

Tips for Interview at Canadian Embassy – Refugee Sponsorship Program¹

- Once your application for permanent residence has been deemed eligible by CIC, you might be called for an interview by an immigration officer;
- The interview is an official procedure, which in most cases, is recorded;
- The officer will ask you questions with respect to your application, the reasons why you decided to apply for refugee and why you are afraid to go back to your country of citizenship;
- You must demonstrate to the officer by your oral testimony and by supporting documentation (if available) that you meet the definition of Convention Refugee:
 - You have a direct risk to your life and your safety;
 - Your government is not able to protect you and no safe place to hide;
 - There is no other country which you are a citizen of that can offer a durable solution (refugee status, permanent residence, special permits);
- In order to submit a complete application, it is recommended that you provide the following documentation (if possible), to the officer:
 - Medical report with respect to any injuries you suffered from the conflict in your country and police reports outlining your personal risk situation;
 - Pictures of destroyed homes/property that you own;
 - Death certificates of family members you have lost;
 - Country condition reports (news articles etc);
 - Any other document that demonstrates that you have a risk to your life if you were to return to your country of citizenship.
- Ensure you keep a copy of all documentation you submit to the officer for your records or for future immigration applications;
- Note that if you have travelled back to the country you are at risk after the start of the conflict, the officer may ask you questions with respect to this. You must be able to adequately explain the reasons for this and if/how you were in hiding during those visits;
- Also note that the officer will ask you questions pertaining to the forms you completed – you must be consistent in your answers as not doing so will reduce your credibility, which can impact the decision;
- At the interview, you might be nervous and scared. This is normal. It is important to answer questions truthfully and to also take your time when answering questions;
- If you do not know or remember the answer to a question, do not guess or lie, simply advise the officer that you do not remember or ask for clarifications;
- The interview is about you and your life – you must take the interview process seriously as the officer can always refuse your application as he/she is the one that has final authority on your application for permanent residence;
- The officer has a duty to consider all of the information you submit – this is called procedural fairness and allows for fair processing of applications. However the officer can only consider evidence that was actually submitted at the interview;
- In some cases, the officer may provide you with the decision immediately following the interview;
- In most cases, the officer will take the matter in consideration and you will receive a decision at a later date, either via email or mail.

¹ Written by Mary Keyork, Immigration Lawyer – February, 2016