

NEWS RELEASE – Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Meet to Reaffirm Support and Ongoing Collaboration for Syrian Refugee Resettlement

December 1, 2015 – Ottawa, ON – Federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) ministers responsible for immigration met today to reaffirm their commitment to welcoming Syrian refugees to Canada over the coming days and months.

Co-chaired by the Honourable John McCallum, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), and the Honourable Michael Chan, Ontario Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, the meeting focused on preparations for the arrival of 25,000 Syrian refugees to communities across Canada by the end of February 2016.

Ministers reiterated the integral role of provinces and territories in warmly welcoming the refugees in their communities. They discussed issues related to where in Canada Syrian refugees will go and the types of support that communities should have in place to be prepared to accept them.

Attending ministers also heard from federal Syrian Refugee Special Coordinator Deborah Tunis and Chris Friesen, President of the Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance on the lessons learned and outcomes resulting from the successful two-day working session with key stakeholders and partners held in Toronto on November 28 and 29. A wide range of topics were discussed, including housing, language training, health needs and community orientation.

The resettlement of 25,000 Syrian refugees by February 2016 will be a national effort requiring significant coordination and support to help ensure their successful integration into host communities across Canada where they will begin to build their new lives. Collaborations among FPT ministers will be ongoing as Canada prepares for their welcome now and into 2016.

Under the Canada-Quebec Accord relating to immigration and temporary admission of aliens, Quebec fully assumes sole responsibility for establishing immigration levels and for the selection, francization and integration of immigrants. In areas under its responsibility, Quebec develops its policies and programs, legislates, regulates and sets its own standards.

Quotes

“Having recently returned from Jordan where I saw first-hand the experiences of Syrian refugees, this meeting presented an important opportunity for me to share that experience and for us to come together to discuss how we will welcome some of these refugees into our communities. Together, we are embarking on a national project that we can all be proud of.”

– *Hon. John McCallum, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship*

“We have a responsibility to respond to this humanitarian crisis with generosity, compassion and action. I look forward to working with all levels of government, the settlement community, the private

and public sectors and not-for-profit organizations to successfully integrate Syrian refugees in our host communities. We are confident that those we help today will enrich our country in the future.”

– Hon. Michael Chan, Minister of Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, Ontario

Quick facts

- Between November 4, and November 26, 2015, 200 Syrian refugees arrived in Canada.
- As of November 24, IRCC is actively processing 4,511 files of Syrian refugees who have been sponsored by organizations and groups of Canadians outside Quebec.
- This FPT meeting took place following the successful Forum on Welcoming Syrian Refugees to Canada hosted earlier in the day by the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada.

Associated link

- Canada.ca/refugees

Contacts

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