

Statement from Citizenship and Immigration Canada

 canada.ca/en/news/archive/2015/10/statement-citizenship-immigration-canada.html

Ottawa, October 8, 2015 – Citizenship and Immigration Canada today issued the following statement:

The Government of Canada has consistently been concerned that the most vulnerable refugees get the protection they need and that Canadian security is not compromised in any way.

Since 2009, Canada has resettled nearly 25,000 vulnerable people from the conflict zones of Iraq and Syria. By the end of 2015, a commitment to resettle 23,000 Iraqis will be complete and we remain on track to resettle 11,300 Syrians by September 2016, as announced last month.

This work, given the scope of the refugee crisis and the volatility of the conflict zone, poses particular challenges. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) works with various international partners, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and others to resettle people here efficiently, while screening out threats to Canada.

CIC is also working with humanitarian organizations with valuable experience in the region, including the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the Aga Khan Foundation, which provide support to Canadian visa officers in the processing of Syrian refugee cases. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is the only organization that refers refugees for resettlement under the Government-Assisted Refugees Program in the Middle East.

Our agreements with partners, such as the DRC, include standard measures for oversight and monitoring. As part of such measures, a review of the first tranche of Syrian Government-Assisted Refugees was undertaken this spring, during which time a brief pause of the processing of some Syrian refugees took place. The processing of Syrian Government-Assisted Refugees resumed after there was confidence that our procedures were adequate and that the DRC was collecting and documenting the necessary information. At the same time, CIC undertook a review of other Syrian refugee files to ensure we are meeting our objectives to provide protection to the most vulnerable while ensuring integrity and security considerations are being addressed appropriately. The processing of Privately Sponsored Refugees continued throughout this period.

Highly trained, professional and non-partisan public servants are responsible for screening and making decisions on resettlement candidates. Given the scale of the global challenge, Canada's response and approach has been and continues to be subject to broad and senior-level engagement and scrutiny to ensure we meet our commitment to protect the most vulnerable.

For further information (media only), please contact:

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Building a stronger Canada: Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) strengthens Canada's economic, social and cultural prosperity, helping ensure Canadian safety and security while managing one of the largest and most generous immigration programs in the world.