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CENTER for  
VICTIMS of  
TORTURE

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CONTACT: Jenni Bowring-McDonough  
612.436.4886  
jbowring@cvt.org

## **CVT Decries Trump Administration Decision to Slash FY2019 Refugee Admissions**

**ST. PAUL, Minn. & WASHINGTON** — The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) today responded to the Trump Administration’s announcement that it intends to set the Fiscal Year 2019 refugee admissions ceiling at 30,000, a historic low.

“This is a complete abdication of U.S. global leadership and a devastating blow to some of the world’s most vulnerable people,” said Curt Goering, CVT’s executive director. “Trump Administration officials continue to try to sell inexcusable decisions like these as necessary for U.S. national security. Not only is that flat wrong, but it ignores the heartbreaking reality that the refugee crisis is a torture crisis.”

Based on research conducted by CVT, the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement estimates that as many as 44% of refugees living in the United States are torture survivors.

“Closing our country’s doors to these men, women and children—depriving them of hope that they might one day find safe haven in the United States and begin to reclaim their lives—exacerbates their trauma and puts them at further risk. This is not supposed to be who we are,” Goering continued.

The Administration’s announcement is the latest of its attacks on the U.S. refugee resettlement program, all of which have come during the worst global displacement crisis on record. In September 2017, the Administration set a refugee admissions goal for FY2018 at a then-historic low of 45,000. It has since layered a host of onerous vetting requirements on top of an already rigorous vetting system at the same time as it has reduced our government’s refugee processing capacity. These actions are designed to achieve the same objective as the newly announced FY2019 refugee ceiling: drastically limit the number of refugees our country welcomes.

Like last year, the Administration’s announcement also came before [statutorily-required](#) consultation with Congress. As Senate Judiciary Committee (SJC) Chairman Chuck Grassley [has explained](#), “[u]nder current federal law, the administration is required to consult annually before a President can set the refugee admissions cap.” In an [August 8 letter](#), Grassley and

SJC Ranking Member Dianne Feinstein warned the Trump Administration not to again disrespect Congress's co-equal role in determining U.S. refugee admission policy: "The Executive Branch simply cannot continue to repeat these mistakes and must take steps to ensure that the consultation process is both consistent with federal law and meaningful."

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*The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization headquartered in St. Paul, MN, with offices in Atlanta, GA, and Washington, D.C.; and healing initiatives in Africa and the Middle East. Visit [www.cvt.org](http://www.cvt.org)*