



**THE HON PETER DUTTON MP
MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION
AND BORDER PROTECTION**

1106/1604



Ref No: MC15-279246

Dr Dennis Jensen MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dennis,
Dear Dr Jensen

Thank you for your letter of 24 November 2015 concerning Petition Number 1106/1604, regarding the resettlement of more refugees in Australia.

As you would be aware, the Australian Government announced in September that Australia will resettle an additional 12,000 people displaced by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. These places are in addition to Australia's 2015-16 Humanitarian Programme of 13,750 places. The additional 12,000 places are a one-off increase to our Humanitarian Programme in recognition of the scale of the crisis and Australia's capacity to help.

The Government's success in tackling illegal people smuggling has eased the pressure on Australia's Humanitarian Programme, enabling the Government to make this generous contribution to addressing the humanitarian crisis in Syria and Iraq.

The scale of the displacement of people from Syria and Iraq, and the unfolding crisis in Europe, requires a strong international response and Australia has shown we are willing and able to play a significant part in this response.

Australia's Humanitarian Programme is also set to rise to 18,750 places in 2018-19. Australia has a long and proud tradition of resettling refugees and vulnerable people in humanitarian need and has consistently ranked among the top three countries that resettle refugees referred by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The Government also recently announced a further increase in humanitarian assistance to the 240,000 displaced people affected by the conflict in Syria and Iraq, at a cost of \$44 million. This brought Australia's contribution to address the humanitarian crises in Syria and Iraq to about \$230 million since 2011. Our latest contribution will deliver food, water, healthcare, education, emergency supplies and protection, including support for women and children.

Australia's package of assistance was decided following careful consideration by the National Security Committee. Australia's commitment represents a significant contribution, likely to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars, to the humanitarian crisis in the Middle East. It is a generous, prudent and proportionate response by a decent and compassionate nation.

Thank you for bringing this petition to my attention.

Yours sincerely

PETER DUTTON