

Resolution in Support of Resettlement of Syrian Refugees in Durham

WHEREAS the United Nations having declared Syria to be the greatest refugee crisis since World War II, with more than half of the Syrian population having fled their homes since the beginning of the conflict in 2011;

WHEREAS the United Nations has stated that the more than 4 million registered Syrian refugees living in five neighboring countries will not be able to return home any time soon and has called for resettling more than 400,000 refugees;

WHEREAS those 400,000 refugees scheduled for resettlement include those most at risk – including children without parents, single parents, victims of torture or violence, women at risk and people with family reunification needs;

WHEREAS Syrians now face increasing challenges to find safety and protection in these neighboring countries, which, faced with overwhelming refugee numbers, insufficient international support and security concerns, have taken measures this year to stem the flow of refugees;

WHEREAS to date the United States, which traditionally takes the lead in resettling UN registered refugees, has taken in only 1,500 Syrian refugees since 2011;

WHEREAS the pledge by President Obama to take in an additional 10,000 Syrian refugees is insufficient to meaningfully contribute to the United Nations reaching its resettlement goal;

WHEREAS the refugees in the program are all registered with the United Nations and cannot return to Syria because of a well-founded fear of persecution and will be reviewed by a proven vetting system in the United States;

WHEREAS the principle of protecting refugees is a core part of this country's identity as a nation committed to freedom and;

WHEREAS Church World Service and World Relief Durham, the leading refugee organizations in Durham, as well as numerous community organizations and religious institutions both Christian and Muslim have declared their support for resettling UN-registered Syrian refugees in Durham;

WHEREAS World Relief Durham and Church World Service has resettled more than 2,600 refugees in the Triangle area since 2008 from more than 20 countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Myanmar, Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo;

Resolved, The Durham City Council declares its support for resettlement of UN-registered Syrian refugees in Durham and calls upon other North Carolina communities to join them in supporting a stronger national effort on Syrian resettlement.