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High Level National Policy Experts, Refugees, and Religious Leaders Call on Trump to Raise Refugee Cap

For a recording of today's call, click [here](#)

Washington, D.C. – In light of recent media reports that the U.S. refugee resettlement cap could sink below 50,000, and a Supreme Court [ruling](#) allowing the Trump administration to maintain its restrictive ban on refugees, policy experts, refugees, and faith advocates gathered on a press call today to push back against these developments. They addressed claims that DHS must decrease refugee processing due to an increasing backlog of asylum seekers and explain why 75,000 should be lowest cap, particularly in the midst of the worst refugee crisis the world has ever faced.

For a recording of today's call, click [here](#).

Ambassador Ryan Crocker, former U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, and Lebanon, said, “Abandoning our commitment to refugees contradicts American values, undermines American leadership, and threatens American national security. Welcoming refugees is not an unmanageable risk—it’s what a proud and confident nation does. No population entering the United States is more closely vetted than refugees.”

Mr. Abdul Saboor, Afghan refugee who previously worked with U.S. military, said, “I immigrated in 2014 with my wife, and the transition of going through the process of resettlement has been a very difficult process. We had to leave all of our goals behind, but I could see my life in Afghanistan turning darker every day. The transition was a difficult process—adjusting to a new culture, adjusting to new laws, learning an entirely new language, competing for economic benefits. However, I had the privilege to come into the U.S., and now I have the privilege to dedicate my life to helping other people. This is a population that is desperate for help—they aren’t just looking to move. I am a firm believer that we must open our doors to these vulnerable individuals and help them find safety, freedom, and hope for themselves and their families.”

Michael Breen, President and CEO of Truman National Security Project, said, “Welcoming refugees is not just a moral good — it is in the strategic interest of the United States. Refugees are among the most thoroughly vetted people to come to our nation, and when open our society to them, we reject the false narratives of extremist groups. By admitting a historically

low number of refugees, the Trump Administration is abdicating not just American values, but American leadership in the world.”

Ambassador Rabbi David Saperstein, former U.S. Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom and Director Emeritus, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, said, “Since 1975, we have brought more than three million refugees into the United States. The faith community’s remarkable refugee resettlement agencies have played a key role in these efforts. These refugees have strengthened our economy as 85% of newly resettled refugees to the US are employed within 180 days. Syrian refugees have higher educational income levels than most other refugees.

As an Ambassador-at-Large, I have seen personally — from inside the government —the intensive vetting process to establish that incoming refugees do not impose a security threat; this is a process that can take up to two years of investigations. It should be noted that not one of the three million refugees the United States has admitted since 1975 has committed an act of terrorism. As a rabbi, I know all too well the disastrous consequences when the United States abdicates moral obligations and turns away refugees at its shores. As a faith leader committed to interreligious expression, I know our collective voice speaks to the obligation, as well as to the value to our county, of a moral response to the refugee crisis, as well as our commitment to work to its resolution.”

Melanie Nezer, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs, HIAS, said, “The president has an opportunity to reaffirm U.S. leadership in the world and to be part of the global response to the refugee crisis that has now displaced more people than at any time before in recorded history. By the October 1 deadline, President Trump must commit to resettling at least 75,000 refugees. While not nearly enough, this level of commitment would show that we are not a country in retreat and that we view the lives and futures of persecuted men, women, and children as worthy of our attention and care.”

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