



United States Mission to the OSCE

On World Refugee Day

As delivered by Chargé d’Affaires, a.i., James E. Donegan
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 24, 2021

World Refugee Day presents an opportunity to recognize the courage and resilience of the millions of refugees who have been forced to flee their homes, the generosity of the communities that host them, and the united global response of humanitarian partners that help them. We mark today with news that the immense global forced displacement crisis has reached a disturbing new high, affecting more than 82 million people who are forcibly displaced, including more than 26 million refugees. These figures and the UN Refugee Agency’s theme for this year’s World Refugee Day, “Together we heal, learn, and shine,” are calls to action for all countries to ensure refugees have access to protection, life-saving care, and opportunities to learn so they can thrive in their host communities.

The United States is once again taking up the mantle of leadership on refugee resettlement, including through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, which has welcomed more than 3.1 million refugees since 1980. We have already taken the critical steps of raising the annual refugee admissions target to 62,500 for Fiscal Year 2021 and restoring regional allocations for resettlement to ensure that access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program is based on refugees’ vulnerability, responds to the emergency need for resettlement across all regions of the world, and reflects the American tradition of welcoming refugees. The Biden-Harris Administration is putting America’s highest values at the center of our foreign policy and offering reassurance to persecuted people for whom permanent resettlement is needed.

The United States will maintain our diplomatic efforts to promote access to international protection for people in vulnerable situations regardless of their location. We will be a reliable partner to all parties seeking to end conflicts or address other drivers of forced displacement and instability in the interest of creating the conditions for people to prosper instead of fleeing for their lives.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

###