



The Canadian Refugee Sponsorship Agreement Holders Association

July 27, 2018

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen
Minister, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
365 Laurier Ave. W.
Ottawa ON K1A 1L1

Dear Minister Hussen,

Greetings from the Council of the Canadian Refugee Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH) Association. Your department recently asked for our opinion on what is causing the unprecedented rise in the number of refugee sponsorship applications from Groups of Five (G5) and Community Sponsors (CS). IRCC, and not the SAH Council, has the data to analyse where these sponsors and applicants are coming from. We can only suggest that because the need for refugee sponsorships continues to increase, and greatly exceeds the annual SAH cap, more and more people are turning to the G5/ CS program within the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP). IRCC's efforts to publicize the PSRP both globally and domestically, and to train up potential G5 and CS sponsors is also a likely factor.

We understand that this rise in intake is creating very significant challenges to IRCC's prospects of reaching your 12-month processing goal for all PSR applications submitted after the end of 2019.

The SAH Council believes there are only three options to address the situation created by this rise:

- increase landing levels,
- reduce the SAH cap or
- put in place effective intake management measures for G5 and CS applications.

We would not support reducing the SAH cap; SAHs have the capacity to submit more applications than the current annual caps allow for. What is more, we know that sponsorship through SAHs is more cost-effective and less time-consuming for IRCC.

We know that limiting G5 and CS sponsorship would be difficult because of legislative challenges, but the attempt to limit through the requirement for UNHCR or other documents which has shut the door for some applicants, has not stemmed the flow of applications this year. We think that the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) requirement has unbalanced the G5 and CS applications because there are places where the required documents are next to impossible to get. It seems advisable to eliminate the RSD requirement and bring a different mechanism into

place so that the overall goal of 12-month processing can be reached without limiting SAH intake.

The preferable solution would be to increase PSR landing. We understand the challenges in this; however, we hope that you will be able to advocate with your colleagues in cabinet for this solution. We believe strongly that an increase in PSR landings should not negatively impact other humanitarian categories. As you know the UNHCR is fighting for every space they can get and we are working hard to encourage groups to take up BVOR applications to make that happen. Perhaps some of the PSR applicants might qualify for an adapted Provincial Nominee Program or other categories of economic immigration and can be taken off the list in the humanitarian part of the quota.

We hope that these comments may be of use as you consider your options in managing, developing and maintaining a successful PSRP. We would be very happy to consult with you further on this important issue.

Sincerely,

The SAH Council

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