



## RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

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PETITION No.: **421-01455**

BY: **Ms. PAUZÉ (REPENTIGNY)**

DATE: **JUNE 7, 2017**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HON. AHMED HUSSEN**

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Response by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

SIGNATURE  
Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

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SUBJECT

**Refugees**

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**ORIGINAL TEXT**

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**REPLY**

Thank you for bringing this case to the attention of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The Department has noted your concerns and will look into the matter. However, due to the Privacy Act, IRCC cannot comment on specific cases without consent of the applicant.

There are currently about 40,000 refugees globally who are waiting for their private sponsorship application to be processed, some of whom have been waiting years.

The Department understands the distress this causes refugees and sponsors, and IRCC is taking steps to reduce wait times while respecting as much as possible the order in which applications were received. Providing timely protection to privately sponsored refugees is a priority for the Department.

In this regard, IRCC has increased admission targets for privately sponsored refugees to 16,000, which is reflected in the 2017 Immigration Levels Plan. The higher admissions targets more than triple the average number of privately sponsored refugees admitted prior to 2015 and will help the Department make significant strides in reducing wait times for privately sponsored refugee applications from Syria and other countries.

At the same time, the Government of Canada is committed to the safety and security of the Canadian public and it is important to take the time to fully and rigorously complete all the steps involved in processing applications. This includes assessing applications to ensure that sponsors are able to meet the financial and resettlement obligations, interviewing refugees, and completing medical and security screening.

How quickly each stage takes depends on a variety of factors, such as the number of applications already in the processing queue and the security situation in the area where the refugee lives.

Sponsored refugees destined to the province of Quebec must meet the criteria of both the Government of Québec and the Government of Canada. Quebec also establishes its own refugee resettlement levels, develops its own related policies and programs, and legislates, regulates and sets its own standards.

Privately sponsored refugees who are in urgent need of protection may present themselves to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) for an assessment. Should the UNHCR find the applicant to be in need of urgent protection, they will make a referral to Canada for resettlement on an urgent basis.

In closing, please be assured that the Department remains committed to resettling refugees in a timely manner, as demonstrated with the successful welcoming of more than 46,000 Syrian refugees since November, 4, 2015. IRCC will continue to work with experienced partners to uphold Canada's humanitarian tradition to resettle refugees and offer protection to those in need.