



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

CANADA VISA APPLICATION CENTRE, KAMPALA, UGANDA

Remarks by Mr Ali Abdi, IOM Uganda Chief of Mission on for the visit of Hon. Ahmed D. Hussen, Canada Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship | 2 August 2018

Honourable Minister Ahmed Hussen

High Commissioner [Sara] Hradecky

Erin [Counselor Brouse]

Dear Colleagues

You are most welcome to the Canada Visa Application Centre, operated by IOM Uganda in partnership with VFS Global on behalf of the Government of Canada.

I want to thank – through you Hon. Minister – the Government and people of Canada, for the strong relationship with, and support for, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which is the United Nations Migration Agency. In 1951, Canada was among the founding members of the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe (PICMME), which later morphed into Inter governmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM) and eventually became IOM. This reflects the organization's transition over half a century from logistics agency to migration agency.

And Canada has, for many years, been among the top 10 state donors to IOM.

This strong relationship is rooted in our mutually shared belief that migration is not just inevitable in specific cases, but it is often both necessary and desirable.

Hon. Minister, 15 months you spoke in New York at a panel discussion on the Global Compact for Migration, hosted by IOM. There, you stressed the positive contributions Migrants to their host societies. They bring new skills and business acumen, and pay taxes.

That is true for every society. True for Uzbekistan. True for Uruguay. True for Uganda.

Like you, Hon. Minister, IOM believes that migration needs to be regular, safe, humane, and well-managed.

This is where the Canada Visa Application Centre (CANVAC) and the IOM resettlement programme come in. IOM – both here and in other countries – is proud to be a partner in making migration to Canada safe, humane and orderly. In Uganda, the resettlement programme for refugees to Canada has been ongoing for nearly two decades. IOM is grateful that over the years, Canada has expanded the warrant programme, and given thousands of vulnerable refugees a safe platform on which to make fuller contributions to humanity.

The Visa Application Centre, where we are, continues to grow impressively. Last year, for instance, CANVAC processed 4,313 applications. For the first five months of this year, CANVAC had already handled 3,008 applications. So, between CANVAC, Resettlement Operations and the Migration Health Division, IOM offers a one-stop centre for Canadian migration, including visas, health assessment, logistics and travel advisory services.

On a more complex scale, in 2015 - 2016, after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau committed that Canada would take in Syrian refugees, IOM was called in and moved 25,000 vulnerable Syrian refugees from Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey to Canada.

As I conclude, Hon. Minister, I wish to reiterate that we strongly value our relationship with Canada. And here, I wish to acknowledge our key partners such as UNHCR and the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda. We are grateful for the support Canada has given us in our bid to make migration safer, more orderly and more humane.

I Thank You!