

## CVT Files Objection to the Asylum Ban

ST. PAUL, Minn. & WASHINGTON — The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) yesterday submitted formal comments on recent Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice and White House actions which, taken together, constitute an asylum ban for many vulnerable people arriving at our southern border seeking protection. Those people surely include torture survivors, as CVT knows: based on research by the Department of Health and Human Services [Office of Refugee Resettlement](#), as many as 44 percent of asylees and asylum seekers now living in the U.S. have suffered torture.

“CVT strongly objects to the asylum ban, which is both illegal and inhumane. Having worked to restore the lives of refugee and asylum-seeking torture survivors for more than 33 years, we know that deliberately preventing access to safety and rehabilitative care—which for many this ban achieves—is especially cruel.

“The November 9 Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice Interim Final Rule, “[Aliens Subject to a Bar on Entry Under Certain Presidential Proclamations; Procedures for Protection Claims](#),” together with President Trump’s “[Proclamation Addressing Mass Migration Through the Southern Border of the United States](#)” from the same day, eliminate the mere possibility of asylum for countless trauma victims, even in cases where those victims have a credible fear of persecution if returned to their home countries and even where government policies and practices—like illegal turn-backs and “metering”—obstruct their ability to access ports of entry.

“As CVT’s [comment](#) explains, the ban is not only illegal but also puts severely traumatized, otherwise asylum-eligible individuals—including torture survivors—at heightened risk of deportation back to the persecution they fled. And while the ban preserves two other forms of legal relief for which some survivors might qualify, both are limited in ways that can delay, inhibit or even prevent survivors from healing.

“The asylum ban comes on the heels of another needless and damaging proposed rule, promulgated in September of last year, which would authorize the prolonged, indefinite detention of traumatized asylum-seeking children and their parents. CVT submitted a [comment](#) objecting—on both legal and humanitarian grounds—to that heinous proposal as well.” — Scott Roehm, director of CVT’s Washington, D.C., office

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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.  
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