



The Council for Global Equality Slams Trump Administration's Callous Refugee Admissions Cap and Calls for the Protection of LGBTQI+ Refugees

October 31, 2025

Washington, DC - In response to the publication of the White House's [Presidential Determination](#) on refugee admissions for Fiscal Year 2026 (PD) in the Federal Register, the Council for Global Equality - alongside several member organizations, including Human Rights First, Immigration Equality, and the Organization for Refuge, Asylum, and Migration (ORAM) - decried the refugee admissions goal and its life-threatening impacts for LGBTQI+ refugees awaiting resettlement to the United States. The PD, which is set at a historic low of 7,500 individuals, prioritizes white South Africans (Afrikaners) and "victims of illegal or unjust discrimination" – the Trump administration's catch phrase to offer protection to far-right extremists – in a blatant attempt to politicize the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, erode our nation's legal obligations, and reject our historical commitments to the most vulnerable.

This announcement comes on top of the Trump administration's already devastating freeze of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program in effect since January 27, 2025. A [report released in June](#) by Immigration Equality, Human Rights First, the Council for Global Equality, the Organization for Refuge, Asylum, and Migration (ORAM), and Rainbow Railroad, details how the suspension of the refugee admissions program has already left LGBTQI+ refugees facing dire and escalating dangers. One lesbian couple from Afghanistan has been left in limbo in Pakistan, a country where consensual, same-sex sexual activity is illegal, due to the suspension of the refugee resettlement program. The couple remains at constant risk of deportation back to life-threatening danger. Camilla, a transgender Somali woman who was awaiting resettlement to the United States, was brutally murdered in Kenya in early 2025 following the freeze. With the new refugee admissions cap, many other LGBTQI+ refugees who have fled persecution and violence will continue to face uncertainty in precarious and unsafe conditions.

"Rather than resettling those fleeing persecution and living in the most dangerous situations, the White House is instead choosing to play politics with the lives of the most vulnerable, including LGBTQI+ refugees," said **Mark Bromley, Co-Chair of the Council for Global Equality**. "This unconscionably low cap is just the latest example of the Trump administration's racist and xenophobic policies meant to gut the U.S. refugee system and harm marginalized communities. Undoubtedly, the Trump administration's actions will be a death sentence for many LGBTQI+ refugees awaiting resettlement that continue to face violence, detention, and death simply for

who they are and whom they love. We urge Congress to maintain longstanding U.S. commitments to refugees and call on other governments around the world to immediately open additional pathways to resettlement for LGBTQI+ refugees.”

“This presidential determination is a national disgrace and yet another new low for this administration,” said **Uzra Zeya, President and CEO of Human Rights First**. “It endangers the lives of refugees in dire need of resettlement around the world. All too often LGBTQI people who escape persecution in their home countries are targeted again in neighboring countries. The lives of real people are on the line. Members of Congress must demand that the administration restore this vital lifeline.”

“The Trump administration’s decision to put a cap of only 7,500 refugees *for the year* will have mortal consequences for thousands of LGBTQI+ refugees,” said **Aaron C. Morris, Executive Director of Immigration Equality**. “LGBTQI+ refugees are often forced to live in nations where they are arrested, harmed, or killed for being who they are. They urgently need a pathway to safety right now. The United States should be a beacon of hope for LGBTQI+ people, not a nation that tolerates oppression. In the past, the U.S. has agreed to resettle up to 125,000 refugees in a single year. Dropping that number to such a small fraction is shameful. Congress must act immediately to insist that the cap be substantially increased.”

“The Trump administration’s decision to slash the U.S. refugee admissions ceiling to just 7,500 is not only a moral failure—it’s a deliberate abandonment of the world’s most vulnerable. For LGBTQI refugees fleeing persecution, violence and even death, this isn’t an abstract policy change but a life-and-death crisis,” said **Steve Roth, Executive Director of ORAM**. “This cynical approach not only betrays the promise of the U.S. refugee program but stains the country’s identity as a haven of safety. ORAM stands together with its partners in the Council for Global Equality in condemning this decision and calling on the United States to immediately restore a resettlement ceiling that reflects both our values and the global imperative for protection of the most vulnerable.”

The Council for Global Equality is a coalition of 45 prominent U.S.-based organizations, each standing at the intersection of human rights and LGBTQI+ equality in the United States and overseas.

***For press inquiries, please contact Matthew Bocanumenth at matthew@globalequality.org.**