

What 5 Winnipeg refugees say about Trump's travel ban

Angry and afraid after Syrian refugees, travellers from 7 Muslim countries barred from U.S.

By Austin Grabish, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jan 29, 2017 4:36 PM CT Last Updated: Jan 29, 2017 4:50 PM CT

Refugees in Winnipeg are speaking out against U.S. president Donald Trump's [sweeping ban](#) on all Syrian refugees and visitors from seven predominantly Muslim countries.

Trump issued the order early Friday evening, creating confusion and anger for travellers around the world including in Winnipeg, where an Iranian couple was turned away from boarding a U.S. flight.

- [Iranian Winnipeggers turned away from flight to U.S. for academic conference](#)

The banned countries are Yemen, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Iran and Iraq. Canadian citizens with dual citizenship were also [temporarily banned](#) from travelling after Trump's order.

CBC News spoke to five refugees in Winnipeg from five different countries about the news.

Here's what they had to say:

Seidu Mohammed, a Ghanaian refugee who [nearly froze to death](#) and got [frostbite](#) after walking into Manitoba on Christmas Eve in the bitter cold, said he's worried about friends trying to seek asylum in the States.

He said his friends who fled to the U.S. to get asylum are scared of being deported.

"Some of my friends, they're finding it difficult right now," he said Sunday.

'Attacking the most vulnerable'

"He's forgetting the main important fact, that these people actually fled their country because of terrorism," said Maysoun Darweesh, a former journalist from Syria, who arrived in Winnipeg in 2012 just before Christmas.

"He's really attacking the most vulnerable people now." Darweesh said she's keeping her American friends in her thoughts and believes refugees will find a way to be strong.

"I still believe in humanity."

'Human rights abuse'

"This is a completely violation of human rights abuse," said Rebecca Deng, a Lost Girl from South Sudan, who has lived in Winnipeg since 2005.

Deng is one of thousands of children who were separated from their families by war in 1987. The kids, who became known as lost boys and girls, fled for an Ethiopian refugee camp, and 200 later came to Winnipeg.

- ['Lost girl' returns to South Sudan to find hundreds slaughtered](#)

Deng said it's not hard for her to put herself in the shoes of those fleeing war looking for safety for their families.

"Being a refugee is not choice of individual, it is a condition, and for the person to a mistake is part of human is not about faith ... this really very emotion," Deng added.

'Too traumatic'

"I'm angry and frustrated and frankly, really terrified," said Hazim Ismail, a gay refugee who says he fled Malaysia after being disowned by his family for being gay.

Ismail said refugees like himself live in constant fear because of what they've fled.

"The past is too traumatic," he said adding the uncertainty that clouds over a refugee's shoulders is hard to handle.

Worried about family

Abdikheir Ahmed, who came to Winnipeg as a refugee in 2003 after leaving Kenya, said Trump's ban is scary for Muslims like himself.

"We might avoid the U.S. forever," Ahmed said.

Ahmed, who works with refugees at the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, said he's worried about family in the States.

"The U.S. is not a safe country for refugees anymore."

He is calling on the Canadian government to toss the controversial [Safe Third Country Agreement](#), which he and other advocates feel is putting asylum seekers in the States in danger.

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