



**Mennonite Central Committee Canada**  
Office of the Executive Director  
300 St. Mary Avenue, Suite 900  
Winnipeg, MB Canada R3C CZ5

**The Honourable Marc Miller, P.C., M.P.**

Minister for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship  
House of Commons Canada  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

September 21, 2023

Dear Minister Miller,

On behalf of Mennonite Central Committee Canada, I congratulate you on your newly appointed cabinet position as Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). I offer you our prayers as you continue to govern. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) looks forward to working with you and your team.

As a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist Christian churches, MCC works to share God's love and compassion in the name of Christ by responding to basic needs and working for peace and justice, in Canada and around the world. Our faith calls us to imagine and work for a world where all can live at peace with God, with one another, and with creation.

Part of how we do this work is through Private Refugee Sponsorship (PSR). MCC was the first Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) and we were instrumental in drafting the first agreement for sponsorship in 1979. Since then, our staff have held leadership roles in the SAH community, including our current role as chair of the SAH Council. We have continued to engage with IRCC to improve refugee sponsorship programs. We are committed to working with you to ensure that Canada continues to be a leader in providing durable solutions for refugees.

No other SAH does more Blended Visa Office Referred Program (BVOR) sponsorships than MCC. Engaging Canadians in sponsorship has always been important to us. We strongly believe in the power to transform communities when they "welcome the stranger" to their community. We want to continue to work with IRCC to strengthen this flagship program. We are currently working with partners, like Refugee613, to develop and implement a sponsor recruitment plan for the BVOR program. At the same time, we believe it is important that Canada continue and even increase its commitment to resettle UNHCR referred refugees in the Government-Assisted Refugees program.

Since the pandemic made travel more difficult, IRCC has struggled to catch up in processing applications. We hope that you will commit to clearing the PSR application backlog and make sure that Canada's refugee resettlement targets remain high. It is important that Canada continues to be a global leader in this area with commitments to numbers and to supporting organizational structures internationally.

As we look forward to the Global Refugee Forum, (GRF) we are looking at ways to make meaningful pledges in the areas of sponsor recruitment, trauma informed support for forcibly displaced people, and engagement in at the triple nexus of, disaster relief, development and peace building to respond to the root causes of forced displacement. We hope you will join us in making and upholding meaningful pledges at GRF.

We look forward to our continued work together. Be assured of our prayers as you take on this important work.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Bauman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Cober Bauman  
Executive Director  
Mennonite Central Committee Canada

CC: Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada  
Marie-France Lalonde, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship  
Tom Kmiec, Shadow Minister for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Conservative Party of Canada  
Jenny Kwan, Critic for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, New Democratic Party  
Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe, Critic for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Bloc Quebecois  
Elizabeth May, Co-Leader, Green Party