

August 31st, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo
The Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. President and Secretary Pompeo,

As organizations that are committed to human rights, refugee rights, and humanitarian protection, we write to express our strong support for a robust U.S. refugee resettlement program and a refugee resettlement goal of 95,000 for FY2021.

The U.S. refugee resettlement program is a vital, life-saving program that protects the most vulnerable refugees and helps to reunite families fractured by forced migration. In the midst of the worst global displacement crisis in world history, with more than 29.6 million refugees worldwide, a strong U.S. refugee resettlement program is a humanitarian expression of our core American values, including religious freedom and democracy, a strategic tool to support key allies and help to stabilize sensitive regions impacted by forced migration, and a positive economic driver for many welcoming U.S. communities.

Refugees are individuals who have fled their homes due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group in their home country. Resettlement is the last resort for refugees who cannot rebuild their lives where they have first fled or return safely to their home country; it is a critical safety net in the humanitarian system. Less than one percent of refugees worldwide have access to resettlement. Due to ongoing wars, regional instability, lack of economic or governmental infrastructure, and religious persecution, many refugees will never be able to repatriate to their country of origin safely. Additionally, due to particular vulnerabilities such as gender-based violence, and continued threats and discrimination, many refugees will never be able to integrate into the community to which they fled.

Refugees who are selected to be resettled to the United States are the most rigorously vetted individuals to enter the U.S. and must pass through a series of security and medical clearances in order to be approved. Since the inception of the formalized U.S. refugee resettlement program in 1980, over three million refugees have been resettled to the United States. Refugees have become citizens, civic leaders, and entrepreneurs, and have contributed enormously to our country. Thousands of volunteers, houses of worship, and business leaders work alongside recently arrived refugees to ensure they can thrive here and enjoy the liberties and protections offered by our country. Indeed, the U.S. refugee resettlement program is a vital public-private partnership that helps refugees achieve self-sufficiency and a sense of belonging in their new communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged every level of American society, and refugees have been essential in the fight against this pandemic. Over 176,000 refugees are healthcare professionals treating COVID-19 patients in hospitals and nursing homes and clinics, and over 175,000 are part of the U.S. food supply chain, laboring as farm workers who put food on our tables, and truck drivers and grocery store workers making sure the shelves are stocked. Refugees have been on the frontlines reaching out as new neighbors to help the communities that welcomed them to overcome this virus.

The Presidential Determination for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 was set at the lowest level in U.S. history at 18,000. Since the start of the U.S. refugee resettlement program in 1980 until 2016, the average annual refugee admissions goal has been 95,000. We urge the Department of State to strengthen the U.S. refugee admissions program as a life-saving foreign policy and humanitarian tool and admit 95,000 refugees in FY2021, a return to historic norms. We believe having a robust U.S. refugee resettlement program is part and parcel of strong U.S. leadership and also promotes democracy and supports the United States' foreign policy priorities agenda abroad.

Sincerely,

Action Corps
Advocating Opportunity
African American Ministers In Action
African Communities Together
Aima
Alianza Americas
American Jewish World Service
Amnesty International USA
Anshe Chesed
Arianna's Center
Armenian Relief Society of Western USA, Social Services
Asian American Advocacy Fund
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Asylum Access
Bethany Christian Services
Beyond90, Inc.
Bilingual International Assistant Services
Border Perspective
Bread for the World
Brooklyn For Peace
Brotherhood Synagogue
Buckman Bridge Unitarian Universalist Church
Caminando Juntos - Presentation Sisters Hispanic Ministry
Canopy NWA
CARE USA
Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Victims of Torture
Central Conference of American Rabbis
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice
Church World Service
Claretian Missionary Sisters
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Columbia Law School Immigrants' Rights Clinic
Community Refugee & Immigration Services (CRIS)
Congregation Kolot Chayeinu
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Demand Progress Education Fund
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
East End Temple
Engage Florida
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities
Ephrata Church of the Brethren
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Exodus Refugee Immigration, Inc.

Faith Communities Organizing for Sanctuary
Faiths for Safe Water
Farmworker Association of Florida
Florida Indigenous Rights and Environmental Equality
Food for the Hungry
Food Not Bombs Lake Worth
Franciscan Action Network
Freedom Network USA
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Global Communities
Guatemalan Maya Center
Habecker Mennonite Church
Hebrew Tabernacle, Washington Heights, NYC
Helen Keller International
HIAS
Hispanic Federation
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA-JPIC
Hope Border Institute
Human Rights First
IAMC
Immigrant Action Alliance
InterAction
InterFaith Works of CNY
International Catholic Migration Commission
International Institute of Los Angeles
International Refugee Assistance Project
International Rescue Committee
IRIS - Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services
Islamic Relief USA
J Street
Jesuit Refugee Service/USA
Jesuit Social Research Institute
Jewish Family and Community Services of Pittsburgh
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles
Jewish Family Service Seattle
Journey's End Refugee Services, Inc.
Justice and Peace Office- Diocese of Joliet
L.A.C.E.S.
Lancaster Church of the Brethren
Landisville Mennonite Church
Latin America Working Group (LAWG)
Latina Institute Florida
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Libyan American Alliance
Lila Latinx LGBTQ Inc,
Lititz Church of the Brethren
Louisiana Organization for Refugees and Immigrants
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Lutheran Services in Iowa
Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area
Men of Reform Judaism
Mercy Corps
Miami Workers Center
Michigan Immigrant Rights Center
Migration and Refugee Services of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees
Mustino Times
NALEC
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans
National Council of Churches
National Council of Jewish Women
National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights
National Partnership for New Americans
Nebraska Appleseed
Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA)
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
New York Immigration Coalition
Northminster Presbyterian Church
Norwegian Refugee Council USA
NuDay
Ohio Immigrant Alliance
Orange County Classroom Teachers Association
Oxfam America
Pan American Development Foundation (PADF)
Poderosa is Her Power
Presbyterian Church (USA)
Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
Program for Torture Victims (PTV)
QLatinx
Red Gate Properties, L.L.C.
Refugee Congress
Refugee Council USA
RefugeeOne
Refugees International
Resilience Force
Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Gulf Coast Florida
Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of South Florida, Inc.
Safe Horizon
Save the Children
Save the Children Action Network
SEIU Florida Public Services Union
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Sojourners
South Dakota Voices for Peace
South Florida Muslim Federation
Southeast Asian Resource Action Center
Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission
SouthWest Organizing Project
St. James Cathedral
St. Louis Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America (IFCLA)
SWANS - Solivita Womens' Action Network
Synagogue Coalition on the Refugee & Immigration Crisis
Syrian Community Network
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
Temple Beth El, Stamford, CT
Texas Interfaith Center for Public Policy/Texas Impact
The Association of Salvadorans of Los Angeles
The Black Alliance for Just Immigration
The Episcopal Church
The Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc.

The Hunger Project
The Shul of New York
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
The Workers Circle
TN Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
UNA-USA Kentucky Division
UNA-USA Southern California Division
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice (UUSJ)
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1445
United Nations Association of San Diego
United Nations Association of the National Capital Area
United Stateless
USAHello
USC International Human Rights Clinic
WeaveTales
Welcoming America
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Witness at the Border
Women for Afghan Women
Women of Faith
Women of Reform Judaism
Word Travels/Stories of Arrival Refugee and Immigrant Poetry Project
World Relief
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights