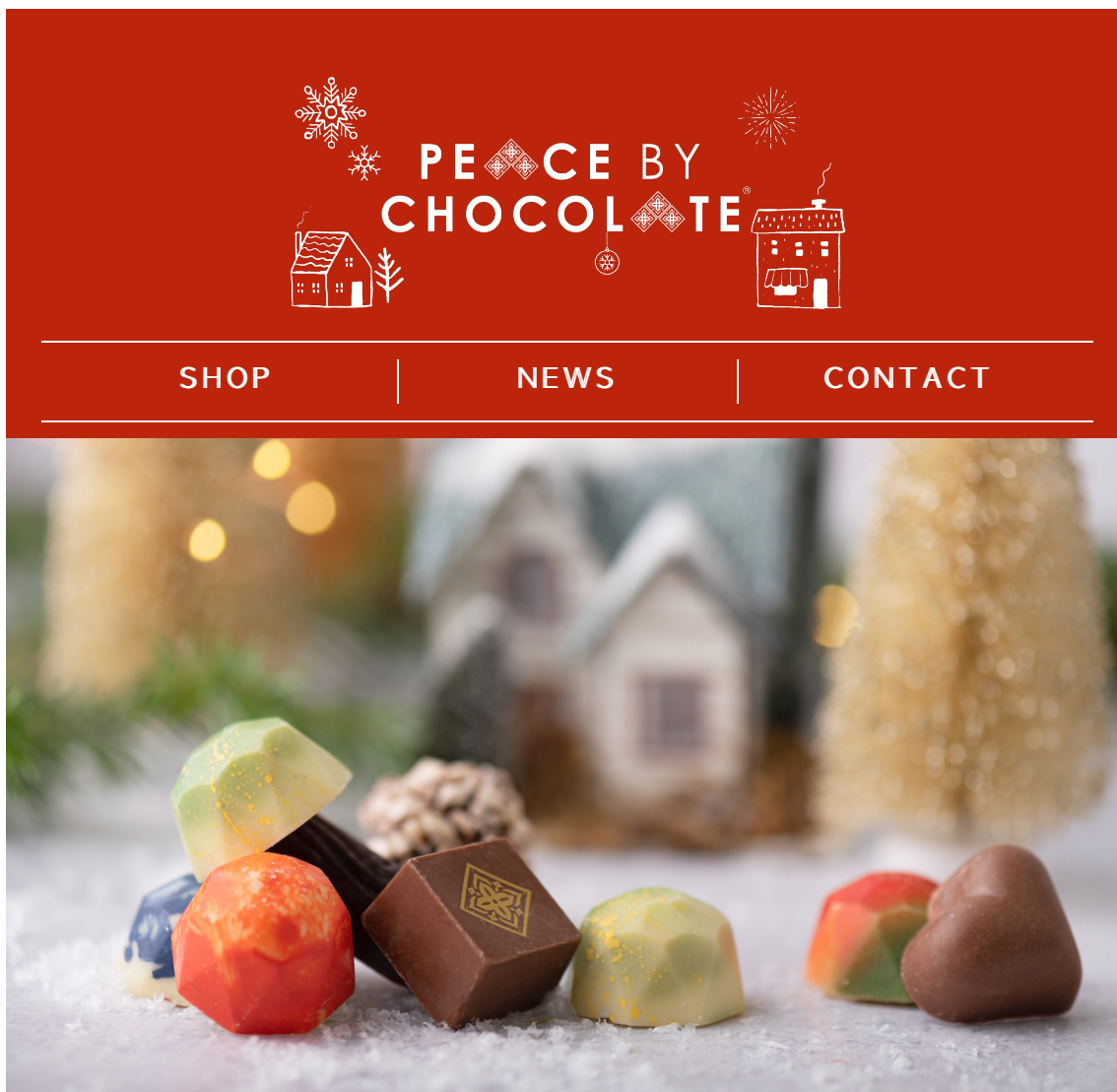


From: Peace by Chocolate customerservice@peacebychocolate.ca
Subject: Merry Christmas 🎄
Date: December 20, 2023 at 12:54 PM
To: phil.chen@believeco.com

PC



To spend Christmas surrounded by loved ones is a dream come true...

This time of year holds a lot of meaning for our family. On Christmas of 2015, Tareq made his way to Antigonish, Nova Scotia alone, in search of a safe place for our family to rebuild our lives.

We went from losing everything in Damascus to the Syrian war, to refugee camps and then the journey of rebirth in Canada. In war everything becomes

about displacement – displacement from our normal lives, our work and from the people we leave behind or lose forever.

We were lucky to make it out alive and despite everything, it brought us all a glimmer of hope when Tareq, as the first member of our family to make it to Canada, landed in Nova Scotia, followed by Isam, Shahnaz, Batoul, Ahmed and Taghrid – a brave decision that would change the trajectory of our family.

Today, 9 years later, we write this note from our home in Antigonish **surrounded by 32 family members** filled with gratitude and big dreams! In Canada, we have a chance to live again and to celebrate together – a gift we don't take lightly.

We can't express how much rebuilding our life, and our chocolate business means to us. We could not have done it without the community in Antigonish and you, reading this.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for buying our products and sharing our story. You are helping to spread peace and bring hope to others on similar journeys to rebuild their lives, one piece at a time.

From our family to yours, we wish you a peaceful and joy-filled holiday season.

The Hadhad Family

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A Message from the Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration Honourable Jon Reyes



Over the past year, I have been proud to co-chair the Immigration Advisory Council with Dr. Lloyd Axworthy. We worked alongside 20 incredible council members, all leaders in their fields, who have brought meaningful perspectives and helped us produce this report. Our council has come together to serve as an expert panel to offer recommendations to improve our great province's current immigration policies and programs.

We came together to build on the success of Manitoba's Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP), which nominated a record number of candidates in 2021 at 6,275, the highest since the program was established in 1998 by the Progressive Conservatives.

This program brings thousands of qualified skilled workers to Manitoba each year, and more than 170,000 nominees and their families have immigrated to Manitoba from all over the world since the program began. The new Manitobans we welcome through this program and others use their skills to contribute to the long-term economic recovery and growth of our province.

Bettering the MPNP program and other immigration processes and policies means welcoming a range of new workers to the province and solving the business demand for labour pivotal to Manitoba's Skills, Talent and Knowledge Strategy – our shared vision to advance Manitoba's economic prosperity. The recommendations found in this report will ensure we have the jobs and the people necessary to rebound from the pandemic.

Our recommendations look at: increasing immigration to our province; streamlining the MPNP process; improving foreign credentials accreditation, language training and other services to meet labour market needs; and collaborating with stakeholders to recruit, settle and retain new immigrants.

Bringing this council to fruition and building this report over the past year has meant so much to me. Many of my constituents recently came to Canada and I've heard from them how complex and complicated the process can be. We have flown, driven and connected virtually throughout the province, hearing from businesses, associations, non-profits and immigrants to build a report that represents the needs of all current and future Manitobans.

Although attracting and retaining talent is a significant challenge, we see it as an opportunity to offer a safe space for immigrants from all over the globe with a variety of skills and experiences to build bright and secure futures while strengthening our province's economic recovery. With this report, Manitoba continues to lead the way for immigration programs in our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Reyes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jon" being more prominent than the last name "Reyes".

Honourable Jon Reyes
Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Immigration
Co-chair of the Immigration Advisory Council



A Message from The Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Co-chair of the Immigration Advisory Council



This report on immigration and refugee policy for Manitoba is the outcome of an important exercise in mapping out a course for the province to meet one of the most significant social and economic developments facing this generation. The migration surge affecting all parts of the globe equals the challenges presented by other existential trends such as climate change, epidemics and human security. It does, however, present Manitobans with opportunities to promote growth, meet labour market demands, and enrich the dynamic, diverse nature of our population. This will require changes in policy and practice that can reshape the way in which we recruit, receive, settle and distribute the newcomers who choose to come here.

One of the crucial decisions for Manitobans is how to fit provincial policy with the recent announcement of the federal government that aims at a 500,000 annual intake of newcomers. This expanded target calls on us to adjust and enhance our nominee program. The report's recommendation that the province aim at accepting the percentage equivalent to our share of the national populace is a good starting point for consideration by the Government, recognizing that this will require additional resources.

The report also includes a number of very practical recommendations on fixes to various practices to improve efficiency and processing. There is also a strong emphasis on the need to have a more extensive outreach with municipalities throughout the province to meet labour market demands in all regions. And there are suggestions on ways to begin eliminating bottlenecks in credentials licensing and international student visas.

The report recognizes that there are some issues needing further attention and that these should include the involvement of the private sector, labour, educational institutions and civil society settlement groups in developing innovative solutions through a partnership model. The recent arrival of thousands of Ukrainian displaced persons has put a spotlight on the need for serious examination of our refugee planning and adaptation systems, particularly in initiating pilot projects for new labour and humanitarian pathways. The idea put forward by the Minister of setting up a new vehicle for managing these emerging issues is welcome and will be eagerly awaited.

I want to thank Minister Reyes for the openness and co-operative spirit with which he managed the Council's work and I applaud members of the Council who gave freely of their time and ideas to this enterprise. I commend the findings to the Premier and Cabinet for immediate action.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy PC, CC, OM.