

January 27th. 2015

Dear André Doumbè:

The Office of the Prime Minister has kindly forwarded to Mr. Chris Alexander, Canada's Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, a copy of your letter of December 5, 2014, concerning the processing of visa applications from foreign nationals who have been physically present in Ebola-affected countries.

Your concerns regarding the recently announced measures for persons from Ebola-affected countries have been noted. The Government of Canada is committed to supporting international efforts to control the Ebola outbreak. On October 31, 2014, the Honourable Chris Alexander, Canada's Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, announced new Ministerial Instructions as precautionary measures to protect the health and safety of Canadians. For more information about the Ministerial Instructions, please visit the following Web site at:

<http://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2014/2014-10-31-x8/html/extra8-eng.php>.

Effective immediately after this announcement, Canadian visa officers were instructed to temporarily pause the processing of visa applications from foreign nationals who have been physically present in a country designated by the World Health Organization as having widespread and intense transmission of the Ebola virus. At this time, these countries include Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

For those applicants subject to the new Instructions, permanent resident visas will not be issued unless the officer is satisfied the applicant has not been in an Ebola-affected country within the three months prior to finalization of an application. These measures will ensure that while the threat of Ebola exists, no new visas will be issued to individuals who may present a public health risk to Canada.

Foreign nationals that do not require a visa, Canadian citizens and permanent residents can travel to Canada and will continue to be screened at ports of entry and will be subject to appropriate health screening and other measures under the *Quarantine Act*.

Renewals, extensions and restorations of temporary resident status of foreign nationals who are in Canada at the time of application and at the time of decision on renewal and extension are exempted from the Ministerial Instructions. However, if a person is applying for a Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) from within Canada and intends to travel to an Ebola-affected country, they would become subject to the Ministerial Instructions. Similarly, if a person leaves Canada without a valid TRV and returns to an Ebola-affected country, they also would be subject to the Ministerial Instructions.

The Ministerial Instructions do not constitute a travel ban. They are a prudent and temporary restriction of non-essential travel from countries where the Ebola outbreak has been concentrated. Should essential travel be required and in the interest of Canada, including travel for economic reasons, the Minister may issue temporary resident permits on a case-by-case basis, thereby allowing the applicant to travel to Canada.

Canada continues to monitor the situation in West Africa to ensure humanitarian, health and security needs are met.

For more information, please visit our Web site at:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/manuals/bulletins/2014/ob593.asp>.

[I trust that this information is of assistance.](#)

Sincerely,

C. Saumier
Ministerial Enquiries Division