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**IRAP STRONGLY CONDEMNS PRESIDENT TRUMP'S MOVE TO SUSPEND REFUGEE  
RESETTLEMENT**

***FISHER: "Today's announcement is a betrayal of the fundamentally American value of welcoming those who are fleeing persecution. The U.S. refugee program is essential to U.S. foreign relations and national security. Abandoning refugees means abandoning American humanitarian leadership."***

***MCEACHIN: "This is an absolute tactical failure. Barring refugees flies in the face of established counterinsurgency doctrine and provides both propaganda and motive to ISIS, our common enemy, as we refuse the very people they persecute."***

**NEW YORK, NY, JANUARY 27, 2017** – The International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) at the Urban Justice Center is outraged at the executive order signed by President Trump that suspends all refugee resettlement for 120 days, bans refugees from Syria indefinitely, and reduces the number of refugees to be resettled this Fiscal Year to 50,000. Denying thousands of the most persecuted refugees the chance to reach safety is an irresponsible and dangerous move that undermines American values and imperils our foreign relations and national security.

IRAP works with hundreds of the most vulnerable refugees – children with medical emergencies, survivors of gender-based violence and torture, and Afghan and Iraqi allies to U.S. forces, to name a few – who will be left in immediate life-threatening danger. For many of them, resettlement in the United States is their only option to live safely and with dignity.

Yousif Al-Timimi, a Case Worker at IRAP and former IRAP client who had to flee Iraq in 2013 because of his service to the U.S. government, said: "Those who helped the U.S. mission in Iraq are thankful to be here in the United States as refugees or through the Special Immigrant Visa program; however, for them, the fear is not over. Their families are still in Iraq where they might get hurt or killed just because they have ties to a person with a U.S. affiliation and are looked at as traitors. Many of them, like me, try to help their parents and siblings to get out of the country for safety."

**Safe Passage. New Beginnings.**

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Apart from its dire consequences for our clients, this executive order also sends an alarming message to our nation's international allies and enemies. The United States will no longer be able to lead by example in matters of global humanitarian concern. Refugee resettlement is a key tool to support our Middle Eastern allies, such as Lebanon and Jordan, which support the United States while hosting large refugee communities. The majority of them have fled from Syria, the largest refugee population worldwide.

**IRAP's Policy Director, Betsy Fisher, stated:** "Today's announcement is a betrayal of the fundamentally American value of welcoming those who are fleeing persecution. The U.S. refugee program is essential to U.S. foreign relations and national security. Abandoning refugees means abandoning American humanitarian leadership."

Emphasizing the danger of such action to U.S. national security, **Mac McEachin, IRAP's National Security Policy Associate, added:** "This is an absolute tactical failure. Barring refugees flies in the face of established counterinsurgency doctrine and provides both propaganda and motive to ISIS, our common enemy, as we refuse the very people they persecute. Furthermore, this order poses a direct threat to our troops still on the ground, as it renders them ever more susceptible by abandoning those who currently protect our troops. The President should strongly reconsider this remarkably dangerous action."

The United States has a long history of welcoming refugees from all over the world and integrating them into their communities to the benefit of all involved. For decades, the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) has been a proud achievement, backed by bipartisan and interfaith supporters. To cripple the program in this way distorts its original purpose: to protect those "who are of special humanitarian concern, while protecting national security." In fact, this executive order will do the opposite.

IRAP therefore urges the President to revoke the order in order to protect refugees all over the world, as well as our nation's reputation and best interests.

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