



## 2019 National Public Administration Case Competition

# Doing Good, or Doing Smart? A Strategic Response to a Global Crisis



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#### The UN Comes Calling

It has been a difficult Cabinet meeting this Tuesday morning in January, and the Prime Minister took a moment as he gathered his papers to reflect on the outcome and what might lie ahead.

He had opened the discussion on the Yemeni crisis by asking the Minister of Global Affairs to briefly outline the UN request: “The Government has received a joint request from the UN (representing appeals from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)) to take in the largest share of the approximately 75,000 refugees that were affected by last month’s Saudi “surge.” The Prime Minister had been briefed on the widespread devastation it caused, leaving many people starving and homeless.

“I don’t need to remind you that the EU and the US have effectively said that they will make no special provisions or accelerate procedures for Yemenis. The UN claims that the situation is desperate, and we have our own intel that confirms that,” said the Global Affairs minister.

“To those fleeing persecution, terror and war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength (#WelcomeToCanada).”  
*The Prime Minister (Twitter), January 2017*

Following the minister’s initial briefing, the Prime Minister had given a simple acknowledgement of his own position on refugee issues, and that he was of the strong view that Canada had to respond positively: it was simply a matter of how many, and how quickly the response could be organized.

Then the discussion at the Cabinet table went in directions the Prime Minister had not anticipated (ruefully, he reminded himself of his injunctions to his colleagues to be forceful and open in Cabinet – to air all views and all sides!).

As he expected (and they had discussed it briefly before the meeting), the Refugees and Immigration Minister supported a positive response and said that up to 25,000 could be pledged and with additional resources his people could begin putting procedures in place almost immediately. The number and level of immigration was important. Canada had pledged to take in 40,000 Syrians, and so this was proportionally appropriate. Moreover, it was feasible from an administrative point of view according to the Immigration Department data.

The Global Affairs minister had chimed in again at this point and said how this was an important opportunity to make a visible humanitarian gesture. Our influence in the Middle East had been compromised with our problems with the Saudis, but here was a chance to build on success with the Syrian refugee crisis. The Saudis (informally) have signalled they actually want some help with the Yemenis to reduce international pressures on them. Even the US has indicated that, even though they will not take any action, a Canadian initiative would not be opposed or criticized.

That said, the Global Affairs minister was particularly insistent that some questions be addressed: “Is this a wise thing to do? Did we really enjoy ‘success’ with the Syrians? It has been a mixed experience at best, with backlogs and interminable processing problems. My constituents are not in any mood to support another ‘worthwhile Canadian initiative’ just because it feels good. Prime Minister, I strongly believe we need to proceed with caution on this one.”

The Prime Minister was not entirely surprised of course as the minister represented a Toronto riding, and she had received an earful from the Premier. But what surprised him was what came next.

“Prime Minister, I agree. My sense is that the country is in no mood for yet another commitment of this scale. In Manitoba we’ve had the illegal refugees walking across the border, avoiding checkpoints. The numbers are small, but the press is bad. Community groups are not equipped to deal even with this influx, especially during the winter months which is where we find ourselves now. What are we to do with 25,000 – or whatever the number ends up being this time round in February?” said the Minister for International Trade Diversification.

Then, ministers representing ridings from Quebec and a few more from Ontario, and even the usually agreeable ministers from the Maritimes piled on.

One prominent minister from Ontario was emphatic. “Public opinion is shifting! What about the backlogs already! We can’t even process the Syrians in a timely fashion, and now we want to take in 25,000 more from somewhere else?!” The PM wished that number now had not been floated. “What about community groups? They are exhausted, overwhelmed as it is, and feel like they’ve ‘done their bit.’”

A minister from Montreal supported the point. “I am taking a lot of heat from shelters and other groups who say that we royally botched the Syrian crisis, and that they would never trust us again with such a policy decision.”

And yet another minister from Atlantic Canada emphasized that, “We can’t squeeze anything more from them! If we give preference to Yemenis, what about the other groups who are patiently waiting in the queue? I am told that refugees are clogging the homeless shelters and support systems in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal! If they can’t keep up, how can you possibly expect our small communities to do it?”

The discussion went on for a full hour, with the mood of the room quickly shifting to rejecting the initiative. The PM shook his head. Humanitarian aid was something he had staked a lot of political capital on, and the Syrian response had been both good politics and good policy as far as he was concerned. It is true that the provinces, as usual, were demanding more money and more support, and the Ontario premier would likely put up a fuss. The Prime Minister was meeting him in the afternoon. But, this decision to approve the UN request was something that was consistent with his government’s brand, and this was something he had been only too happy to defend in the election.

Given the substantial push-back around the table, however, the PM finally relented and agreed that Cabinet should get a fuller analysis and review, along with recommendations, before its next meeting.

In particular, the PM indicated that he welcomed information that gauged provincial and local government responses and readiness. He insisted that this was going to be a “partnership” and a “pan-Canadian” commitment. There would be no “federal government going it alone” on this file. He informed his colleagues of meetings he would have later in the day to confirm his ideas.

Exiting the meeting, the PM sighed as he walked toward his office. Were his instincts so wrong on this issue? Done right, this could pay-off internationally, build the government’s brand, and pull Canadians together in another national effort. But his colleagues weren’t buying it, at least not at first blush. Who was right, and how to proceed?

Looking at his file provided by Global Affairs, he reviewed some facts again in order to figure out what to do next.

## **Syrian Refugees: An Ambiguous Success**

### *The Problem of Backlogs*

In November 2015, the federal government committed to accepting 25,000 Syrian refugees. As of 2018 the actual number was over 50,000, spread out over 350 communities across Canada. However, many of those refugees are still struggling to find work, learn either French or English, and in some cases have had to rely on food banks. As of early December 2017, the Immigration Department had a backlog of 20,000 sponsored Syrian refugees, including almost 16,000 from private sponsorships. The largest backlogs at the time were in Lebanon (7,700), the UAE (3,200), Saudi Arabia and Turkey (both around 2,400), and Jordan (1,840), where people had been waiting for over a year and often longer.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the backlog could be attributed to processing issues. In particular, many refugees have very little documentation, and it takes a great deal of time to validate and verify their status, even their citizenship. Given the delays, many refugees who have crossed into Canada also endure long wait times and are essentially living without many government services while here. The challenge is that such backlogs in hearings create more backlogs. If additional initiatives are added to the existing burden on the system, wait times could be even longer if additional resources are not added.

“Refugee Policy is a contentious issue in every refugee receiving country in the world. In Canada, there is a general consensus that Canada ought to offer protection to those who deserve it.”

Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights. December 2016.  
“Finding Refuge in Canada: A Syrian Resettlement Story.”

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thestar.com/news/immigration/2018/01/02/years-after-canada-opened-its-doors-thousands-of-syrian-refugees-are-still-waiting-to-come-here.html>

According to the International Refugee Board (IRB), the backlog was significant even before the influx of refugee claimants entering Canada at non-border crossings from the United States over the summer of 2018. Although the number of claimants entering Canada irregularly from the United States in 2017 (about 18,150) was relatively high, the overall number of claimants at 47,425 is not much different from numbers Canada has experienced in the past. As of the end of February 2018, the IRB had 47,451 claims pending and were clearing approximately 2,000 claims per month. At the current rate of processing cases, the backlog represents about two years of processing, in addition to the new claims, which have averaged approximately 4,000 per month over the past year.<sup>2</sup>

Several solutions have been offered to the IRB to improve its processing time of refugee claimants, but they have often fallen on deaf ears, according to Robert Vineberg and others. In particular, questions have been raised about the policy decision arising out of the 1985, “Singh decision” by the Supreme Court. Harbhajan Singh and other nationals had attempted to claim refugee status under the *Immigration Act, 1976* on the basis that they feared persecution in their home country if they were deported. The Minister of Employment & Immigration denied these individuals status on the advice of the Refugee Status Advisory Committee. The court concurred with the appellant that their rights had been violated under the Charter. As a result, the court ordered that all rejected refugee claimants had a right to an in-person appeal. The result of this process has been a persistent backlog in claims each year, compounded by the commitment to help Syrians. Also notable is that initial screenings should not be carried out by the IRB but should be undertaken by the Immigration department. Such inefficiencies have implications for non-routine initiatives.

### ***Implications of Long Processing Times***

When the UNHCR *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (1951) was crafted, signatory countries committed to the principle to provide protection to foreign individuals who arrive at their borders requesting asylum or who make a refugee claim. The Convention is clear about individuals who qualify, and strict protocols are put in place to ensure timely processing. The assumption that such claims will be processed efficiently and in a timely way is often problematic as noted in the IRB data, and other challenges arise regarding the treatment of those awaiting to have their claim heard.

According to the 2017 report of the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), as time goes on refugees integrate into their new homes and communities, making it that much more difficult to deport, especially in cases when children are born in Canada. There has been a growing issue of children of refugee claimants, and those claimants argue that they cannot leave their children behind should their claims be rejected. Public outcry on these matters has also been increasingly evident in the media, particularly when some asylum claimants seek protection in churches and other places of worship. Questions of natural justice are raised.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See: <https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/refugee-news/Pages/q2-2018.aspx> . IRB newsletters provide details on all claimants and processing times. See also: OAG. 2017. “Report 3 – Settlement Services for Syrian Refugees and Citizenship Canada. Available at: [http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl\\_oag\\_201711\\_03\\_e\\_42668.html](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_201711_03_e_42668.html)

<sup>3</sup> Robert Vineberg, “Canada’s Refugee Strategy: How it can be Improved.” Calgary: University of Calgary. Available at: <https://www.policyschool.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Canadas-Refugee-Strategy-Vineberg.pdf>

More immediate concerns arising from delays relate to accessing public programs such as the Canada Child Benefit. In order to qualify, a great deal of documentation is required that claimants often do not have. This puts a great deal of pressure on caseworkers in regional offices to solve these problems. Finding interpreters to respond to claimants alone places a huge burden on federal, provincial and municipal governments. This compounds processing times for other programs downstream from refugee claims and creates situations where naturalized Canadians are increasingly having difficulty having their benefits processed.

Such reported difficulties square with the available data. In British Columbia, for example, the Immigrant Society of BC conducted a multilingual telephone survey of refugee households who arrived in the province between 1 October 2016

and 31 December 2017. The survey aimed to determine the experience of claimants integrating into their local communities so that the province could better respond with targeted policies and programs. Of the 311 respondents, 51 percent came from three Middle East countries: Afghanistan (22%); Iraq (17%); and Iran (12%). Most arrived in Canada by walking across the Canada-US border (59%) or by way of a Canada Border Services land-based port entry (8%). Approximately 59 percent arrived as individuals (59%), whereas 41 percent claimed that they had family in Canada. Most respondents indicated that they faced several challenges integrating into their communities: finding housing (20%); obtaining employment (17%); and navigating the refugee claims process (15%).<sup>4</sup>

Interestingly, many of the claimants said that they had been employed in their home country and that they possessed university level or professional training. For Syrian claimants, many noted that their credentials are not recognized in Canada making integration all the more difficult. Although there are good reasons for credentials to be checked and validated, the OAG asserts that Canada could do much more to recognize professional credentials, thereby streamlining processes for individuals to find jobs in their fields.

The 2017 report of the Auditor General also reached important conclusions on the integration of Syrian refugees in Canada:

Overall, we found that most Syrian refugees received needs assessments, language assessments, and language training during their first year in Canada. More than 80 percent had their needs assessed, and 75 percent of those who received language assessments attended language classes. Syrian refugees received settlement services at a higher rate than other refugees who arrived in Canada during the same period.

“Refugees go unprocessed for years, and in the meantime end up living, working and laying down roots. Often that only increases the chances they will end up staying even if they might have otherwise been rejected. It may even lead to increases in questionable refugee claims, as people realize they can work and make money in Canada for years before their case is even heard.”

Robert Vineberg. April 2018. “Canada’s Refugee Strategy: How Can it be Improved?”

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<sup>4</sup> See: Immigrant Services Society of BC. June 2018. “Refugee Claimants in BC: Understanding Current Irregular Arrival Trends.” Available at: [http://bcrefugeehub.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Refugee\\_Claimants\\_in\\_BC-2018.pdf](http://bcrefugeehub.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Refugee_Claimants_in_BC-2018.pdf)

We also found that Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada did not allocate all of its available funds to service providers at the beginning of the 2017–18 fiscal year. The purpose of these funds was to sustain additional settlement services established in 2016. When they did not receive funding, some service providers cut settlement services for at least three months.

These findings matter because for Syrian refugees to integrate into Canadian society, they must be able to access the settlement services they need when they need them.

## **The Public Mood: Cautious and Cooling**

Given these reports and other expert research, the Prime Minister could appreciate the apprehension of his Cabinet. They all knew and understood the data, and the many reports calling for governments and service providers to do a better job. He also knew that the public was raising concerns, and that he might be taking a significant political risk if he announced another major refugee initiative so soon after the Syrian program. He turned his attention to the polling data next. For this, he asked to speak to his Director of Communications.

The PM’s meeting with the Director of Communications, accompanied by his Chief of Staff, was troubling, in part, because they did not agree on what public opinion polling actually indicates.

The Chief of Staff began the briefing with a reminder that Canadians have long had strong support for immigration.

“You probably read that study by Keith Banting and colleagues which found that Canada is one of the few countries in the world in which public trust and tolerance increases as ethnic diversity increases. Environics, which has tracked public attitudes on immigration and diversity for years, reports that when Canadians are asked what makes our country unique, the vast majority say ‘multiculturalism.’ They believe immigrants can be just as good citizens as those born in Canada, and they don’t think immigrants take jobs away from them. In fact, 80 percent of the public think that immigration is good for the economy. And Canadians have positive views on people from Muslim countries – an important factor when we are considering refugees from Syria and Yemen. Moreover, one in five Canadians is an immigrant and an additional 20 percent are second generation. We are a diverse country, linked by immigration in some way, which should support our action on Yemen.”

“A successful refugee program is essential to a successful immigration program in general as lack of public support for one component of the program will undermine support for the overall immigration program.”

Robert Vineberg, April 2018.  
“Canada’s Refugee Strategy: How it can be improved.”

The Communications Director interjected (he enjoyed being devil’s advocate, especially when it came to the Chief of Staff’s “sunny ways” approach to everything).

“But, as the Angus Reid Institute showed in its poll earlier this year, for the first time the Canadian public thinks immigration levels should be reduced. I have the figures right here. In a 2017 poll, 27 percent of Canadians said the government’s proposed immigration levels were too

high, up from 23 percent in 2016, and 32 percent said that there are too many refugees coming to Canada, up from 30 percent a year earlier.”

“A few percentage points? That could just be the margin of error,” retorted the Chief of Staff.

“But, I will agree that the ‘immigration issue’ has been muddied by the illegal border crossings and asylum seekers. The television images of families walking across the border in Manitoba and Quebec gave the impression we let anyone in.”

The Communications Director had been ready for this and consulted the figures at hand.

“Polls show that almost 2/3’s of Canadians think that there are too many asylum seekers crossing the border for the country to handle, although 50 percent of those polled grossly overestimated how many people came across the border last year, thinking it was over 50,000 when it was actually about 31,000 people. People perceive that these illegal immigrants, as many see them, are actually economic migrants, seeking better jobs, rather than genuine asylum seekers. Yet, they get accommodation and benefits right away and, even if their claims are not legitimate, few are ever deported. Especially for immigrant families who waited years to get processed and may still be waiting to bring in relatives, they have a sense that these people are ‘jumping the queue.’ For Canadians as a whole, this seems to violate their basic sense of fairness.”

“I would like to remind us,” replied the Chief of Staff, “that we are talking about helping genuine asylum seekers - people fleeing war and the worst humanitarian crisis of our lifetime, with over 22 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.”

“My point is,” said the Communications Director, looking directly at the PM, “that the messaging around the immigration file is not simple nor easy to control. All it takes is for one sensationalized news story about an immigrant accused of killing a teenager in BC, and good public policy goes sideways. Have you read the comments on immigration and refugee stories in any of the major papers? It’s common to read, ‘freeloader;’ ‘go home and fix your own country;’ ‘our middle-class way of life is disappearing.’ It is sad, really.”

“Although, we might dispute some of the data, Mr. Prime Minister, I think we agree on two things,” the Chief of Staff said quickly. “First, the file on the Yemenis will not simply mirror that of the Syrians. Will Canadians have the same positive response to the arrival of thousands of Yemenis as they had, at least initially, to the Syrians or the Vietnamese boatpeople before them, when communities came together to raise funds and provide private sponsorships? Second, immigration will be an election issue. The opposition has been spreading misinformation hoping to mobilize its base,

Six-in-ten Canadians say Canada is “too generous” to those crossing the border irregularly. This is a slight increase from 2017 when the same question was asked.

Angus-Reid poll, ARI Awareness Index, April 2018.

“Ibrahim Ali, 28, is charged with first-degree murder in the death of a Burnaby teen, MARRISA SHEN, whose body was found in Central Park.”

Globe & Mail. July 2017.

At: <https://globalnews.ca/news/4693953/man-accused-murder-marrisa-shen-appears-vancouver-court/>



and a recent poll even indicated that a large segment of the public thinks the opposition leader might be better at handling the issue than you are. On the bright side though, this election will see plenty of new citizens and the youngest of the Millennials eligible to vote for the first time.”

The discussion ended abruptly, at least for now, when the Executive Assistant entered the room, “Prime Minister, you are running late for your meeting with the Premier of Ontario.”

## **Provinces and Communities: Apprehensive Partners**

### ***The Provinces are Frustrated, and Municipalities are Overburdened***

Earlier, as the Prime Minister prepared to meet with the Ontario premier, he knew that he had an uphill battle ahead. Cabinet colleagues were also very interested in what the Ontario premier had to say.

The premier has the support of both the Manitoba and Saskatchewan premiers on federal transfers for immigration. And the premier also knows that the support of British Columbia for federal initiatives was waning under the pressure of provincial colleagues who are dubious of federal promises to ensure that provinces are not seriously affected financially by federal refugee and immigration programs. Other premiers were watching the public feuds with interest.

Walking into his office, the PM found the Ontario premier waiting – and making it clear from his demeanor that he was self-assured.

“Mr. Premier,” said the Prime Minister. “It is a pleasure to see you today. Have you thought any more about our recent telephone conversation about supporting Yemeni refugees? Ontario would have to play a major role in settling a large number of families.”

“Thank you, Prime Minister, for the invitation to discuss this. Speaking as I always do for the people of Ontario, I have my doubts about this plan of yours. And, as you know, I am not alone. You are no doubt aware that my good friend from British Columbia is also under a lot of pressure to backtrack on their intake of refugees, and the Premier of Quebec wants to break ranks altogether and set his own intake levels.”

“I know that a lot has happened on this issue since the summer, Mr. Premier. The increase in irregular border crossings in BC has not helped to calm public concern on this matter, let alone the steady number of irregular crossings in Quebec. I also know that many of these individuals and families end up wanting to settle in Ontario,” said the Prime Minister.

“So why do you want to pour gasoline on the fire by allowing Yemenis to enter Canada on a scale similar to that of the Syrian crisis? You must know that our resources are being tapped out, and people on the ground are tired. Our systems cannot handle any more! You have cost Ontario \$200 million, and counting, this past year with your promises of an open border. These are illegal crossings, and we should be deporting them!” barked the premier.

The Prime Minister retorted, trying to stay calm. “I am not sure that ‘illegal’ is the right term as we have obligations under the UNHCR Refugee Convention. Let’s not confuse refugees with economic or political migrants. I realize federally we have not done a good job of separating refugee and immigrant settlement in our treatment of them, but this is no reason to fan negative perceptions of refugees or immigrants in the media.”

“I am not sure what you mean by this artificial separation of border crossers. It all looks the same to me, and the people of Ontario. The fact is that rental housing costs alone in Ontario and other

provinces are skyrocketing. And, there is little help coming from Ottawa to cover those increases,” said the Premier, frustrated.

The Prime Minister pressed on. “We know that Canadians still support our refugee policy, although that support has slightly waxed and waned at times. You are on the wrong side of this, Premier. And we are going to need help to fill countless jobs that Canadians do not want. You would be getting some tax benefits with your investments. Rather than concentrate your settlement efforts

in the big cities, why not spread people out where there are labour demands? This is something *our* friend in British Columbia is doing and doing well. I read a report from BC this morning that said the province will need 925,000 jobs filled in the next ten years, and more than a quarter of those will have to be filled by immigrants. I cannot imagine that this story is different in Ontario, Mr. Premier.”

“That may all be true, Prime Minister. I have not read those reports. But I do know that jobs in the future do not help me with my housing needs now! Ontario’s cities are struggling to find housing, not to mention basic supports such as interpreters for our social services case workers. You make the promises, Prime Minister, but it is we premiers who have to work daily to fulfill them. Don’t you think we deserve the respect to be included in your promise making? Don’t even get me started on what an earful I am taking from the various nonprofits, especially in Toronto! They cannot handle the demand anymore. There are not enough local resources to deal with job and language training, daycare, healthcare, after-school programs, and the basics such as financial planning or reading and writing in some cases.”

“Thank you for bringing all of this to my attention, Mr. Premier. I know that we all have a great deal of work to do. But the fact is that I have an obligation to respond to the UN. Canada has to do its part. I am sure these conversations will continue. I must apologize, but I have an important meeting now to attend with senior officials,” said the Prime Minister. “I am sorry that our time is so short, but I can assure you that your comments are important.”

“One more point, Prime Minister, and this is rather serious. I was on CFRA radio this morning, and I was being grilled by callers as to why refugees and immigrants were receiving big allowances when Canadians who have worked here all their lives were struggling to make ends meet. Many of those callers tell me about these immigrants who decide it is better to sit at home rather than put their ‘benefits’ at risk by going to work. How do you suggest I deal with that, Mr. Prime Minister? What do you expect me to say?”

“We each have our problems on this issue, Mr. Premier. There will always be those who think they are worse off than someone else. Now, if you will excuse me, my assistant will escort you out.”

“Communities across Ontario have been straining to support a high number of illegal border crossers, and the approach of the federal government is now testing the patience and generosity of Ontarians.”

Minister of Social Services. 16 July 2018.

<https://www.thestar.com/vancouver/2018/08/01/bc-refugee-groups-want-dedicated-immigration-ministry-as-other-provinces-steer-away.html>

Walking to the door, the Premier added, “You need to take my comments seriously, Mr. Prime Minister. You have an election coming up.”

The comment was unwelcome, but the PM knew there was some truth in what the Premier said. Calling his assistant once again after the Premier left, he made a request.

“I want the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, and the Minister of Finance to provide me with a full briefing at a breakfast meeting on Friday. I also want the Privy Council to get started on coordinating this effort, so I want the Clerk to be part of this coordinated effort. Given the importance of the issue for the Canadian public, I will ask the Chief of Staff at the PMO to join us for that breakfast meeting. We need to better understand the concerns of the provinces and the mayors, anticipate other complexities, and get a good handle on public opinion so that I know the realistic options in responding to the UN request. And, we need to consider how we would realistically implement a plan for any level of intake of Yemeni refugees.”

## **The Case Challenge**

The federal government faces a tricky situation. It has staked its brand on compassion, humanitarianism, and a welcoming stance on refugees. It wants to be seen as a global leader on these issues, and the Yemen crisis presents an opportunity to reinforce its brand both internationally and domestically. There is no question that there will be a federal response to the UN request, and there will be a targeted number of Yemenis coming to Canada. The question is: what should the target be? What is realistically possible given the Canadian political climate, public opinion and the practical complexities of how to manage additional refugees?

Whatever the target ends up being, a significant problem is the growing provincial and municipal opposition to Ottawa’s “do-goodism” when others pay the cost. There was a scramble to accept the Syrians, without a clear plan on where they would be settled and how (beyond a hope and a prayer that voluntary sponsorships would soak up a large number).

Any statement on accepting whatever number of refugees has – this time – to be accompanied by a clear strategy of provincial and municipal support and cross-national burden-sharing.

As indicated by the Prime Minister, he has directed the Ministers of Refugees, Immigration and Citizenship, Innovation and Economic Development, and Finance as well as the Clerk of the Privy Council to gather information and propose a recommended strategy for the breakfast meeting on Friday (it is currently Tuesday) that the Prime Minister will be able to “sell” to the next Cabinet meeting.

This group must present a *national* plan that is workable for all regions and all levels of government. However, it also needs to address provincial and local circumstance and concerns: the presentation must be sensitive to the issues, capacities and other factors specific to provincial, regional and local contexts.

## Case Directions

Each team represents the inter-departmental/agency ADM level group who will prepare and present a recommendation and implementation plan to the PM and ministers with PMO staff present, at the breakfast meeting in a few days.

The recommendation must present a reasonable national target for Yemeni refugees, with an argument to justify the target that will be acceptable across the country. You should explain the key issues, considerations and requirements that are fundamental to the ministerial decision to implement a plan.

The recommendation and implementation plan should be sensitive to regional, provincial and local interests. In this regard, each case team should address provincial, regional and local issues relevant to the recommendation and implementation plan but should emphasize the interests of the case team's home province/region.

To assist with your justification of the recommendation and implementation plan, take account of the following considerations from the perspective of *your* region<sup>5</sup> or province/territory.<sup>6</sup> Note that you are not limited to these considerations.

- Current state of your regional/provincial acceptance/position on refugees;
- Current state of programmatic capacity (i.e., housing, and service programs such as clinics for medical treatment, language training, etc.);
- Indication of non-profits/community support and likely community partners;
- Indication of sponsored refugee responses to such requests.

You are asked to follow a standardized approach to the PM and ministerial briefing. You will be giving advice to your ministers and PM represented as the judging panel for the competition. However, it is realized that your DMs would be present as well if this were reality. Your presentations should be in PowerPoint format and should include:

- Purpose / Objective of the Briefing (e.g., problem statement);
- Background (including assessment based on your departmental data);
- Recommendation(s);
- Key Considerations (using the above or others), and Analysis of your findings to come to your recommendation(s);
- Implementation Options for the ministers on how to proceed and justification of the plan you are proposing (including potential costs); and,
- Key Communications Messages (i.e., communications strategy options for citizens in your region, province or local area. You should also consider what messages could be extended to a national strategy).

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<sup>5</sup> Note: you may present an assessment of the items in this list based on the location of your team (e.g., British Columbia, Quebec, etc.).

<sup>6</sup> A region is defined as a set of provinces (e.g., Atlantic provinces, Central Canada, etc.)