



Joint Statement: Urging Support for Refugees & Asylum Seekers

August 2020

As organizations representing millions of Americans, we call on all political parties and policy makers to be champions for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.

With more than [79.5 million people](#) displaced from their homes, the world is facing the worst displacement crisis in history. At the same time, the United States has retreated from its prior leadership role providing protection to refugees and asylum seekers who have no other option for safety.

The Trump administration has brought the annual refugee admissions goal to an all-time low of [18,000](#), more than an 80% cut from the [historic average of 95,000](#). The administration has also improperly denied, banned, blocked, and turned away asylum seekers at the U.S. border. These draconian policy changes have had deadly human consequences and have severely dismantled the capacities of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) and the U.S. asylum system.

President Trump's Muslim, African, refugee, and asylum bans have separated families, forced people to remain in harm's way, and made discrimination based on religion and nationality the law of the land. It is imperative that the United States rescind these discriminatory bans immediately, implement the asylum system in a functional and humane way, return refugee admissions to historic norms, and rebuild the USRAP.

U.S. policies on refugee protection have profound implications for global stability, regional security, and U.S. foreign policy interests. The United States has often leveraged its refugee resettlement program to encourage other countries to keep their doors open to refugees and allow refugees to work and their children to attend school. This helps to stabilize key strategic allies, such as Jordan, Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, and Kenya, that are disproportionately affected by forced displacement. By leading by example on access to asylum and supporting allies through resettlement, assistance, and infrastructure, the United States can successfully promote stability, reduce pressure on allies, and advance U.S. interests.

The American public supports refugee resettlement, with a [majority of Americans](#) opposing laws that keep refugees from coming to the United States. And in response to President Trump's now-enjoined executive order allowing states and

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localities to ban refugees, [43 governors and more than 100 local officials](#) affirmed their support for refugee resettlement.

We call on all political parties and policy makers to advocate for a refugee admissions goal of 125,000 and to support legislation including The GRACE Act, which would set a minimum resettlement goal of 95,000 in keeping with historic norms. Recommitting to refugee protection by restoring access to asylum, increasing refugee admissions, and rebuilding the USRAP will be critical to advancing U.S. global leadership.

[Reclaiming this identity is the ideal to which we aspire.](#)

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