



14 September 2015

Prime Minister Tony Abbott
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

On behalf of Australian Quakers I write to congratulate you and the Government for the decision to accept 12,000 additional refugees who are victims of the tragic war in Syria and Iraq.

We are also pleased that UNHCR is being supported in its work, and that the refugees will be drawn mainly from the camps in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey where many have endured lengthy periods of hardship. We join with other voices that encourage the acceptance of people on a basis of need rather than ethnic, religious or family background. Our members around Australia are willing to be part of any program of practical assistance to incoming refugees.

At the same time we are opposed to further military action by Australia in the region, as this will only add to the suffering of civilians and prolong the war.

We urge the Government to use its well-established reputation, from its term on the United Nations Security Council, to persuade all the parties involved in the conflict (directly on the ground and through the provision of arms) to achieve a negotiated end to the hostilities and a long-term political settlement. Only then will there be a chance for adopting an effective plan for meeting the humanitarian needs of the many thousands affected.

In Peace

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julian Robertson".

Presiding Clerk, Australia Yearly Meeting