

Uruguay Receives First Group of Syrian Refugees



Montevideo, October 9 (teleSUR-RHC) -- On their arrival on Thursday, the first group of 120 Syrian refugees were welcomed by the Uruguayan government.

The humanitarian effort was organized by Uruguay's government and the United Nations, after the grinding violence and civil war in Syria displaced over 3 million people.

"This is not a migration process, it is a resettlement process of refugees in another country," Uruguayan Human Rights Secretary Javier Miranda said.

The five Syrian families that arrived on Thursday will live for two months in the southern region of San José, where they will learn Spanish and the basic knowledge of the country needed to live a normal life. After this period, the families will be relocated in small groups in different neighborhoods.

Uruguay's Human Rights Secretary said houses, jobs and schools for the refugees are already prepared. Sixty percent of the refugees are children, and most of them are Muslims. Some 80 more Syrian refugees are expected to arrive in Uruguay in February.

Earlier this year, Miranda explained that, "These families are free to do as they wish; stay in Uruguay, return to their homeland or go somewhere else. They are free people and if they decide to stay, we will grant them the same rights as Uruguayan citizens."

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