



The
CENTER for
VICTIMS of
TORTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 27, 2017

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

Executive Order on Refugees Betrays Long-Held American Values

ST. PAUL, Minn. and WASHINGTON —The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) strenuously opposes the Executive Order issued today that suspends the entire U.S. refugee resettlement program for 120 days; bans the arrival of Syrian refugees; and reduces the overall number of refugees who will enter the United States this year from 110,000 to 50,000.

“The United States has traditionally been the most generous of all resettlement-receiving countries, even as refugees are the most thoroughly [vetted](#) people to enter the United States,” explained Curt Goering, CVT’s executive director. “The U.S. refugee resettlement program saves lives and serves important U.S. foreign policy interests in offering relief to the countries neighboring war who shoulder the greatest weight of protecting and caring for refugees—many of these countries, such as Jordan and Turkey, are important U.S. allies.”

“Furthermore, resettlement is often the only salvation for survivors of torture who may never be able to return to their home countries,” stated Goering. “CVT [estimates](#) that up to 44 percent of refugees in the United States are either direct survivors of torture or the children or spouses of torture survivors.”

Global forced displacement is at a [record high](#), with over 65 million people forcibly displaced from their homes, over 21 million of whom are refugees, having crossed an international border. Of these, the largest displaced population is Syrians who have fled a devastating conflict that has been marked by the widespread use of torture, targeting of civilians, use of barrel bombs and chemical weapons, and besieged cities cut off from basic humanitarian assistance. Over half of the almost 5 million Syrians who have fled into neighboring countries and beyond are children.

“In the face of such global need, the United States should not shut its doors, turn its back on its allies, upend decades of American leadership in refugee protection, and undermine its proud legacy of being a beacon of hope to the most vulnerable people around the world,” Goering concluded. “We remain committed to working with the administration on improving refugee protection globally and in guaranteeing that survivors of torture have access to high quality rehabilitative services.”

###

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