



Christian Reformed
CENTRE FOR Public Dialogue



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

January 8, 2026

Dear Minister Diab:

We trust this letter finds you well amidst what we know are many responsibilities. We are grateful for your work on behalf of all Canadians.

We are following up on our June 2025 letter and wanted to begin by re-introducing ourselves. The Centre for Public Dialogue is the advocacy arm of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada – a close partner of World Renew. World Renew, a member of the Canadian Council for Refugees, is a Canadian humanitarian and international development organization that was founded in 1962 and has functioned as a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) with IRCC since 1978, supporting the resettlement of over 11,500 refugees to Canada. In our June letter, in addition to welcoming you to your role, we also expressed our joint wish alongside our sponsors that Canada would remain committed to strengthening its refugee protection and resettlement systems and to decreasing the backlog of applications in the Private Sponsorship of Refugees pathway.

Considering this, and in light of World Renew's long history as a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) and as an agency of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada, we must express our deep disappointment with the October 2025 immigration levels announcement.

To see the total number of *Refugees and Protected Persons* reduced by 16% is particularly discouraging to us and our sponsors as it comes at a time when, as the UNHCR reports, there are over 42.5 million refugees seeking safety. It is further disheartening that in 2026, the resettlement targets make up only 8% of the overall PR target despite the long-time calls from the SAH Association, the Canadian Council for Refugees and others that this be at least 15%.

The 2026-2028 levels plan, and particularly the 30% reduction – over double the devastating cuts of 2025 – in the Private Sponsorship of Refugees category, in addition to the drastic 54% reduction in the Global Cap, will not reduce the backlog of approximately 93,000 applicants. Refugees will be waiting even longer than the already too-long average waiting period of over three years. This will leave refugees who are already in vulnerable situations at even greater risk.

Your office informed the SAH Association that these cuts are in part because "public opinion has changed." However, it is important to note that sponsors are also public citizens, and they remain committed to a strong

welcome for refugees. World Renew partners with sponsoring groups across Canada, representing a large and diverse cross-section of Canadian society including Christians, Jews, Sikhs, and Muslims, as well as humanitarian charities and organizations that have no faith ties. These sponsors – all of whom are volunteers – have private funds, housing, and robust settlement teams ready and waiting to welcome the refugees they are sponsoring, and they are deeply supportive of a robust refugee welcome system in Canada. We join them in asking that you rescind the cuts on the Global Cap and advocate for increased levels for refugee pathways in next year's plan.

While the clear priority of refugee resettlement is to save lives, a secondary benefit is that it brings people to Canada who contribute positively to our country in a multitude of ways. Our sponsors see this every day as their lives and communities are enriched by those they are welcoming. Furthermore, data from the United Nations and others shows that as refugees settle and integrate in cities across the country, they make critical contributions that grow our economy and society.¹ Canada truly is stronger because of our rich cultural diversity and deep history of welcome to those who desire to build lives of peace within our borders.

As we emerge from the Christmas season, when our faith community remembered the birth of Jesus, whose own family experienced forced displacement, we write as a community across Canada that would like to see our country re-extend hospitality to refugees through a wise balance of justice and the wellbeing of all.

As we wrote in our last letter, safety, welcome, and justice for vulnerable displaced persons is a vital human rights responsibility that we consider to be sacred. We continue to wish you and your colleagues God's blessings of wisdom and discernment for this essential work of welcome and justice.

Respectfully,



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¹ <https://www.unhcr.ca/in-canada/refugees-in-canada/>