



SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD  
**NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER**  
*Rise Up AND Act for Justice*

**Statement Submitted for congressional hearings on November 19, 2015:  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs  
House Committee on the Judiciary's Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security**

Since the Order of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd was founded in France in 1835, the Order has dedicated itself to serving poor and marginal people. The work of the Sisters in 70 countries in 5 continents, 17 States, and 2 U.S. Territories is based on the belief that everyone, regardless of age, sex, culture or religion, has the right to a basic quality of life; adequate income, shelter, opportunities for education and employment, quality health care, and nutrition. As Catholics, our faith requires that everyone should be treated with the utmost dignity and respect.

Based upon that belief system, the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd urges you to keep the United States a welcoming home to people of all religions who are fleeing violence in their home countries. Keeping Syrian refugees out of this country based on their religion sends the wrong message to the rest of the world about who we are as Americans. We are a welcoming country with a religiously diverse society and our resettlement program should continue to reflect this. To not do so only feeds into ISIS' propaganda and makes us all less safe.

Speaking of the plight of refugees, Pope Francis recently said, "They are human people, I stress this, who are appealing for solidarity and assistance, who need urgent action but also and above all understanding and kindness. God is good, let us imitate God. Their condition cannot leave us indifferent. Moreover, as Church we should remember that in tending the wounds of refugees, evacuees and the victims of trafficking, we are putting into practice the commandment of love that Jesus bequeathed to us when he identified with the foreigner, with those who are suffering, with all the innocent victims of violence and exploitation."

We urge you to avoid knee-jerk reactions that politicize the events in Paris, to reject misplaced blame that creates an atmosphere of fear, and to stand in solidarity with Syrian refugees, who are themselves the victims of ISIS. Thank you.