

27 November, 2015

The Honourable John McCallum, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship  
365 Laurier Avenue West  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1

Dear Minister McCallum,

I am writing on behalf of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada to congratulate you on your party's victory in the federal election as well as on your recent cabinet appointment. I want to assure you of our prayers and extend our best wishes as you begin your new responsibilities as Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

MCC is a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, sharing God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ by responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice. MCC Canada currently supports programs in 60 countries through the efforts of more than 1,000 workers, 14,000 volunteers, and 122,000 members of supporting churches.

Working with refugees and displaced peoples has been, and continues to be, a vital part of MCC's programming both at home and around the world. As the first organization to become a Sponsorship Agreement Holder in 1979, MCC has an over thirty-five year history helping refugees rebuild their lives in Canada through the Private Sponsorship Program. Within the international context, much of our relief, development, and peace work aims to create alternatives to migration through building communities of peace, justice, and well-being.

MCC is encouraged by your party's commitment to rebuild a strong, generous, and inclusive resettlement program that not only takes in more—and the most vulnerable—refugees, but dedicates the financial resources necessary for efficient processing, sponsorship, and settlement services in Canada. We affirm your commitment to resettle 25,000 Government Assisted Refugees by the end of February, and are pleased that a high-level committee has been put in place to ensure this is done effectively alongside the Private Sponsorship Program. Given our decades of experience in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq, MCC also welcomes your party's promise to provide financial support for the critical humanitarian work done by the UN High Commission for Refugees in the region.

We look forward to building on our strong history of working with the Government of Canada in responding to the needs of refugees, particularly at a time when interest in resettlement has grown dramatically. MCC looks to your leadership to ensure that levels of Government Assisted Refugees increase and numbers of Privately Sponsored Refugees are in addition to—rather than instead of—those the government resettles. As you work towards renewing Canada's role, we encourage you to strengthen your department's capacity for humanitarian immigration. As you are well-aware, the

number of refugees accepted by Canada has steadily declined over the years, despite rising global needs. MCC believes refugees and immigrants make extremely important contributions that help shape Canadian identity in positive ways.

As we have with all Canadian governments over the past five decades, MCC will continue to offer our perspective and expertise—guided by the voices of our partners and the people we serve in Canada and abroad—in order to contribute to policies and programs that are better able to address the profound challenges of our world.

Once again, I wish you well and assure you of our prayers as you provide leadership for this important dimension of the federal government's work. We look forward to engaging with you in constructive discussions on important public policy issues in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,



Donald G. Peters  
Executive Director  
MCC Canada

CC: Hon. Michelle Rempel, Official Opposition Critic for Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship,  
Conservative Party of Canada  
Jenny Kwan, Opposition Critic for Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, New Democratic  
Party of Canada