

Expanding the Muslim Ban is Needless and Cruel

ST. PAUL, Minn. & WASHINGTON — The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) issued this statement in response to the White House’s announcement that new countries, including Eritrea, will be added to its Muslim Ban.

“This is a sad day. Adding six countries to the Muslim Ban—as it reaches its three-year anniversary, no less—is yet another callous extension of the discriminatory and cruel policies this administration has repeatedly enacted.

“CVT has worked with Eritrean refugees from one of the newly banned countries, Eritrea, since 2013, in camps in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. We are profoundly aware of the torture, persecution and oppression experienced by our clients. A land with forced, and permanent, military conscription, Eritrea is a country from which people flee by the thousands. Parents begin working on plans to help children escape from the time both boys and girls move into their teenage years. To force parents to comply with the conscription policies, family members are often imprisoned and tortured. There has long been a shoot-to-kill order at the borders. And once in the military, a life of torture and imprisonment is all but certain.

“While the ban does not apply to refugees and asylum seekers directly, it could nevertheless harm them, in particular by limiting the possibilities for family members to join them in the United States if they manage to resettle here. In our clinical work, we are [keenly aware](#) of the effects of separation of family members after torture or persecution, and the ongoing stress of never knowing when you might see loved ones again.

“We must stand with survivors and demand that this ban is removed.” –Neal Porter, CVT director of international services

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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.