What Supporting Documents are Helpful to Submit with your Asylum Application:

Questions & Answers:

What are Supporting Documents?
Supporting documents or “evidence” include items that can help convince the Asylum Officer that the facts in your Declaration are true. When you submit supporting documents, do not submit the original version. Make a photocopy of the original, and submit that copy. (You will bring the original version with you to the Asylum Interview.)

What kind Supporting Documents should I Submit to the United States Government in Support of my Asylum Application?
Every case is different and you are not required to submit supporting documents, but if you are safely able to, you can submit any document that supports the facts in your declaration, as long as it is true. But you should only submit documents that are specific to your claim for asylum. There are many types of documents that you could submit to support the facts in your declaration. Some examples of supporting documents MIGHT include: witness statements from people who saw what happened to you or who are aware of what happened to you, even if they did not see it or medical records if you ever sought treatment for any harm that you suffered and can get those documents safely. Again, there is not a set rule on what documents you can or cannot submit EXCEPT that anything you submit cannot be fraudulent or fake.

REMEMBER – No one piece of supporting documents will guarantee asylum. If you cannot get a document, or getting documents will put you or someone else in danger, you should explain to the Asylum Officer why you are unable to get these supporting documents.

NEVER SUBMIT A FRAUDULENT DOCUMENT
Never submit a fraudulent document to the U.S. Government. Documents are routinely tested for authenticity by U.S. Immigration Officers. It is always better to truthful and explain why the supporting documents could not be obtained than to make it up.

I don’t speak English and my Supporting Documents are in Another Language! Can I submit the Supporting Documents in another language?
Any documents you submit, including supporting documents that are not in English must be translated into English and accompanied by a Certificate of Translation. See the Guide for Applying for Asylum Manual for a sample Certificate of Translation and for a list of professional interpretation/translation services in Maine. You must submit a copy of the document in the original language, the translated copy, and the Certificate of Translation. Choose your translator carefully and always review both the copy of the original and the translation to be sure the translation is correct and that the facts are consistent with your Declaration.

What Documents are Country Condition Documents?
- Country Conditions Documents and Human Rights Reports
  The Asylum Officer who reviews your application may not know anything about your country. Therefore, it is important to teach him or her about your country and what it was like for you to live there.
  Country Condition Reports are generally available on the Internet. It is likely that the Asylum Officer will want to see some of these reports and even look them up herself. If you have access to the Internet, you may access reports from the links below:
  - RefWorld – http://www.refworld.org
  - U.S. Department of State - http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/

  You may also find country conditions reports relevant to your home country from the following organizations:
  - AsylumLaw.org - http://www.asylumlaw.org/

Sometimes, the information in a country conditions report will contradict facts in your Declaration. If that happens, it is important to seek the advice of an experienced immigration lawyer BEFORE you include that report in your asylum application.
• Newspaper & Magazine Articles, Books
It may be useful to submit copies of articles from respected news publications. News sources often cover human rights abuses around the world. Sometimes these stories can be found on the Internet.

Always review the articles carefully, and only include them if they specifically support your claim.

What are the Most Important Things to Remember when Submitting Supporting Documents?

1. NEVER SUBMIT A FRAUDULENT DOCUMENT. A single fraudulent document may have serious consequences, including denial of your asylum application.

2. Do Not Put Yourself or Others in Danger
When gathering supporting documents, you should ask yourself whether it is reasonable to obtain a document. If obtaining a document will put you, your family, or your friends in danger, then it may not be reasonable to obtain the supporting documents. Remember, you can always explain in your Declaration or the interview why you could not obtain a specific document.

3. Have Documents Accurately Translated into English
When submitting supporting documents, you must get them translated by a translator who is truly fluent in both English and the language in which the document is written. You are not allowed to translate your own documents. You must have another person do it for you, and that person must sign a “Certificate of Translation” before you include the document in the application.

4. Do Not Submit Documents Unless You Have Personally Reviewed Them
It is important to review every document you want to submit with your asylum application before you submit them to be sure that your Declaration, your Form I-589, and your Supporting Documents are CONSISTENT.

   If the Asylum Officer finds a conflict and you are unable to explain why the contradiction exists, it might mean the Asylum Officer will not find your story believable, which could result in the denial of your asylum application.

   If there is an inconsistency, and you believe that it is still important to include the document with your application, be sure to include a reasonable explanation for why the inconsistency exists.

5. Save All Original Documents
You should save the originals of every document that you submit with your application, including all original stamped envelopes sent to you with the document(s) (if applicable).

Submit copies of your supporting documents and bring the originals with you to your Asylum Interview.

Saving originals will help you prove where a document came from and where it has been. If you submit a letter from a witness still living in your home country, the Asylum Officer may need proof that the letter is not fraudulent. One way to show this is to produce the original letter in the original stamped envelope it came in. E-mails, text messages, transcripts of Internet chats, and other correspondence can also be important.

REMEMBER
No One Supporting Document will Guarantee that you Receive Asylum from the U.S. Government. Only Submit Documents that are True and Support Your Declaration.

