



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 1, 2020

Lauren Carl

lauren.carl@pinkston.co

703-388-6734

World Relief Decries Trump Administration's Failure to Set Robust Presidential Determination for Refugee Resettlement for FY2021

New fiscal year 2021 begins without an official refugee resettlement ceiling

BALTIMORE – With the end of FY2020 and a proposed ceiling of 15,000 for FY2021, World Relief calls the administration to engage in meaningful consultations with Congress to increase the refugee ceiling to 95,000 for FY2021. Furthermore, World Relief warns that the prolonged absence of a Presidential Determination (PD) has life and death implications for many waiting in limbo around the world. Unnecessary delays in continuing the U.S. refugee resettlement program in FY2021 means families will remain separated, religious minorities will continue to live at risk of persecution and unrest, and displacement will continue to exacerbate vulnerabilities for women and children in particular.

“The administration’s failure to observe its legal obligation to consult with Congress and set a refugee ceiling before the beginning of a new fiscal year is deeply concerning,” said **World Relief President Scott Arbeiter**. “The White House has made explicit promises to protect persecuted Christians abroad. Sadly, we have not seen these promises honored through a robust U.S. refugee resettlement program that has been a lifeline of protection for persecuted Christians. Instead, we’ve seen the resettlement of refugees from countries known for persecution drop about 90% in some cases over the last four years. This is unconscionable. We urge the President to increase and sign the PD as soon as possible”

The Refugee Act of 1980 set the precedent for the president to set an annual target for resettlement for the following fiscal year by September 30. While the stated resettlement target for 2020 was 18,000 – an historically low number – fewer than 11,000 were actually resettled. This year, the Report to Congress was sent to Congress late on September 30, but no meaningful consultation meetings have happened, nor has a PD been set that reflects U.S. leadership in responding to global need. Further, the report reflects a concerning conflation of refugee resettlement and asylee processing – processes that are distinct and reflect U.S. obligations to protect those fleeing persecution in different ways.

“The initial public health concerns at the onset of the pandemic that led to the suspension of the program were worth heeding. However, the State Department and partner agencies have worked together to institute certain public health measures to ensure that refugees arriving in the United States do not pose a public health risk. These measures include screenings, temperature checks and a 14-day quarantine upon arrival. We strongly believe that it is not only possible to resettle refugees safely, but it’s essential,” commented **Tim Breene, World Relief CEO**. “The overlapping global refugee crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic present challenges for anyone around the world facing underlying insecurities, and now is not the time for the U.S. to drop the ball.”



Join World Relief in urging Congress and the president to set a FY2021 refugee resettlement target at 95,000 by visiting <https://worldrelief.org/advocate/>.

###

About World Relief:

World Relief is a global Christian humanitarian organization that seeks to overcome violence, poverty and injustice. Through love in action, we bring hope, healing and restoration to millions of the world's most vulnerable women, men and children through vital and sustainable programs in disaster response, health and child development, economic development and peacebuilding, as well as refugee and immigration services in the U.S. For over 75 years, we've partnered with churches and communities, currently across more than 20 countries, to provide relief from suffering and help people rebuild their lives.

Learn more at worldrelief.org.