

UNITED STATES BISHOPS CHAIRMAN EXPRESSES DEEP CONCERN ABOUT REFUGEES LEFT IN HARM'S WAY DUE TO LOWEST EVER REFUGEE ADMISSIONS CEILING FOR 2019

October 6, 2018

WASHINGTON— President Donald Trump has issued the Presidential Determination (PD) for refugee admissions for fiscal year 2019, setting the level at 30,000 refugees. The PD will be the lowest refugee ceiling in the 38-year history of the resettlement program, with the average annual limit being 95,000 refugees. Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Migration has offered the following statement regarding the PD.

Full statement follows:

"As Christians, we believe it is our duty to welcome and help those who are persecuted, including the vulnerable such as children and religious minorities. Resettlement in our country is a way through which we live out our Gospel call to welcome the persecuted into our communities--individuals and families with no viable options to stay where they are or return home. I am saddened by today's major reduction in resettlement to 30,000 refugees. I worry and pray for those refugees left in harm's way by this decision. We urge the Administration to diligently work to reach this year's Presidential Determination as we know that many in the world fleeing war, persecution and religious discrimination continue to desperately need our support. We pledge to work with the Administration to ensure that we reach that goal. We will continue to call for a higher refugee admissions level for next year. We can and must do more to assist those in need."