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IRAP STATEMENT ON THE DENIAL OF U.S. ASYLUM FOR IRANIANS IN THE LAUTENBERG PROGRAM

New York, NY – Recent reports suggest that the United States has denied asylum to Iranian refugees applying for resettlement under the Lautenberg Amendment, which allows persecuted religious minorities from Iran to be processed as refugees from within Austria to be resettled in the United States. As a result, these vulnerable individuals may be forced to return to Iran, where they are in constant danger. In response to these concerning reports, the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) at the Urban Justice Center issued the following statement:

“IRAP is deeply concerned and angered to learn that the U.S. Government has issued rejections to dozens of Iranian refugees waiting in Vienna, Austria to complete the U.S. resettlement process. These refugees had applied for resettlement under the Lautenberg Amendment, which allows threatened religious minorities in Iran to join family members in the United States after completing extensive processing in Austria, where they are temporarily safe from persecution. However, these rejections mean that they are no longer eligible for resettlement to the United States and their futures are uncertain. This is just another example of the United States turning its back on those fleeing from harm.”

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