



The Canadian Refugee Sponsorship Agreement Holders Association

15 December 2015

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

The Council of the Canadian Refugee Sponsorship Agreement Holders Association (SAH Council) represents the organizations in Canada that sponsor refugees under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.

In our October 20th media release, we congratulated the Liberal party on winning the federal election. Since then you and your party have formed a new Government and implemented many changes that we see as positive. We are heartened by the name change of the department to specifically include Refugees. We are encouraged by the message it sent when the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) met with the Council in Ottawa as part of a busy tour to meet key stakeholders related to the Ministry's broad mandate. To be accorded this respect as direct partners of the Canadian Government in the resettlement of refugees fuels optimism that there will be increased consultation and collaboration moving forward. And finally, we are proud to be an integral part of the national effort to bring Syrians to safety in Canada. In the first wave of 10,000 Syrian refugees arriving in Canada by December 31st, almost three quarters of the refugees are privately sponsored. In the months ahead, we expect that number to grow through both the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program and the Blended Visa Office Referred Program. Your presence at the airport, together with the Ontario Premier and opposition members, to personally meet the first large group of Syrians arriving in Canada, was an important symbol for Canada and internationally. It was also an indication to the private sponsoring community that our work is valued and seen as an important contributor to nation-building.

We look forward to more sunny days ahead. Inevitably, though, there will be challenges and we hope that with your leadership, the office of the Minister of IRCC will be open and receptive to the concerns of private sponsors and to collaborating with the Council in finding solutions.

We extend a wish for peace and happiness for you and your family, for Canada, and for the many places in the world torn apart by conflict and war. May we as Canadians continue to open our borders, homes and hearts to those seeking refuge in a new land.

Sincerely,

Brian Dyck

Aslam Daud

Tom Denton

Ellen Erickson

Paulette Johnson

Scott McLeod

Susan Nye-Brothers

Rebecca Walker