

Ask Congress NOW: Support relief and resettlement for Syrian refugees!



Background

The human rights violations that have been perpetrated by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL or ISIS) have been widespread and have left more than 10 million people in need of humanitarian and protection assistance both within Syria and in surrounding countries. Christians, Yezidis, Shabaks, Turkoman Shiites, Coptic Christians, Druze, Mandeans, Assyrians and others have been forced to flee their homes in search of safety and are in need of both international humanitarian support and expedited access to the United States Admission Program. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has issued a [global appeal](#) for funding from the U.S. and other donor countries in order to provide immediate and long-term assistance to refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). CWS and partner organizations recently visited displaced persons in the region and have released a report entitled [At the Breaking Point: Refugees in Jordan and Egypt](#).



Three young girls in Jordan, close to the border with Syria
Photo by Naomi Steinberg, Director, Refugee Council USA

"One mother shared with me that she had lost all hope, and that if assistance did not come soon, she would have no other option but to kill her three young girls and then take her own life, rather than watch them all starve. What is our answer for this mother? How will we respond to her? We cannot look away. We must do better. We must provide the assistance and the hope for a better life that her and other mothers like her need and deserve."

- Erol Kekic, Director, CWS Immigration & Refugee Program during recent trip to the region

Take Action

The Protecting Religious Minorities Persecuted by ISIS Act of 2015, H.R. 1568, was recently introduced by Representatives Vargas (CA-51), Rooney (FL-17), Conyers (MI-13) and Hunter (CA-50). H.R. 1568 would make the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program more accessible to persecuted groups in Iraq and Syria, including individuals facing gender-based violence and religious and ethnic minorities fleeing ISIS. The legislation would also open additional processing entities in the region, increase staff for processing refugee applications, and streamline the existing systems for conducting background and security checks. H.R. 1568 would also expand the use of video interviewing and improve accountability and transparency around denial decisions.

Call 1-866-940-2439 to be connected with your Member of Congress' office. Urge them to support this positive legislation, to express your appreciation for the robust U.S. support for UNHCR's appeal thus far, and to push for additional funds to help alleviate the suffering due to this conflict.

Here's a sample of what to tell your Member of Congress's staff when you call:

"I'm a constituent from [City/State] and I urge Rep. [NAME] to co-sponsor and support The Protecting Religious Minorities Persecuted by ISIS Act. The U.S. must stand up against religious, ethnic and gender-based persecution, uphold our country's tradition of welcoming vulnerable populations, and increase the number of Syrian refugees we help provide opportunities for new lives through the U.S. refugee resettlement program. I'm grateful that the U.S. has supported the U.N. Refugee Agency's global appeal, and urge you to support continued funding to help alleviate suffering due to the conflict."

For additional information, contact:

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