

Starbucks to hire 10,000 refugees worldwide after Trump ban

NEW YORK, USA: Starbucks plans to hire 10,000 refugees worldwide over the next five years in response to President Donald Trump's travel ban, the head of the US coffee-chain company said Sunday.



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"I write to you today with deep concern, a heavy heart and a resolute promise," Starbucks chairman and chief executive Howard Schultz said in a letter to employees posted on the company's website.

"We are living in an unprecedented time, one in which we are witness to the conscience of our country, and the promise of the American Dream, being called into question."

Schultz, a Democratic Party supporter, said that Starbucks had been in contact with employees affected by the new Republican president's executive order signed Friday.

The decree suspends the arrival of all refugees for at least 120 days, Syrian refugees indefinitely and bars citizens from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen for 90 days.

The CEO said the refugee hires would be fleeing war, persecution and discrimination in the 75 countries where the company operates.

"And we will start this effort here in the US by making the initial focus of our hiring efforts on those individuals who have served with US troops as interpreters and support personnel in the various countries where our military has asked for such support," he said.

Schultz also defended Mexico, which Trump has said will have to pay for a wall along its long and porous border with the United States to deter immigrants, perhaps by the US imposing a 20 percent tariff on Mexican imports.

"Building bridges, not walls, with Mexico," he wrote, voicing support for the country that has provided Starbucks with coffee for three decades and where nearly 600 Starbucks coffee shops employ 7,000 people.

"We stand ready to help and support our Mexican customers, partners and their families as they navigate what impact proposed trade sanctions, immigration restrictions and taxes might have on their business and their trust of Americans.

"But we will continue to invest in this critically important market all the same."

Schultz is close to Hillary Clinton, the Democratic presidential candidate who lost to Trump in the November election, and supported her during her White House campaign. But he has dismissed persistent rumors that he would seek the highest office in the land.

Source: AFP

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