



THE CANADIAN
BAR ASSOCIATION
L'ASSOCIATION DU
BARREAU CANADIEN

INFLUENCE. LEADERSHIP. PROTECTION.

Office of the President
Cabinet de la présidente

September 11, 2015

Via email: stephen.harper@parl.gc.ca; Minister@cic.gc.ca; Chris.Alexander@parl.gc.ca

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister
Langevin Building
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

The Honourable Chris Alexander, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1A 1L1

Dear Prime Minister and Minister:

We are writing to indicate the willingness of the Canadian Bar Association to work with you to address the humanitarian crisis caused by refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria and elsewhere in the region.

Our hope is that Citizenship and Immigration Canada and this country's immigration lawyers can work together to help address the immediacy of this crisis by expediting the entry into Canada of many of those refugees.

Members of the CBA Immigration Law Section understand the challenges of migration during a time of intense crisis. Given the obstacles faced by refugees fleeing desperate situations and by their families and sponsors in Canada, the CBA Section is offering to assist individuals and sponsoring groups to ensure that the necessary documents are in order. The CBA Section will launch a *pro bono* initiative to this end. Participating lawyers will offer initial legal consultations and assistance for Canadians and permanent residents in Canada with family members overseas. They will also advise refugee applicants and the institutions seeking to assist those applicants. This initiative is similar to others undertaken by the CBA, most recently after the 2013 typhoon disaster in the Philippines.

Through the CBA website, users will be able to locate and contact participating lawyers. We have also created a checklist explaining the type of assistance CBA lawyers can and will provide, as needed.

We believe that all Canadians understand that the dignity we cherish is a fundamental human right that must be shared with all those who seek our protection and assistance. CBA members stand ready with the capacity and resources to assist Canadian authorities in expediting and facilitating the entry of qualified refugees into Canada.

We hope you will agree that this situation warrants immediate action. We look forward to your earliest possible response to this offer of cooperation.

Yours truly,

(original letter signed by Janet M. Fuhrer and Stéphane Duval)

Janet M. Fuhrer
CBA President

Stéphane Duval
Chair, CBA Immigration Law Section

cc. Provincial Premiers premier@gov.ab.ca; premier@gov.bc.ca; premier@leg.gov.mb.ca; premier@gnb.ca; premier@gov.nl.ca; premier@gov.nt.ca; premier@gov.ns.ca; premier.taptuna@gov.nu.ca; premier@ontario.ca; premier@gov.pe.ca; ministre@mce.gouv.qc.ca; Philippe.Couillard@plq.org; premier@gov.sk.ca; premier@gov.yk.ca