

September 3, 2015

Media Release

**STATEMENT FROM TIMA KURDI ON SYRIAN REFUGEE FAMILY MEMBERS**

On behalf of our family, we feel it is important to outline the details of my brother's tragic experience in Turkey this week given some misinformation currently circulating in the media.

My brother, Abdullah Kurdi, lost his wife and two young boys yesterday while trying to cross the 4 km journey from Turkey to the Greek Island of Kos, in a desperate attempt to survive. This tragic journey has now become the focus of the international media, finally bringing to light issues that need the global community's immediate attention.

There is an innate fear among the Syrians living in Turkey who are without many of the basic necessities of life. The concern among refugees is that a camp is being mobilized on the border of Syria to push millions of displaced refugees back into their country where there is threat of imminent danger. This has led to many Syrians attempting a risky journey across the water to Western Europe. These are acts of desperation.

One thing that's become clear is that the international community so far has failed and drastic measures are needed right now. The tragedy my family has endured in fleeing Syria, just trying to survive and yesterday's events have highlighted the desperate need for greater humanitarian efforts by all countries. Sadly, my family's story is one of many.

We began a formal process to bring over all of my siblings and their families early in 2015. However, due to financial constraints and a complex application process requiring numerous international documents, we were forced to do one at a time.

The first of the applications was done on behalf of our older brother Mohammad and his family, as his children are of school age. Abdullah's application was to be submitted upon approval of the first.

I gathered a group of sponsors including family and friends and we filed a sponsorship application in early 2015. It was rejected in June as it was impossible for my family, as it is for many Syrians, to get the necessary documents that would satisfy the Canadian refugee entry requirements. Some of the documentation required for this process included: a valid Syrian passport and a Turkish work permit (Mavi Kimlik card), which are simply not available to Syrians in that region.

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