



November 5, 2015

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

Dear Honourable Mr. McCallum,

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. Our membership stands ready to work with you on a variety of immigration related policy and program areas. We are uniquely positioned to provide insights based on our expertise gained through directly working with immigrants and refugees in this country. Our membership delivers, on behalf of your department, a wide ranging scope of settlement programs and services that enhances the social and economic integration of newcomers to Canada. At the same time, we also actively work on the ground in communities across Canada to build more welcoming and inclusive spaces – at the heart of nation building.

Of immediate importance is working with you in a strong collaborative manner to adequately respond to the on-going Syrian refugee resettlement movement to Canada. We completely support the bold commitment to resettle 25,000 Syrian government assisted refugees to Canada but remain concerned about some program capacity issues in certain regions of Canada as well as general increase challenges in locating longer term housing options within the current limited resettlement assistance shelter allowance structures. We need to address existing settlement capacity to adequately meet the corresponding heightened demand as eventually these Syrian newcomers will be integrated into local communities across this country. We want to work with you and department staff in addressing these challenges together.

Lastly, at a time, date and location convenient to you we would welcome an opportunity to have a roundtable discussion on some key areas we hope you would take into consideration as you develop your priorities over the next year and beyond.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Friesen,  
Chair