

**PROPOSED REFUGEE ADMISSIONS
FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2017**

REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
TO THE
COMMITTEES ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE
AND
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
SECTIONS 207(d)(1) and (e)
OF THE
IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



INTRODUCTION

This *Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2017: Report to the Congress* is submitted in compliance with Sections 207(d)(1) and (e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). The Act requires that before the start of the fiscal year and, to the extent possible, at least two weeks prior to consultations on refugee admissions, members of the Committees on the Judiciary of the Senate and the House of Representatives be provided with the following information:

- (1) A description of the nature of the refugee situation;
- (2) A description of the number and allocation of the refugees to be admitted and an analysis of conditions within the countries from which they came;
- (3) A description of the plans for their movement and resettlement and the estimated cost of their movement and resettlement;
- (4) An analysis of the anticipated social, economic, and demographic impact of their admission to the United States;¹
- (5) A description of the extent to which other countries will admit and assist in the resettlement of such refugees;
- (6) An analysis of the impact of the participation of the United States in the resettlement of such refugees on the foreign policy interests of the United States; and
- (7) Such additional information as may be appropriate or requested by such members.

This report contains information as required by Section 602(d) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-292, October 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2787) (IRFA) about religious persecution of refugee populations eligible for consideration for admission to the United States. This report meets the reporting requirements of Section 305(b) of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-333, October 18, 2004, 118 Stat. 1287) by providing information about specific measures taken to facilitate access to the United States refugee program for individuals who have fled “countries of particular concern” for violations of religious freedoms, identified pursuant to Section 402(b) of the IRFA.

¹ Detailed discussion of the anticipated social and economic impact, including secondary migration, of the admission of refugees to the United States is being provided in the *Report to the Congress* of the Refugee Resettlement Program, Office of Refugee Resettlement, Department of Health and Human Services.

FOREWORD

On the occasion of World Refugee Day, June 20, President Obama reaffirmed our nation's commitment to helping refugees and our leading role in providing safe haven. This commitment comes in the midst of an unprecedented global migration and refugee crisis. There is currently a higher number of refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced persons – more than 65 million – than at any time on record. The United States leads the world in providing humanitarian aid to crises overseas and also accepts more refugees for resettlement through the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) than any other country.

While starting life anew in the United States may be daunting, it also offers hope and unparalleled opportunity. It is a chance not only to escape from violence and persecution but to make a fresh start. The assistance the American people provide helps newcomers find their footing and become a part of their new communities. Refugees are not the only ones who benefit; they add to America's vitality and diversity and make substantial contributions to our economic and cultural life.

Resettlement in a third country is a solution for some of the world's most vulnerable refugees. As a matter of principle, the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) offers the possibility of resettlement to refugees regardless of their location, national origin, health status, occupational skills, or level of educational attainment.

U.S. Resettlement Program Growing

In FY 2016, the Administration aims to reach the ceiling of 85,000 refugee arrivals established by the President, and in FY 2017 will strive to admit 110,000 refugees. This represents a 57 percent increase over a two-year period from the 70,000 refugees admitted to the United States in 2015. In the current fiscal year, more refugees are likely to be resettled to the United States from the Near East/South Asia region than in any year on record, as well as more refugees from Africa than in any of the past dozen years. In order to achieve this, the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) expanded operations in Jordan, Tanzania, and Uganda, interviewing nearly 25,000 refugee applicants. By co-locating and surging staff, the USRAP significantly reduced the time between certain steps in the process, including UNHCR referral, pre-screening, DHS interview, and medical screening, and thus decreased overall processing time without curtailing the program's robust security checks.

Increasing the refugee admissions ceiling to 110,000 in FY 2017 will require cooperation among several U.S. government agencies, including close interagency coordination on security checks and other requirements. As a public-private partnership, the program also depends on the support of American non-governmental organizations, charities, faith-based groups and thousands of volunteers and caring people in hundreds of communities across the country.

Leaders' Summit on Refugees

On September 20, 2016, President Obama will host the Leaders' Summit on Refugees at the United Nations for countries that have made new and significant commitments to increase international humanitarian assistance; to create greater opportunities for legal resettlement or other legal pathways for admission to safe countries; and to enact policies that allow refugees to be self-reliant, including by increasing the number of refugees worldwide in school by one million, and the number of refugees granted the legal right to work by one million.

President Obama also launched a private sector Call to Action in advance of this year's UN General Assembly to draw on the expertise, resources and entrepreneurial spirit of the private sector to help refugees. The Call to Action asks companies to make "new, measurable and significant commitments that will have a durable impact on refugees residing in countries on the frontlines of the global refugee crisis and in countries of resettlement, like the United States." The Call to Action is focused on generating corporate commitments

"Today, on World Refugee Day, we recognize the challenges and hardships that refugees face, honor their courage and resilience in the face of overwhelming obstacles, and celebrate their many valuable contributions to our Nation.

This year's commemoration comes as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees reports that more people are displaced by rising violence, insecurity, and persecution than at any time on record. More than 65 million people around the world – more than the population of France, or California and Texas combined – have been driven from their homes. More than half are children. The scale of this human suffering is almost unimaginable; the need for the world to respond is beyond question.

Every day, members of the international community, humanitarian organizations, civil society, and individual citizens work to assist these vulnerable populations. For our part, the United States provides more humanitarian assistance to refugees than any other nation and maintains the world's largest refugee resettlement program. We support programs that provide food, water, shelter, and medical care to refugees, and fight for their rights to safety, dignity and long-term livelihood opportunities.

Today, we commemorate the spirit and strength of refugees worldwide and the dedication of those who help them on and after their journeys. Protecting and assisting refugees is a part of our history as a Nation, and we will continue to alleviate the suffering of refugees abroad, and to welcome them here at home, because doing so reflects our American values and our noblest traditions as a Nation, enriches our society, and strengthens our collective security."

President Barack Obama

June 20, 2016

In commemoration of World Refugee Day

in three key areas: facilitating access to education; increasing employment opportunities for refugees; and helping refugees to get the resources they need to become self-reliant. Commitments can be directed towards refugees resettled in the United States or located anywhere in the world.

Syrian Resettlement on the Rise

The refugee crisis caused by the conflict in Syria is the worst the world has witnessed in a generation, generating more than 5 million refugees in the region. The U.S. government is deeply committed to assisting the Syrian people and has provided nearly \$5.6 billion in humanitarian assistance since the start of the crisis, more than any other donor. While the vast majority of Syrians would prefer to return home when the conflict ends, it is clear that some remain extremely vulnerable in their countries of asylum and would benefit from resettlement. The United States will meet or exceed the goal of admitting 10,000 Syrian refugees in FY 2016 and aims to admit a significantly higher number in FY 2017.

The United States is one of 32 countries that have agreed to accept referrals from UNHCR as part of its ambitious international effort to secure permanent or temporary resettlement for up to 10 percent of Syrian refugees. As of mid-2016, UNHCR has secured commitments from these countries to admit more than 220,000 Syrians for permanent resettlement, humanitarian admission, private sponsorship, or academic scholarships.

“Today, we honor refugees’ resilience and courage. We also recognize the tremendous contributions made by local and international non-governmental organizations on the front lines of delivering life-saving assistance. This year’s commemoration comes at a time when brutal conflicts are forcing record numbers of innocent people to flee, and challenging the world to find better ways to protect them. The war in Syria alone has displaced more than 11 million people – half of that nation’s pre-war population. Millions more have fled Daesh’s atrocities in Iraq, civil wars in Yemen and South Sudan, political violence in Burundi, and Boko Haram’s rampages through Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, and Chad.

The number of forcibly displaced people is the largest ever recorded. Sixty-five million people are refugees, internally displaced or seeking asylum, five million more than a year ago.

The refugees we welcome to the United States will join previous generations who have come to this country to escape violence and persecution – threats to human life and dignity that remain all too real today. History celebrates such moments when we have overcome bias and fear, and opened our doors. Those who have walked through them have made immeasurable contributions to our community of citizens and enriched our lives. Their achievements are a testament to the potential all humans have to heal, to overcome loss, to start over, and to the obligation we share, to give future generations that chance.”

Secretary John Kerry

June 20, 2016

In commemoration of World Refugee Day

Protecting Vulnerable Children and Others in Central America

In December 2014, the Administration established an in-country refugee and parole program for children in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Under the initial program, lawfully present parents in the United States could file to bring their unmarried children under age 21 to join them in this country, and in certain circumstances, an in-country parent could be approved to travel with the approved child to the United States. In July 2016, the Administration announced an expansion of the program to include the following relatives, when accompanied by a child under age 21: sons and daughters age 21 and older and/or married, the biological parent of the child even if not married to the U.S.-based lawfully present parent, and certain caregivers who are also related to the U.S.-based lawfully present parent. As of August 2016, parents have submitted more than 9,500 applications and more than 700 children have arrived to join parents in the United States. Thousands more will be joining parents in the coming months as an increasing number of interviews have been conducted and applications are being approved.

In July 2016, the Government of Costa Rica announced that it had entered into a protection transfer arrangement (PTA) with UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration to provide protection to vulnerable individuals and families from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Under the PTA, Costa Rica will serve as a temporary site to host Central Americans awaiting completion of their refugee application process and onward resettlement to the United States or another third country. For cases not requiring immediate transfer to Costa Rica, we have also moved to establish an in-country referral program for residents of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Under this program, UNHCR will assist in identifying vulnerable individuals who will be considered for refugee protection in the United States after being screened and interviewed by the U.S. Government in their countries of origin.

Ensuring National Security in the Refugee Admissions Program and Combatting Fraud

The USRAP continues to employ rigorous security measures to protect against threats to our national security and is committed to deterring and detecting fraud among those seeking to resettle in the United States.

Refugees of every nationality are subject to the highest level of security checks for any category of traveler to the United States. This multi-step screening process includes intensive biographic and biometric screening involving multiple federal intelligence, security, and law enforcement agencies including the National Counterterrorism Center, the Federal Bureau of

Investigation, and the Departments of State, Defense, and Homeland Security. A step-by-step guide to the process is posted at the following link:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2015/11/20/infographic-screening-process-refugee-entry-united-states>.

The USRAP continues to work on an interagency basis not only to maintain the highest rigor in screening refugee applicants, but also continually to seek ways to strengthen existing procedures.

Sharing Best Practices on Resettlement and Integration

Beginning in mid-2015, interest in refugee resettlement in the United States, Canada, and Europe has surged. National and local resettlement agencies in the United States have reported receiving a remarkable number of offers of assistance including donations of household and personal goods, housing, and willingness to ‘sponsor’ or befriend refugees. At the same time, some elected officials have publicly stated their opposition to resettling certain refugees in their states. These dynamics have sparked a debate about admitting refugees to this country and increased interest in learning more about the program in communities large and small throughout the country.

The White House Task Force on New Americans was established by President Obama in November 2014 to strengthen integration efforts nationwide and build welcoming communities for all immigrants, including refugees. As stated in the preamble to the one-year progress report, this interagency effort was launched “to develop a coordinated federal strategy to better integrate new Americans into communities and support state and local efforts to do the same.” Sixteen core goals and 48 recommendations were made to enhance the civic, linguistic, and economic integration of new Americans. Various campaigns, initiatives, pilots, partnerships, websites, and best practices were launched and shared by federal agencies, state and local governments, White House offices, businesses, educators, community and faith-based organizations, and philanthropists.

Numerous foreign government and civic leaders approached the United States this year to learn about the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program and to seek information about establishing or improving refugee resettlement programs in their countries. The Department of State has been deeply involved in helping to design programs for groups visiting the United States who are interested in refugee resettlement and integration, and in showcasing the best examples of successful local and national programs. These groups have met with federal officials, toured national resettlement agency headquarters, and visited dozens of local communities throughout the country to meet representatives from the public

and private agencies and organizations that welcome refugees and other immigrants every day.

Conclusion

America's reputation as a nation of refuge provides a beacon of hope for persecuted people around the world and serves as a model for new resettlement nations. Through the USRAP, our government, cooperating private partners, and American citizens in communities throughout the country demonstrate day in and day out the generosity and core values of our nation.

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I. OVERVIEW OF U.S. REFUGEE POLICY

At the end of 2015, the estimated refugee population worldwide stood at 21.3 million, with 16.1 million under the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This represents an increase of 1.7 million refugees under UNHCR mandate in one year. The United States actively supports efforts to provide protection, assistance, and durable solutions to these refugees, as these measures fulfill our humanitarian interests and further our foreign policy and national security interests. Under the authority of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as amended, the United States contributes to the programs of UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and other international and non-governmental organizations that provide protection and assistance to refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), victims of conflict, stateless persons, and other vulnerable migrants. These contributions are used to address the legal and physical protection needs of refugees and to furnish basic assistance such as water, sanitation, food, health care, shelter, education, and other services. The United States monitors these programs to ensure the most effective use of resources, maximizing humanitarian impact for the beneficiaries.

The United States and UNHCR recognize that most refugees desire safe, voluntary return to their homeland. In 2015, some 201,400 refugees voluntarily repatriated to their country of origin – a nearly 60% increase over 2014, but unfortunately, still low. Refugee repatriation operations brought refugees home to Afghanistan, Sudan, Somalia, and Central African Republic, among others. These operations were carried out to protect returning refugees as well as to help them contribute to the stabilization, reconstruction, and development of their home countries.

Where opportunities for refugees' safe and voluntary return remain elusive, the United States and its partners pursue self-sufficiency and temporary, indefinite, or permanent local integration in countries of asylum. The Department of State encourages host governments to protect refugees and to allow them to integrate into local communities. The State Department further promotes local integration by funding programs to enhance refugee self-reliance and support community-based social services. Groups that have availed themselves of opportunities for local integration in recent years include Afghans in India, Angolans in Zambia, Burundians in Tanzania, Liberians and Sierra Leoneans in seven countries across West Africa, and Colombians in Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama and Venezuela. Mali agreed to provide birth certificates to some 8,000 Mauritanian refugee children, paving the way for them to eventually apply for Malian citizenship.

UNHCR estimates that there are at least 10 million people worldwide who are not recognized as nationals of any state and are therefore stateless. Without citizenship in any country, many stateless persons are unable to move freely, to access basic services such as health care and schools, to work legally, to own property, or to access police protection and systems of justice. The United States supports UNHCR's mandate to prevent and reduce statelessness, including its Global Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024. The United States is encouraging States to address gaps in citizenship laws that result in statelessness, to eliminate provisions that discriminate against women, to facilitate naturalization for stateless persons, and to ensure universal birth registration. U.S. contributions to UNHCR's core budget support efforts to prevent and address statelessness in Burma, the Dominican Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Nepal, Sudan, Syria, and elsewhere. In addition, the Department of State seeks to use the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) to demonstrate leadership and encourage other countries to do more to help stateless people and refugees in protracted situations. This approach is reflected in, for example, the current resettlement of protracted Rohingya refugees from Burma who were born outside Burma, mostly in Malaysia and Thailand.

The United States, like UNHCR, recognizes that resettlement in third countries is a vital tool for providing certain refugees protection and/or a durable solution. For some refugees, resettlement is the best, and perhaps the only, alternative. In particular, stateless refugees who arrive in the United States for resettlement not only find a durable solution to their displacement, but are also placed on a path that will afford the opportunity to naturalize and resolve their stateless status.

For more than a decade, the U.S. government has provided financial support to expand and improve UNHCR's resettlement capacity, principally by funding staff and construction of facilities. As a result, UNHCR has substantially increased referrals to the United States and other resettlement countries, submitting more than 134,000 individuals for resettlement in 2015 – an increase of nearly 30% over 2014. We plan to continue to work with UNHCR and consult with host governments on group referrals. We will continue to assess resettlement needs and allow qualified NGOs to refer refugee applicants to the program.

The United States has also supported UNHCR's efforts to expand the number of countries active in resettlement. In 2015, UNHCR referred refugees to 27 countries for resettlement consideration. Over 90 percent of refugees referred for resettlement were referred to the United States, Australia, and Canada. Smaller numbers of referrals were made to Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Czech Republic,

Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, and the United Kingdom.

While the overall number of refugees referred by UNHCR and the percentages resettled by various countries fluctuate from year to year, the United States aims to ensure that at least 50 percent of all refugees referred by UNHCR worldwide are considered for resettlement in the United States, depending on the availability of funds. Some 64 percent of UNHCR-referred refugees who were resettled in 2015, were resettled in the United States (see Table VIII).

The foreign policy and humanitarian interests of the United States are often advanced by addressing refugee issues in asylum and resettlement countries. In some cases, the United States has been able to use its leadership position in resettlement to promote and secure other durable solutions for refugees, or advance other human rights or foreign policy objectives. The United States is by far the largest single donor to UNHCR, providing over \$1.33 billion in FY 2015. During the past few years, U.S. resettlement efforts in Africa, the Middle East, and East Asia have helped energize efforts by UNHCR and other countries to ensure that first asylum is maintained for larger refugee populations and that local integration or third country resettlement are options offered to those in need. In certain locations, the prompt resettlement of politically sensitive cases has helped defuse regional tensions.

During its history, the USRAP has responded to changing circumstances. The end of the Cold War dramatically altered the context in which the USRAP operated. The program shifted its focus away from large groups concentrated in a few locations (primarily refugees from Vietnam, the former Soviet Union, and the former Yugoslavia) and began to admit refugees representing over 50 nationalities per year. Today, officials from the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (DHS/USCIS) often conduct refugee applicant interviews in remote locations and focus on the individuals and populations who most need third country resettlement opportunities.

While maintaining the United States' leadership role in humanitarian protection, an integral part of this mission is to ensure that refugee resettlement opportunities go only to those who are eligible for such protection and who do not present a risk to the safety and security of our country. Accordingly, the USRAP is committed to deterring and detecting fraud among those seeking to resettle in the United States and continues to employ rigorous security measures to protect against threats to our national security.

Refugees resettled in the United States enrich our nation. The USRAP is premised on the idea that refugees should become economically self-sufficient as quickly as possible. The Department of State works domestically with agencies participating in the Reception and Placement (R&P) program to ensure that refugees receive services in the first 30 to 90 days after arrival in accordance with established standards. During and after the initial resettlement period, the Office of Refugee Resettlement at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS/ORR) provides technical assistance and funding to states, the District of Columbia, and nonprofit organizations to help refugees become self-sufficient and integrated into U.S. society. ORR programs use formula and discretionary grants to provide cash and medical assistance, employment and training programs, and other services to newly arriving and recently arrived refugees. Refugees arriving in the United States are expected to be future U.S. citizens. Refugees are immediately authorized to work upon resettlement in the United States, and after one year in this country are required to apply for lawful permanent resident status. Five years after admission, a refugee who has been granted lawful permanent resident status is eligible to apply for citizenship.

REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM FOR FY 2017

PROPOSED CEILINGS

TABLE I

**REFUGEE ADMISSIONS IN FY 2015 AND FY 2016
PROPOSED REFUGEE ADMISSIONS BY REGION FOR FY 2017²**

REGION	FY 2015 ACTUAL ARRIVALS	FY 2016 CEILING	FY 2016 PROJECTED ARRIVALS	PROPOSED FY 2017 CEILING
Africa	22,472	25,000	27,500	35,000
East Asia	18,469	13,000	14,000	12,000
Europe and Central Asia	2,363	4,000	4,000	4,000
Latin America/Caribbean	2,050	3,000	1,500	5,000
Near East/South Asia	24,579	34,000	38,000	40,000
Regional Subtotal	69,933	79,000	85,000	96,000
Unallocated Reserve		6,000		14,000
Total	69,933	85,000	85,000	110,000

Generally, to be considered a refugee, a person must be outside his or her country of nationality or, if stateless, outside his or her country of last habitual residence. Additionally, under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) § 101(a)(42)(B), the President may specify circumstances under which individuals who are within their countries of nationality or last habitual residence may be considered a refugee for purposes of admission to the United States. The FY 2017 refugee admissions proposal recommends continuing such in-country processing for specified persons in Iraq, Cuba, Eurasia and the Baltics, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. Persons for whom resettlement is requested by a U.S. ambassador in any location in the world may also be considered, with the understanding that those within their countries of nationality or last habitual residence will only be referred to the USRAP following Department of State consultation with USCIS at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Likewise, the U.S. will consider

² These proposed figures assume enactment by Congress of the President's Budget levels related to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program elements.

accepting a limited number of referrals from qualified NGOs of highly vulnerable individuals within their countries of nationality or last habitual residence following Department of State consultation with USCIS.

Unallocated Reserve

This proposal includes 14,000 unallocated admissions numbers to be used if needed for additional refugee admissions from any region. The unallocated numbers would only be used following notification to Congress.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

Eligibility Criteria

The Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) is responsible for coordinating and managing the USRAP. A critical part of this responsibility is determining which individuals or groups from among the millions of refugees worldwide will have access to U.S. resettlement consideration. PRM coordinates within the Department of State, as well as with DHS/USCIS and other agencies, in carrying out this responsibility.

Section 207(a)(3) of the INA states that the USRAP shall allocate admissions among refugees "of special humanitarian concern to the United States in accordance with a determination made by the President after appropriate consultation." Which individuals are "of special humanitarian concern" to the United States for the purpose of refugee resettlement consideration is determined through the USRAP priority system. There are currently three priorities or categories of cases:

- Priority 1 – Individual cases referred to the program by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement;
- Priority 2 – Groups of cases designated as having access to the program by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement; and
- Priority 3 – Individual cases from designated nationalities granted access for purposes of reunification with family members already in the United States.

(Note: Refugees resettled in the United States may also seek the admission of spouses and unmarried children under 21 who are still abroad by filing a "Following to Join" petition, which obviates the need for a separate refugee claim adjudication. This option is described in more detail in the discussion of Following to Join cases below.)

Access to the USRAP under one of the above-listed processing priorities does not necessarily mean an applicant meets the statutory definition of a “refugee” or is admissible to the United States under the INA. Applicants who are eligible for access to the USRAP within the established priorities are presented to DHS/USCIS officers for interview. The ultimate determination as to whether an applicant can be admitted as a refugee is made by DHS/USCIS in accordance with criteria set forth in the INA and various security protocols.

Although the access categories to the USRAP are referred to as “processing priorities,” it is important to note that entering the program under a certain priority does not establish precedence in the order in which cases will be processed. Once cases are established as eligible for access under one of the three processing priorities, they all undergo the same processing steps.

PRIORITY 1 – INDIVIDUAL REFERRALS

Priority 1 (P-1) allows consideration of refugee claims from persons of any nationality,³ usually with compelling protection needs, for whom resettlement appears to be the appropriate durable solution. Priority 1 cases are identified and referred to the program by UNHCR, a U.S. Embassy, or a designated NGO. UNHCR, which has the international mandate worldwide to provide protection to refugees worldwide, has historically referred the vast majority of cases to the United States under this priority. Some NGOs providing humanitarian assistance in locations where there are large concentrations of refugees have also undergone training by PRM and DHS/USCIS and have been designated as eligible to provide Priority 1 referrals.

Process for Priority 1 Individual Referral Applications

Priority 1 (P-1) referrals from UNHCR and NGOs are submitted to the appropriate Regional Refugee Coordinator, who forwards the referrals to the appropriate Resettlement Support Center (RSC) for case processing and scheduling of the DHS/USCIS interview. PRM’s Office of Admissions reviews embassy referrals for completeness and may consult with DHS/USCIS in considering these referrals.

A U.S. ambassador may make a Priority 1 referral for persons still in their country of origin if the ambassador determines that such cases are in need of exceptional treatment and the Departments of State (PRM) and Homeland Security

³ Referrals of North Koreans and Palestinians require State Department and DHS/USCIS concurrence before they may be granted access to the USRAP.

