



September 24, 2025

Dear President Trump,

The undersigned members of Refugee Council USA (RCUSA), a coalition of refugee-serving organizations, urge the United States and all United Nations Member States to uphold, preserve, strengthen, and celebrate international human rights and refugee law and treaties - and reject efforts to [undo](#) or [undermine](#) international legal norms. In light of rising global displacement and protracted humanitarian crises, it has never been more important to reaffirm our moral and legal obligations - and serve our global security and economic interests - particularly under the [1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol](#).

Let us be clear: Any attempt to withdraw from or circumvent [international](#) and [domestic](#) refugee law undermines U.S. global leadership and our respect for the rule of law. According to [UNHCR's 2026 Projected Global Resettlement Needs report](#), over 2.5 million refugees will require resettlement in the coming year. This includes many who have lived in limbo for years—Syrians, Afghans, South Sudanese, Rohingya, Sudanese, and Congolese, among others. Yet only a fraction of those in need are ever resettled. In 2023, less than 5% of identified global resettlement need was met. Countries must stand ready to welcome asylum seekers and refugees – individuals fleeing persecution – and protect them according to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which was specifically drawn up by States to respond to urgent and protracted displacement crises and has protected millions of people globally.

U.S. adherence to the Refugee Convention is one of the most important ways we encourage global cooperation with us and respect for international law. We need that cooperation for our counterterrorism, law enforcement, and diplomatic and economic policies to be effective. For example, the United States encouraged countries neighboring Ukraine to increase their capacity to welcome people forcibly displaced by mounting hostilities from Russia. The United States also called for other European Union (EU) Member States and NATO allies to show solidarity by providing support to Ukraine's neighbors and agreeing to relocate asylum seekers or resettle refugees. This was in concurrence with the U.S. offering [temporary](#) and [permanent](#) protection.

In 1968, Congress ratified the 1967 Protocol to the 1951 Refugee Convention, thereby undertaking a majority of the obligations spelled out in the Convention. These obligations were embedded into U.S. domestic law through the Refugee Act of 1980, the foundation that supports [global, regional, and national security](#). Unilaterally scrapping the current asylum system or U.S. resettlement program is not only unlawful, it will also not stop people from fleeing persecution. It will drive them into the hands of smugglers, traffickers, and criminal networks. The result would be more chaos en route to and at borders, more irregular migration, and less control for governments. The existing framework gives states clear, lawful tools to process asylum claims in an orderly way. Weakening it creates disorder, instability, and increased security risks.

Welcoming individuals fleeing violence and persecution makes economic and fiscal sense, serving U.S. and global economic interests, as well. In the U.S., refugees [contributed](#) a net \$123.8 billion to public finances between 2005–2019. In [Poland](#), Ukrainian refugees boosted GDP by 2.7% in 2024 without displacing local workers - in fact the total gain for Poland's economy is estimated at €11.15 billion beyond the aid they provided. Refugees start businesses at high rates, create jobs, and pay taxes. If the international community walks away from refugee and asylum obligations, it risks losing [these economic gains](#) while taking on the higher costs of policing irregular migration.

As we approach the upcoming 75th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention, RCUSA calls on our national leaders to reaffirm and fulfill international and domestic refugee laws – and encourages all UN Member States to do the same. Withdrawing from or ignoring our treaty obligations does nothing to support our national security, economic, legal, or moral interests. We urge your administration to operate the U.S. refugee resettlement and asylum programs in good faith and fully restore access to humanitarian protections, regardless of nationality, race, or religion.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this important matter.

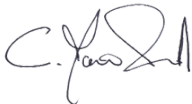
Sincerely,



Laila Ayub
Attorney and Co-Director
ANAR



Karen Musalo
Director
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies



Mario Russell
Executive Director
Center for Migration Studies



Scott Roehm
Director of Global Policy and Advocacy
Center for Victims of Torture



Erol Kekic
Chief Strategy Officer
Church World Service



Amali Tower
Founder & Executive Director
Climate Refugees



Angelica Salas
Executive Director
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)



Diya Abdo
Director
Every Campus A Refuge



Krish O'Mara Vignarajah
President and CEO
Global Refuge



Beth Oppenheim
Interim CEO
HIAS



Sharif Aly
President
International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)



Nicole Melaku
Executive Director
National Partnership for New Americans



Senna Seniuk
Director of Engagement
Rainbow Railroad



Nili Sarit Yossinger
Executive Director
Refugee Congress



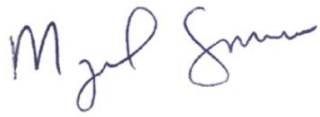
Jeremy Konyndyk
President
Refugees International



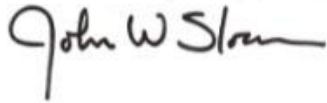
Eskinder Negash
President and CEO
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants



Rachel Peric
Executive Director
Welcoming America

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Myal Greene".

Myal Greene
President & CEO
World Relief

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John W. Slocum".

John Slocum
Executive Director
Refugee Council USA

CC: The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520