refugees that fled to the country.

August 21, 1937 President Manuel Quezon issued [Proclamation No. 173](#)

With Chinese refugees fleeing from the advancing Imperial Japanese forces in mainland China, Quezon directed government agencies in Manila, Baguio, Rizal, and the Mountain Province to provide aid for refugees especially Filipinos and Americans in China who fled to our country.

September 8, 1937 Quezon authorized the admission of ethnic German and German Jews refugees

Quezon allowed a large group of ethnic German and German Jews to enter Manila aboard the Norddeutscher Lloyd steamship, *Gneisenau*. He also formed the Jewish Refugee Committee to assist these refugees.

November 10, 1937 Quezon declared a policy of absolute neutrality during the Spanish Civil War

In a [letter sent to the Rector of the San Juan de Letran College](#), Quezon said he and the government do not, and cannot, approve of the Philippines "being converted into a theater of propaganda." He further explained that the Philippines has no reason to take sides, and said that our interest must be limited only to see peace be re-established in Spain.

February 15, 1939 The Philippine government opened its doors to political refugees with professional qualifications

Quezon sent a message to Congress and urged members to allow more German Jewish professionals, initially planning on taking as much as 10,000 refugees – resettling them in farming communities in hopes of helping the Philippine economy.

President Manuel Quezon dedicated the Marikina Hall to refugees. Photo from [Film Development Council of the Philippines \(FDCP\)](#)

April 23, 1940 Quezon donated Marikina land to the Jewish refugees

Seven-and-a-half hectares of Quezon's country estate were donated as working farms for the refugees. He said in his speech, "It is my hope, and indeed my expectation, that the people of the Philippines will have in the future every reason to be glad that when the time of need came, their country was willing to extend a hand of welcome."

July 1, 1940 Quezon signed [Proclamation No. 570](#)

With the expansion of the Imperial Japanese, residents of the then British colony of Hong Kong fled to the Philippines, which led Quezon to sign the proclamation.

August 26, 1940 Quezon signed [Commonwealth Act 613 \(The Philippines Immigration Act of 1940\)](#)

The law stated: For humanitarian reasons, and when not opposed to the public interest, [the President has the power] to admit aliens who are refugees for religious, political, or racial reasons, in such classes of cases and under such conditions as he may prescribe.

June 21, 1949 The Cabinet approved the request of the International Refugee Organization for a 4-month extension of the stay of the White Russian refugees

In December 1948, White Russian refugees fled to the Philippines in fear of persecution from the Bolshevik Red Army. President Elpidio Quirino offered to the 8,000 evacuees the choice to stay in the former naval base of Tubabao Island in Guiuan, Samar. A 4-month extension was granted to them in 1949, and some were even allowed to visit Manila. (READ: [PH a 'paradise' for White Russian refugees](#) and [IN PHOTOS: The life of White Russian refugees in PH](#))

August 21, 1979 President Ferdinand Marcos issued Executive Order No. 554, establishing a Task Force on International Refugee Assistance and Administration

This executive order was issued to build refugee processing centers and to work with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in helping refugees. It assigned Ulugan Bay and Tara Island in Palawan as preliminary refugee processing centers.

January 21, 1980The Philippine Refugee Processing Center was inaugurated in Morong, Bataan

This served as a holding center for Indochinese refugees prior to their relocation and settlement in the US, Canada, France, Australia, and other countries. It was funded by the UNHCR, and also provided English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and primary education programs.

July 22, 1981The Philippines acceded to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol

Its legal framework was implemented through Department Order No. 94 issued by the Department of Justice (DOJ), which established a refugee status determination procedure.

August 31, 1987President Corazon Aquino issued [Executive Order No. 304](#)

EO 304 authorized the Task Force on Refugee Assistance and Administration and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to respectively issue identity papers and travel documents to refugees staying in the Philippines. The Task Force was reconstituted the following year.

March 7, 1995President Fidel Ramos ordered the closure of the Philippine Refugee Processing Center by virtue of [Memorandum Order No. 267](#)

Due to the significant decrease of refugees, the UNHCR – which exclusively funds the refugee center – asked that the refugee center be closed. The facilities were then turned over to the Philippine government to be used for other purposes, once no longer required for the refugee program. It provided food, shelter, and education to about 400,000 refugees.

1996"Viet Ville" was established in Palawan.

With the Indochinese refugee program in Palawan slated to be closed by the Ramos administration, some refugees were still left in Palawan – including the Vietnamese refugees who were prevented from visiting their families in Vietnam due to issues of the legality of their status. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) requested the Philippine government to allow 2,710 Vietnamese refugees to remain in the Philippines indefinitely, leading to the establishment of "Viet Ville" – a Vietnamese refugee settlement in Palawan sponsored by Vietnamese communities around the world and supported by the Center for Assistance to Displaced Persons (CADP) of the CBCP.

1998The Department of Justice formed a Refugee Processing Unit (RPU)

The unit, however, did not grant authorization to cater to the needs of stateless individuals.

May 30, 2011President Benigno Aquino III signed the instrument of ratification of the 1954 UN Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons

It was submitted to the UN on September 22, 2011. It resulted to the change in name of the RPU to the Refugee and Stateless Persons Protection Unit (RSPPU).

October 18, 2012The Department of Justice issues Department Circular No. 058 – Rules on "Establishing the Refugee and Stateless Status Determination Procedure"

Under these rules, groups of refugees and stateless persons will be given access to an efficient process application for the granting of a refugee or a stateless status.

May 18, 2015The Philippines opened its doors to the Rohingya "boat people"

[The government announced](#) it is open to providing shelter to up to 3,000 "boat people" from Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Look Ref.: <https://www.quora.com/Humanitarianism-Why-is-Philippines-so-generous-and-accepting-to-refugees-compared-to-other-countries-like-Egypt-Indonesia-etc> - Look MUCH more here: [Why the PH is a safe haven for refugees](#)