

CHAIRMAN OF THE UNITED STATES BISHOPS COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION RELEASES STATEMENT ON THE SETTING OF THE REFUGEE LIMIT FOR 2019

September 18, 2018

WASHINGTON—The United States Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo, announced yesterday that the Administration will set the Presidential Determination, the level of refugees allowed into the United States, at 30,000 refugees for 2019. This is the lowest number set in the history of the U.S. refugee admissions program which was formally created in 1980.

Most Reverend Joe S. Vásquez, Bishop of Austin, Texas, Chair of the of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, issued the following statement:

"The announcement of the Presidential Determination is deeply disturbing and leaves many human lives in danger. To cut off protection for many who are fleeing persecution, at a time of unprecedented global humanitarian need, contradicts who we are as a nation. Offering refuge to those fleeing violence, torture, or religious persecution is a cornerstone of our history. We as a country are blessed with vast resources making us capable of securely welcoming those fleeing harm. Closing our doors on those seeking such safety is not who we are as a people. In the coming days, we pray that Congress will have the opportunity to engage in the formal consultation process with the Administration that is required by law. During this mandatory consultation process, Congress should strongly urge the Administration to return to a refugee admission level that reflects local community response and support of refugees, global refugee protection needs, and our long history of compassionately welcoming refugees."