

To Whom it May Concern-



I hope this letter finds you well.

My name is Alaa Fadel, a 29-year-old from Damascus, Syria. In 2016, while in my fifth year of studying Agricultural Engineering at Damascus University, I was wrongfully detained and imprisoned by authorities loyal to President Bashar al-Assad. As you probably know, this regime has wreaked havoc on a significant portion of the Syrian population since the beginning of the civil war in 2011, with random and illegitimate arrests of innocent civilians being one of the government's most notorious exercises.

I spent three and a half years inside Syria's corrupt prison system, including two months in a military intelligence (security) branch and four horrifying months at Sednaya Prison – a place where I was physically and psychologically tortured on a daily basis and, by the grace God, narrowly escaped becoming victim to the facilities' mass murders. Spending three and half – of what should have been some of the best – years of my life in prison has been heartbreaking for my family, my friends and, of course, myself.

I was released from detention in October of 2019. In the subsequent weeks, the Syrian Government asked that I join the regime's armed forces, a request that I found to be irrational and absurd given how they had treated me. After two months at home in Damascus with loved ones, I fled to Turkey in search of better personal and professional opportunities.

I am currently in Mersin working at a factory that manufactures furniture. I earn only enough money to barely support myself and to send a small amount back to my family in Syria. The conditions are inadequate and this situation is not sustainable.

My dream is to travel to and live in Canada – to study, work and live a life without oppression. I speak English well and believe that I can bring meaningful value and perspective to the Canadian population. I have relatives in Canada and close friends in the United States. I understand that this process will likely not be short, but, what I'm asking of you today is to please NOT ignore this letter. At a minimum, could you please advise what a productive next step for me would be? Maybe you could suggest a specific person or group for me to contact?

Thank you in advance for any guidance. I am extremely eager for this opportunity.

With the warmest regards,
Alaa Fadel