

# ENSURE PROTECTIONS FOR AFGHANS SEEKING SAFETY IN THE UNITED STATES

Amnesty International is working to ensure protections for Afghans seeking safety in the United States.

Tens of thousands of Afghans have arrived to the United States to seek safety. We must welcome our Afghan neighbors with dignity into our communities and ensure that all Afghans have the ability to resettle and thrive in their new communities.

The majority of arriving Afghans have entered through a process called humanitarian parole. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has the authority to use this process to allow people outside the United States to enter for humanitarian reasons, but it is typically only granted for 1 or 2 years to provide safety for people under threat.

Humanitarian parole, however, does not grant people a way to stay here permanently or have access to critical refugee resettlement benefits such as refugee medical assistance, English-language classes, housing assistance, job training, and helping children enroll in school.

Afghans on humanitarian parole must then either leave the country at the end of their parole period or regularize their immigration status in order to stay, such as applying for a visa, seeking asylum, or obtaining citizenship. This process is particularly challenging since many Afghans had to destroy their documentation that would be used as supporting evidence for their asylum or refugee claims, so they are at real risk of losing their ability to stay in the United States permanently.

## WHAT IS AIUSA ASKING CONGRESS TO DO

There is urgent need for additional resources and authorization to resettle the tens of thousands of our Afghan neighbors arriving to the United States, including authorizing funding and a roadmap for those being paroled into the United States.

Specifically, Congress must:

- **Pass legislation to ensure that all arriving Afghans have access to refugee resettlement benefits, including those who are arriving on humanitarian parole.** Congressional

reauthorization is needed to ensure all Afghan parolees have access to the same resettlement services as refugees who are resettled through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). Resettlement services include medical assistance, English-language classes, housing assistance, job training, and helping children enroll in school;

- **Pass legislation to establish a roadmap to citizenship for arriving Afghans to ensure that all those seeking safety in the United States have the ability to adjust their status to stay long-term.** This is a critical need as many Afghans were advised to destroy documents associating them to the U.S. mission, their human rights work, and other information that would otherwise be used as evidence to pursue an asylum claim; and
- **Pass robust appropriations to fund these efforts including:**
  - The Office of Refugee Resettlement within the Department of Health and Human Services for states and localities to welcome and support refugees;
  - The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration within the Department of State for both overseas and domestic reception and placement (R&P) programs;
  - United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) within DHS to address the refugee and asylum backlog – and to help process parole renewals and applications for Afghans to regularize their immigration status; and
  - Legal support within the Department of Justice to provide legal support for arriving Afghans.

## CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ADVOCACY LEAD ON THIS ISSUE

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