

For a Canada as welcoming as we are

Canadian federal party leaders must uphold the rights of refugees and migrants during the 2025 federal election campaigns

Open Letter to Party Leaders

Mark Carney, Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada

Pierre Poilievre, Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada

Yves-François Blanchet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois

Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada

Elizabeth May and Jonathan Pedneault, Co-Leaders of the Green Party of Canada

Dear Party Leaders,

Elections are a perilous time for marginalized groups. At a time of significant national political and economic insecurity and amidst a cost-of-living crisis that affects us all, refugees and migrants have been frequent targets. As the federal election approaches, we are writing to seek your commitment to reject this scapegoating, and defend and strengthen one of Canada's best traditions: protecting refugees and welcoming newcomers.

Political leaders play a critical role in upholding the rights of immigrants and refugees. This responsibility is particularly important today, when we see the rise around the world of xenophobic fear-mongering about people who move in search of a better life for their families. Canada is not immune to these narratives.

But while people may differ on policies, there still remains a broad consensus that Canada is strengthened by immigration, respect for human rights and being open to the world. Going into the federal election, we know this precious consensus is under attack, and you have both the opportunity and the obligation to remind Canadians why it is important to preserve it. We therefore ask you to embrace both language and policies that honour newcomers and their contributions to our country, and ensure they continue to feel safe and welcome in our communities.

We urge you to ensure that, throughout the election campaign, your party's platform and messaging about refugees and immigrants champion:

The rule of law, including upholding the right to asylum and the fundamental protections guaranteed to all by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Our shared humanity and the need to treat all newcomers with the dignity and welcome we all deserve.

The principle that refugees and immigrants strengthen our communities and not just our economy.

The belief that Canada finds opportunity through diversity.

The responsibility of political leaders to speak up for those marginalized in our society.

At a time when our sovereignty is under threat, when Canadians are challenged to rally behind what makes us distinct and binds us together as a nation, we ask you to defend our core values as a welcoming country. As people in Canada mobilize from coast to coast to stand up against attacks on our country, refugees and immigrants are already part of this collective response and must be embraced and recognized as such.

In communities across Canada, people show up for other people. We welcome newcomers as neighbours, as colleagues, as friends. We urge you to run an election campaign that reflects this, and to commit to building an immigration system, indeed a country, as welcoming as our people are.

Canadian Council for Refugees (for its 222 members)

Amnesty International Canada

Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers

List of additional signatories

Canadian Council for Refugees

Amnesty International Canada

Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers

Accueil-Parrainage Outaouais

Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights

Action Committee against Internal and International Human Trafficking (CATHII)

Action Réfugiés Montréal

Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA)

Afghan Women's Organization Refugee and Immigrant Services

AGIR: Action Lesbienne, Gai, Bisexuelle, Trans et Queer (LGBTQ) avec les immigrants et réfugiés

Albanian Canadian Association Kosova

Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies

Alongside Hope

Amnistie internationale Canada francophone

Angela Rose and Oak House

Anglican United Refugee Alliance (AURA)

Association des lesbiennes et des gais sur Internet (ALGI)

Association for the Rights of Household and Farm Workers (DTMF)

Association québécoise des avocats et avocates en droit de l'immigration (AQAADI)

Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (ARAISA)

Au bas de l'échelle (ABE)

Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS)

Bienvenue à Notre-Dame-de-Grâce

Black Africanness RCIC

Bridges Not Borders -- Créons des Ponts

Bridging Divides Research Program (Toronto Metropolitan University)

CALACS de L'ouest-de-l'île

Campagne québécoise pour la régularisation et la justice migrante

Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty

Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration Program (Toronto Metropolitan University)

Canada-US Border Rights Clinic

Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE)

Canadian Association of University Teachers

Canadian Centre for Language and Cultural Studies, Inc (CCLCS)

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT)

Canadian Drug Policy Coalition

Canadian Friends Service Committee

Canadian Labour Congress

Canadian Refugee Health Network

Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW)

Canadian Union of Postal Workers Local 566 - London

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Canadian Union of Public Employees Manitoba (CUPE Manitoba)

Capital Rainbow Refuge

Carrefour d'Action Interculturelle (CAI)

Carrefour d'aide aux Nouveaux arrivants (CANA)

Carrefour de ressources en interculturel (CRIC)

Carrefour d'éducation à la solidarité internationale - Québec (CÉSIQ)

Carrefour le Moutier

Carty House

CÉDA

Centre communautaire (CEFEDI)

Centre Communautaires des femmes sud asiatiques (CCFSA)

Centre d'Orientation et de Formation pour Favoriser les Relations Ethniques Traditionnelles (Le COFFRET)

Centre de Lecture, d'écriture et de Formations Mitis-Neigette (CLEF Mitis-Neigette)

Centre des femmes de Verdun

Centre d'orientation paralegale et sociale pour immigrants (COPSI)

Centre for Refugee Children

Centre for Refugee Studies (York University)

Centre for Spanish Speaking People (CSSP)

Centre social d'aide aux immigrants (CSAI)

Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue

Christie Refugee Welcome Centre

Citizens for Public Justice

Climate Action Network - Réseau action climat Canada

Comité logement Bas-Saint-Laurent

Community Family Services of Ontario

Community Legal Services of Ottawa

COMPASS Refugee Centre

Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN)

Congregation of Notre-Dame of Montreal

Congress of Democratic Trade Unions

Conseil central du Bas-Saint-Laurent (CCBSL-CSN)

Cooper Institute

COSTI Immigrant Services

CRESO Centre-conseil en emploi

CUIAS Immigrant Services

Diocese of Hamilton

Doctors of the World Canada

Entre Parents de Montréal-Nord

Exchange Language Services Inc.

Jewish Family Services of Ottawa

FCJ Refugee Centre

Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ-CSN)

Foyer du Monde

Francophonie Albertaine Plurielle (FRAP)

FrancoQueer

Greenpeace Canada

Halifax Refugee Clinic

HANA Bellechasse (Résidence d'accueil Bellechasse Sud)

Healthy Muslim Families

Horizon Ottawa

Illusion Emploi de l'Estrie

Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba

Immigrant and Refugee Support Center

Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISSofBC)

Immigrant Workers Centre (IWC)

Immigrants Working Centre (IWC)

Immigration Clinic, Detroit Mercy Law

Income Security Advocacy Centre (ISAC)

INICI (Immigrate, Integrate, Innovate)

Inter Pares

International Association for Refugees Canada (IAFR Canada)

International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group

Iraqi Federation of Refugees

Islamic Relief Canada

IslamicFamily

Jesuit Refugee Service Canada

Jumpstart Refugee Talent

Kinbrace Community Society

Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre

Le Pont - A.P.P.I.

Le Tremplin, Centre pour personnes immigrantes et leurs familles

Legal Assistance of Windsor

Lehal Law Corporation (Delta)

Ligue des droits et libertés

Lush Cosmetics

Madhu Verma Migrant Justice Centre

Maison Alice Desmarais

Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations

Mary Ward Centre Canada

Matthew House Refugee Services Toronto

Matthew House Refugee Welcome Centre of Windsor

Mennonite Central Committee Canada

Mennonite Central Committee Ontario

Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto (MCC Toronto)

Micah House Refugee Reception Services Inc.

Migrant Justice Clinic

Migrant Rights Network

Migrant Workers Centre BC

Migrante Alberta

Migrante Canada

Montreal City Mission Just Solutions Legal Clinic

Montréal LGBTQ+ Community Centre

MOSAIC - Multi-lingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities

Mothers Matter Canada

Multi-Agency Partnership of BC (MAP)

National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM)

National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE)

Neighbourhood Legal Services

New Canadians Centre Peterborough

New Hope Community Services Society

New Map Immigration Services Inc.

Newcomer Center of Peel (NCP)

Newcomer Legal Clinic (Thunder Bay, Ontario)

North West College

Oasis Centre des femmes

OCASI-Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Oeuvres Marie-Anne-Lavallée

Office for Systemic Justice, Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada

Ontario Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty

Ottawa Food Bank

Oxfam Canada

Oxfam-Québec

Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

Progress Toronto

Promotion of Sustainable Development in Donga Mantung Association

Quaker Committee for Refugees of Toronto Monthly Meeting, the Religious Society of Friends

Rainbow Railroad

Rainbow Refugee Society

RCEC Diocese of London Refugee Ministries Windsor

Refugee 613

Refugee Family Reunification

Refugee Health YYC

Regional Connections Immigrant Services

Regroupement des Organismes du Montréal Ethnique pour le logement (ROMEL)

Regroupement des organismes pour l'hébergement de personnes migrantes

Réseau d'aide aux travailleuses et travailleurs migrants agricoles du Québec (RATTMAQ)

Rights For All LGBTIQ+ Refugees In Canada Now Society (RARICAnow! Society)

Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary

Romero House

Samaritan House Ottawa

Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA)

Saskatoon Open Door Society Inc.

Silent Voice Canada

SINGA Québec : innovation social et enrichissement culturel avec les réfugiés

Skills For Change

Social Planning Toronto

Sojourn House

Solidarité ethnique régionale de la Yamaska

Somali HelpAge Association

Somerset West Community Health Centre

South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO)

South Asian Women's Collective (SAWC)

South Asian Women's Rights Organization

Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes

Table des groupes de femmes de Montréal

The Refugee Centre

The United Church of Canada

The Windsor Women Working With Immigrant Women

UFCW National

Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op

Vancity

Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture (VAST)

VAST

Waterloo Region Community Legal Services (WRCLS)

Welcome Collective

West Kootenay Friends of Refugees

Working Skills Centre

World Renew

World Skills Employment Centre

YMCA NCR

YWCA Toronto