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World Relief Laments Trump Administration Signing Lowest Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions in American History

New refugee ceiling of 15,000 the lowest set since the Refugee Act of 1980

BALTIMORE – On October 27th, President Trump signed the Presidential Determination (PD) on refugee admissions, setting the refugee ceiling for FY2021 at 15,000, the lowest in U.S. history. Currently, there are approximately 80 million people forcibly displaced around the world, and due to COVID-19 and natural disasters, many of those displaced are facing greater hardships and difficulties. World Relief urges the United States to lead by example to offer refuge to those who have nowhere else to go and restore the refugee ceiling to the historical norm of 95,000.

“The issuance of the lowest refugee ceiling in history is further evidence of the administration’s lack of compassion toward vulnerable refugees and immigrants who are displaced due to conflict and persecution and facing even more dire circumstances due to COVID-19,” said **World Relief President Scott Arbeiter**. “Despite this administration’s clear promises to protect persecuted Christians, the actual resettlement of Christian refugees from countries known for persecution drop about 90% in some cases over the last four years. We have abandoned our moral responsibility to honor our word and help the vulnerable.”

The Presidential Determination states that 6,000 previously unused spots from FY2020 were incorporated into the FY2021 ceiling of 15,000, which is an unprecedented position by the State Department. In addition, the new categories created for refugee admissions will further limit those who are eligible to be resettled through the program, including large numbers of Congolese refugees, unaccompanied minors and others. This position is an abdication of the leadership the United States has traditionally shown in times of humanitarian crises. While resettlement was paused for a time due to COVID-19 this year, the intensive national security and medical processes all refugees undergo mean that the program can and should be expanded to save lives.

“We urge President Trump to hear the cries of Americans advocating for vulnerable lives and those desperately in need around the world,” **commented Tim Breene, World Relief CEO**. “This decision by the administration does not represent the values that America was founded on – like human liberty, religious freedom and equality that should extend to those facing persecution abroad. If our nation promises to be a country under God, then we must help our hurting neighbors and allow more refugees to resettle in the United States.”

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

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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.