

# STATEMENT

**Joint Statement – Ministers from Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Argentina, Spain and New Zealand underline their support for community-based refugee sponsorship in advance of the 2018 United Nations General Assembly and agreement on the Global Compact on Refugees**

**LONDON, THE UNITED KINGDOM, 16 July 2018**

1. We, Ministers responsible for Immigration in our respective countries, are committed to piloting or implementing community-based refugee sponsorship programs as part of our response to the global refugee crisis. We recognize the need to show solidarity with other refugee-hosting states, to maximize refugee integration outcomes, and to find new and innovative approaches to refugee protection.
2. In 2018, countries will agree on a Global Compact on Refugees aimed at strengthening international refugee responses by better sharing responsibility for refugees globally. Resettlement has always played a critical role in offering protection and a solution to some of the world's most vulnerable refugees identified by UNHCR. It is also about easing pressure on the developing countries that are hosting the majority of the world's refugees. In this way, resettlement and other pathways are a demonstration of solidarity and responsibility sharing.
3. Our governments are focusing on how we can, in partnership with our civil societies, do more to welcome refugees. We join together to recognize how community-based refugee sponsorship is providing a positive way for refugees to be supported upon arrival in our countries.
4. Community-based refugee sponsorship allows individuals, communities, and organisations to directly engage in refugee resettlement efforts. In partnership with government, sponsors commit to providing financial, emotional, and integration support to help newly-arrived refugees adapt to life in a new country.
5. In countries that have already launched these programs, we are seeing the receiving communities themselves transformed by the experience, as powerful bonds between sponsors and refugees are established, and positive attitudes towards refugees are fostered. Sponsors frequently comment that this is the most meaningful activity they have ever been a part of.

6. Thousands of refugees have already been admitted or resettled globally through community-based refugee sponsorship programs in 2018. But together we can do more. With the support of the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative, we are pleased to celebrate numerous successes in recent months, including launching new programs, enabling international best practice sharing, connecting refugee sponsors between countries for mentoring, facilitating technical and policy exchanges on refugee protection, and much more.
7. We welcome all to consider joining our growing cohort of countries, working in partnership with their communities, to offer a warm and supportive welcome through community-based refugee sponsorship. We stand ready to support you in these endeavours.

Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Canada  
Caroline Nokes, Minister of State for Immigration, The United Kingdom  
Charles Flanagan, T.D., Minister for Justice and Equality and David Stanton, T.D.,  
Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration, Ireland  
Rogelio Frigerio, Minister of the Interior, Public Works and Housing, Argentina  
Consuelo Rumí Ibáñez, State Secretary for Migration, Ministry of Labour, Migration and  
Social Security, Spain  
Iain Lees-Galloway, Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety, ACC, and of  
Immigration, New Zealand

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## Quotes

“Canada remains committed to resettling refugees and offering protection to those in need. We believe that when governments and civil societies work together to welcome refugees, we all benefit. I am delighted that our collective efforts are resulting in the development of new community sponsorship programs around the world. Together, we can increase the number of resettlement spaces globally and help more refugees.”

- The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Canada

“Refugee resettlement through community sponsorship is made possible by the dedication, hard work and compassion of community groups across the UK. The UK has one of the world’s largest refugee resettlement programmes, based on referrals by UNHCR of the most vulnerable refugees in need of resettlement. We are pleased to be working with Canada and others to share our experience of community sponsorship and support more countries who want to implement community-led refugee resettlement programmes.”

- Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP, Minister of State for Immigration, The United Kingdom

“Ireland, in partnership with UNHCR, has a long-standing programme of refugee resettlement. The addition of community sponsorship as a further durable solution will enhance the capacity of societies to respond effectively to the resettlement and integration needs of refugees through a partnership approach between states, civil society, the private sector and, most importantly, local communities. We look forward to working collaboratively with colleagues in Canada, the UK and elsewhere to make this approach a shared reality.”

- David Stanton, T.D., Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration, Ireland

“We firmly believe that we must search for creative and innovative ways to boost our humanitarian support to refugees and the countries that are receiving and assisting people in need of protection. Private or community sponsorship is based on an extraordinary commitment by civil society, faith-based organizations, the business sector and government, working together to give a helping hand to those who have been forcibly uprooted. Argentina will not turn its back on the current refugee crisis and will work hand in hand with other countries to help resolve it. We are working with the UNHCR, the IOM, and the support of various countries and partners within the international community to increase protection capacity for people in need.”

- Rogelio Frigerio, Minister of the Interior, Public Works and Housing, Argentina

“The Spanish government, together with the regional government of the Basque Country, and with the collaboration of the GRSI, is working to develop a community sponsorship programme, building on the solidarity with refugees shown by the people of Spain. This programme presents not only the chance to strengthen resettlement and refugee integration in Spain, but also a unique opportunity to advance coordination among central, regional and local authorities to welcome refugees. Spain hopes that the successful implementation of the programme in the Basque Country will lead to the implementation of similar initiatives in Spanish regions that have expressed an interest in contributing to this effort.”

- Consuelo Rumí Ibáñez, State Secretary for Migration, Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security, Spain

“New Zealand is committed to working with UNHCR and the international community to provide protection to refugees through resettlement. New Zealand has a long-standing Refugee Quota Programme and we are piloting the Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship Category. The new grassroots approach aims to bring communities together so they can feel involved in supporting refugees to settle into New Zealand life. We are hopeful that this new approach will bring positive social, economic and cultural benefits for the resettled refugees and the community as a whole.”

- Hon. Iain Lees-Galloway, Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety, ACC, and of Immigration, New Zealand

## About the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative

- The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative was announced in September 2016 following the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants 2016, and officially launched in December 2016 in Ottawa, Canada.
- The initiative is a partnership between the Government of Canada, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the University of Ottawa, the Radcliffe Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations.

## Associated links

- [Global Compact on Refugees](#)
- [Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative](#)
- [Global Initiative Brings Canada's Refugee Sponsorship Model to the World](#) (27 June 2017)
- [Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative promotes Canada's private refugee sponsorship model](#) (16 December 2016)
- [Canada, UNHCR and Open Society Foundations seek to increase refugee resettlement through private sponsorship](#) (19 September 2016)
- [Backgrounder: Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program](#)

## For more information:

### Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

[cic.gc.ca](http://cic.gc.ca)

[facebook.com/CitCanada](https://www.facebook.com/CitCanada)

[twitter.com/CitImmCanada](https://twitter.com/CitImmCanada)

[Instagram.com/CitImmCanada](https://www.instagram.com/CitImmCanada)

### Open Society Foundations

[opensocietyfoundations.org](http://opensocietyfoundations.org)

[facebook.com/OpenSocietyFoundations](https://www.facebook.com/OpenSocietyFoundations)

[twitter.com/opensociety](https://twitter.com/opensociety)

[Instagram.com/opensocietyfoundations](https://www.instagram.com/opensocietyfoundations)

### Radcliffe Foundation

<https://radcliffefoundation.org>

[twitter.com/radcliffefdn](https://twitter.com/radcliffefdn)

[Instagram.com/radcliffefdn](https://www.instagram.com/radcliffefdn)

### United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

[unhcr.org](http://unhcr.org)

[facebook.com/UNHCR](https://www.facebook.com/UNHCR)

[twitter.com/Refugees](https://twitter.com/Refugees)

### University of Ottawa

[uottawa.ca](http://uottawa.ca)

[facebook.com/uottawarefugeehub](https://www.facebook.com/uottawarefugeehub)

[twitter.com/RefugeeHub](https://twitter.com/RefugeeHub)

For more information (media only):

Please contact [info@refugeesponsorship.org](mailto:info@refugeesponsorship.org)