



July 20, 2026

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., M.P.

Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Subject: Open Letter Regarding Leadership of Canada's Immigration System

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and individuals, we write to express our profound concern regarding the administration of Canada's immigration system under the leadership of the Honourable Lena Diab, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

Canada's immigration and refugee system has long been respected for its commitment to fairness, procedural integrity, humanitarian protection, and equality before the law. Increasingly, however, decisions taken under the current administration have raised serious questions about whether these principles are being applied consistently and without discrimination. Collectively, these developments have weakened public confidence in the fairness and integrity of Canada's immigration system.

Our concerns can be summarized in five broad areas:

1. **Inconsistent and differential treatment** of applicants from different countries and regions;
2. **A departure from Canada's humanitarian tradition**, particularly in the administration of emergency and humanitarian immigration measures;
3. **Barriers to academic, civil society, and public engagement** resulting from visa refusals affecting invited international speakers;
4. **Growing concerns regarding systemic inequities** in immigration decision-making;
5. **The erosion of public confidence** in the fairness and impartiality of Canada's immigration system.

These concerns are not based on isolated incidents. They reflect broader patterns documented through government data, parliamentary testimony, legal advocacy, academic research, media reporting, and the experiences of affected communities. A summary of this evidence is attached below in *'Background and Supporting Evidence'*.

We recognize that your government faces complex challenges in managing Canada's immigration system. However, these challenges cannot justify outcomes that create the appearance, or reality, of unequal treatment. Administrative discretion must always be exercised

consistently with the principles established by Parliament in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and Canada's international legal obligations.

The cumulative concerns outlined in this letter demonstrate that confidence in Minister Lena Diab's leadership has been fundamentally undermined. We therefore respectfully call upon you to remove Minister Diab as Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and appoint new leadership capable of restoring public confidence in the fairness, integrity, and impartial administration of Canada's immigration system.

Furthermore, we respectfully urge your government to address the documented concerns regarding inconsistent treatment and systemic disparities, and to restore transparency, fairness, accountability, and public confidence in Canada's immigration system.

Sincerely,

Organizations/Individuals

- Canadian Muslim Public Affairs Council (CMPAC)
- Doctors for Humanity
- Jewish Faculty Network
- Righting Relations Canada
- Palestinian Students and Scholars at Risk (PSSAR)
- Canadian Muslim Healthcare Network
- Saskatchewan Physicians for Justice and Peace
- Ibrahim Jame Mosque
- Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) Toronto–York Region Chapter
- Hikma Public Affairs Council
- Victoria Healthworkers Against Genocide
- Islamic Social Services Association
- Canadian Palestinian Social Association
- Arab Canadian Vote
- Ottawa Healthcare Professionals for Palestine
- British Columbia Physicians Against Genocide
- Islamic Family & Social Services Association
- Think for Actions
- Jewish Faculty Network – BC (JFN-BC)
- Ontario Palestinian Rights Association
- Jamat-E-Islahu Musliemin (JEIM)
- Saskatoon Chapter of Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East
- Siraj Institute
- Sabeel Holdings
- Canadians for Better Education
- The Faiza Alaraji Foundation
- Canadian Muslims for Palestine – Winnipeg

- Canadians Against Oppression and Persecution (CAOP)
- Rabbi David Mivasair
- Bruce Katz
- Cheryl Gaster, LL.B., C. Med., Human Rights Lawyer (Retired)
- Cynthia Khoo, Principal Lawyer, Tekhnos Law
- Pantea Jafari, Jafari Law
- Majed Jarrar, Professor, University of Ottawa

Background and Supporting Evidence

1. Immigration Policy Trends

According to recent Government of Canada immigration data:

- Deportations reached a ten-year high under Minister Diab's leadership, rising to **23,160 removals in 2025**, a **33% increase** from **17,397 in 2024**.¹
- At the same time, permanent resident admissions have been reduced from **483,655** in 2024 to a target of **380,000** in 2026.²
- Study permit allocations were reduced by **16%**, from **485,000 in 2024** to a cap of approximately **408,000 for 2025–2026**.³
- Visitor visa refusal rates increased from **38% in 2023 to 54% in 2024**. As of April 2025, the refusal rate remains elevated at **49%**.⁴

Collectively, these measures represent a significant tightening of Canada's immigration system with important implications for access and humanitarian protection.

2. Inconsistent and Differential Treatment

Stakeholders, parliamentarians, legal advocates, and affected communities have identified recurring concerns regarding inconsistent implementation of immigration policy.

These concerns include:

- differential treatment of applicants from conflict-affected regions;
- inconsistent application of humanitarian and temporary public policies;
- unequal access to emergency immigration measures;
- prolonged processing delays affecting certain nationalities; and
- substantially different approval rates for comparable immigration streams.

¹<https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/agency-agence/reports-rapports/security-securite/removals-renvois-eng.html>

²<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/transparency/committees/cimm-de-c-04-2025/permanent-resident-targets.html>

³<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/transparency/committees/cimm-de-c-04-2025/permanent-resident-targets.html>

⁴<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/transparency/committees/cow-jun-9-2025/migration-integrity.html>

In 2024, visitor visa refusals based on 'alleged misrepresentation' increased by **251%** compared to 2023⁵, raising serious concerns about the consistency, proportionality, and procedural fairness of decision-making under section 40 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. A finding of misrepresentation carries severe legal consequences, including inadmissibility and potential bars on future applications. **Such a dramatic increase therefore warrants scrutiny to ensure applicants are not being unfairly or disproportionately penalized.**

3. Departure from Canada's Humanitarian Tradition

In April 2025, asylum claims made by visitor visa holders **plummeted by 71%**, dropping from 10,095 claims in April 2024 to just 2,893 claims ⁶, a decline that raises serious questions about whether recent administrative practices are effectively deterring or obstructing access to refugee protection

Canada's refugee protection system is founded upon humanitarian obligations reflected in both domestic legislation and international law, including the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Recent concerns include:

- limited or delayed pathways for individuals fleeing armed conflict;
- restrictive implementation of emergency public policies;
- barriers affecting family reunification; and
- administrative decisions leaving vulnerable individuals without meaningful access to protection.

Although governments retain discretion over immigration policy, humanitarian discretion should remain consistent with the objectives established in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

4. Barriers to Academic and Civil Society Engagement

Canada has traditionally welcomed scholars, researchers, faith leaders, civil society representatives, and invited public speakers.

Recent visa refusals affecting invited speakers including guest speakers travelling from G7 partner countries to attend the MAC National Convention have generated concern regarding Canada's ability to facilitate legitimate academic, professional, and democratic exchange.

⁵<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/transparency/committees/cow-jun-9-2025/migration-integrity.html>

⁶<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/transparency/committees/cow-jun-9-2025/migration-integrity.html>

5. Erosion of Public Confidence

The legitimacy of Canada's immigration system depends not only on lawful decision-making but also on public confidence that decisions are administered fairly, consistently, and free from discrimination.

Recurring concerns across refugee protection, visitor visas, student visas, humanitarian pathways, and family reunification have contributed to declining confidence in the administration of Canada's immigration system.