



The  
CENTER for  
VICTIMS of  
TORTURE

## **The Center for Victims of Torture Denounces Biden Administration's New Assault on Asylum**

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** — The Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) today issued this statement in response to President Biden's executive order imposing a cap on asylum processing at the U.S. Southern border.

Today, President Biden issued a [Presidential Proclamation](#) that will close the southern border -- starting tomorrow -- to survivors of torture and persecution who seek asylum in the U.S. outside ports of entry. Under the new proclamation and accompanying [interim final rule](#), the border will close to asylum seekers whenever so-called "irregular crossings" exceed a seven-day average of 2,500, and reopen when the average falls below 1,500, with only limited exceptions for unaccompanied children, victims of severe forms of trafficking and certain others.

CVT denounces this new ban as a callous political maneuver that keeps vulnerable individuals from exercising their [right to seek asylum](#) "whether or not at a designated port of arrival" and delivers them back into the life-threatening situations they fled. The new ban is particularly shocking because it subjects people who have already suffered unspeakable harm at the hands of violent regimes and gangs to severe penalties simply for seeking help from the U.S., including a five-year ban on admission to the U.S. and potential criminal penalties.

At CVT, we see clients every day who have survived torture in their home countries and were forced to flee via overland travel through multiple countries before arriving in the United States. A number of those clients have told us that journey was long and terrifying, and have described numerous additional traumas they experienced in addition to their torture. Some say the journey was worse than their torture experience. To prevent someone from applying for asylum because they happen to be arrival number 2,501 on any given day is not only arbitrary but also cruel.

When the Biden administration took office, it committed itself to creating a safe, humane and orderly asylum system. CVT has shared concrete [ways](#) to reach this goal. This ban is not a way forward, but a way backward to a place of increased human suffering and disregard of U.S. law and ideals.

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*The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization with offices in Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Uganda, United States and additional project sites around the world.*

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