

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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[hdessaulles@refugeerights.org](mailto:hdessaulles@refugeerights.org)**IRAP STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT'S UPDATED REFUGEE RESTRICTIONS**

**New York, NY** – On Monday, the Trump Administration announced additional security enhancements as a result of its 90-day review of the security screenings applied to nationals from eleven countries deemed “higher risk”, most of them majority Muslim. The review period, which had been ordered in a memo as part of the executive order resuming refugee resettlement, *de facto* stopped refugees from these countries from being processed, leaving them in indefinite limbo.

According to a press release issued by the Department of Homeland Security, additional screening will be required “for certain nationals of high-risk countries.” However, DHS has yet to clarify what the additional vetting will entail and who will be impacted.

IRAP supports good-faith security screenings that protect the national security of our country. However, the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program is already highly secure, involving data collection and screening by several different agencies. Expanding these protocols without an articulated threat will not improve security but instead impose significant delays in refugee resettlement.

**IRAP's Policy Director, Betsy Fisher, elaborated:** “Our casework includes aiding refugees with the collection of documents needed to apply and qualify for resettlement. From experience we know that incomplete or insufficient documentation will result in being denied resettlement to the U.S. For refugees fleeing their homes with very few belongings, this can be an often insurmountable challenge in an already long and arduous process. Adding further requirements to the resettlement process will almost certainly ensure that individuals from the impacted countries will be stuck in life-threatening situations.”

On November 13, 2017, IRAP and other groups had filed a class action lawsuit against this latest refugee ban, which resulted in a District Judge [partially enjoining the restrictions](#) from being implemented. The ruling also enjoined the indefinite suspension of the follow-to-join program. The government has appealed the decision.

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In the meantime, however, the number of resettled refugees from the eleven targeted countries has plummeted, as evidenced by [RCUSA data](#). IRAP calls on the Administration to immediately resume processing of the affected refugees and to be transparent about any new vetting procedures applied to refugees.

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