

Hear the Call. Be the Call.

FAQs About the Syrian Refugee Crisis

HEAR THE CALL!

➤ What is the crisis?

- The world is experiencing the worst refugee crisis since World War II. In particular, 54% of all Syrians are refugees who have left Syria, or are displaced from their homes. Over 200,000 have already died in Syria.
- According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):
 - Over **3 million** Syrians have fled to their immediate neighbors Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq
 - Another **6.5 million** are internally displaced within Syria.
 - The European Union expects almost **1 million** Syrian refugees to enter Europe this year.

➤ Why engage?

- We were strangers in the land of Egypt. Hillel taught: *If I am only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?*
- When, prior to and at the beginning of World War II, **the world shut its doors to us**. 6 million Jews were murdered.
- We **MUST** be a light in this darkness.

➤ What should be done immediately? Financial or political action?

We are advised by HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) about the most impactful immediate action. For 130 years, HIAS has rescued people whose lives are in danger for being who they are. They're aligned with 9 US agencies and 22 globally.

Political action:

- **HIAS urges us to persuade the White House to include 100,000 Syrian refugees** in addition to the 70,000 other refugees that the US admitted last year.
- **This Presidential Determination is made on September 30**, in accordance with section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the "Act") (8 U.S.C. 1157). It allows the President to determine how many refugees can enter the US in a fiscal year, whether only 70,000 (2015) or over 225,000 (1980). **You can influence this. It must be done by September 30.**
- **The United States and Canada must step up and do our part** by opening our doors. This is a global crisis.

Financial Action:

- Our financial support *will begin* once clear strategies for supporting refugees in transit, and their resettlement, are developed and in place. HIAS and others are working on this now.
- In the two weeks ahead, *the most important impact* we can have will be to convince our President to open our own doors to resettlement efforts.
- Over the next many months, we will work together to do whatever else is deemed necessary, including encouraging financial support.

BE THE CALL!

➤ How can I participate?

- **MOST URGENT: Call the White House today** (talking points included) **or the day after Rosh Hashanah.**
- **Go to the HIAS website (link below) and sign their online petition to President Obama:**
"Commit to resettling in the United States 100,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees, allowing more individuals and families to start new lives in safety and freedom."
<http://support.hias.org/site/PageNavigator/AskthePresidenttoTakeBoldLeadershipforSyrianRefugees.html>

➤ Where can I learn more about security, the refugee crisis, resettlement, and Jewish action responses?

- **HIAS.com** HIAS protects the most vulnerable refugees, helping them build new lives and reuniting them with their families in safety and freedom. HIAS advocates for the protection of refugees and assure that displaced people are treated with the dignity they deserve
- **RCUSA.org**, the Refugee Council USA, of which HIAS is a member. This website offers detailed information about the complete process for refugees entering into the US, including how people are chosen, screened, where funding comes from, etc.
- **URJ.org, RAC.org, WUPJ.org** – these are the three leading Reform Jewish organizations, here and internationally. They'll be posting information and action opportunities as the year proceeds.
- **Your synagogue website**