The Honourable Chris Alexander, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
The House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

January 15, 2015

On January 7, just after we hit 'send' on a letter to you, we learned of the excellent news of a Canadian commitment to the resettlement of 13,000 refugees from the Middle east. Thank-you for taking this important step to address the needs of vulnerable people in Iraq and Syria.

Along with this thanks we reiterate our belief and hope, that Canada's response should provide *welcome and generosity to the most vulnerable* refugees regardless of their religion. Given the significant role expected from Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs) in this latest commitment, we underscore the need for a deepening and productive dialogue with them, in the interest of successful and timely settlement. Historically, private sponsors across Canada have demonstrated faithful commitment to the protection and resettlement of refugees in addition to those sponsored by the Canadian government. It is not clear to us how other SAHs were consulted in advance of your announcement, we only know that World Renew (a SAH) was not consulted specifically. World Renew and other SAHs have encountered significant challenges and delays in recent efforts to resettle refugees from the Middle East and other regions and countries.   We know that SAHs and other settlement partners will have good questions, passion and energy to help address these challenges and to provide a welcome for arriving refugees in this cohort and beyond.   Please make every effort to consult deeply with these essential partners.

Minister Alexander, thank you again for making this significant commitment. We look forward - and are committed to - its fulfilment.

Sincerely,

Rev. Darren Roorda   Rev. John Kapteyn
Canadian Ministries Director   Executive Secretary
Christian Reformed Church in North America   Regional Synod of Canada,
                                                                          Reformed Church in America

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