

PROPOSED REFUGEE ADMISSIONS
for
FISCAL YEAR 2008

REPORT TO THE CONGRESS

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
TO THE
COMMITTEES ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE
AND
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
SECTION 207(e) (1)-(7)
OF THE
IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT

United States Department of State
United States Department of Homeland Security
United States Department of Health and Human Services



INTRODUCTION

This *Proposed Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2008: Report to the Congress* is submitted in compliance with Section 207(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). The Act requires that before the start of the fiscal year and, to the extent possible, at least two weeks prior to consultations on refugee admissions, members of the Committees on the Judiciary of the Senate and the House of Representatives be provided with the following information:

- (1) A description of the nature of the refugee situation;
- (2) A description of the number and allocation of the refugees to be admitted and an analysis of conditions within the countries from which they came;
- (3) A description of the plans for their movement and resettlement and the estimated cost of their movement and resettlement;
- (4) An analysis of the anticipated social, economic, and demographic impact of their admission to the United States;¹
- (5) A description of the extent to which other countries will admit and assist in the resettlement of such refugees;
- (6) An analysis of the impact of the participation of the United States in the resettlement of such refugees on the foreign policy interests of the United States; and
- (7) Such additional information as may be appropriate or requested by such members.

In addition, specific reporting required by Section 602(d) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-292, October 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2787) (IRFA) on information about religious persecution of refugee populations eligible for consideration for admission to the United States and Section 305(b) of the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-333, October 18, 2004, 118 Stat. 1287) on information about specific measures taken to facilitate

¹ Detailed discussion of the anticipated social and economic impact, including secondary migration, of the admission of refugees to the United States is being provided in the *Report to the Congress* of the Refugee Resettlement Program, Office of Refugee Resettlement, Department of Health and Human Services.

access to the United States refugee program for individuals who have fled countries of particular concern for violations of religious freedoms, identified pursuant to Section 402(b) of the IRFA, is included in this report.

FOREWORD

The United States Refugee Admissions Program is a critical humanitarian undertaking that demonstrates the compassion of Americans for the world's most vulnerable people. It is also a foreign policy tool permitting us to help refugees who have been persecuted or fear persecution and require resettlement as a durable solution. In recent years under this program, the United States has admitted refugees of over 60 nationalities and conducted processing in over 40, often remote, locations worldwide. The program is more geographically diverse and operationally complicated than ever before. We continue to identify ways to make the U.S. resettlement program more responsive to varied and shifting worldwide refugee circumstances. While the program is subject to many unexpected roadblocks and political challenges, it offers unparalleled opportunities for saving lives, reuniting families, and ending protracted refugee situations.

During FY 2007, the Administration had significant success in putting in place a system that supports both our traditional humanitarian values and ensures that our homeland security will not be compromised in executing the U.S. resettlement program. It was determined that the admission into the United States of refugees who had provided material support to certain organizations engaged in conflicts with repressive regimes or who were innocent victims compelled under duress to provide support to terrorist organizations was in the foreign policy interests of the United States and would not compromise our national security. With the Secretary of State and Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with each other and the Attorney General, exercising their separate authorities to render the material support inadmissibility provision inapplicable, over 2,500 refugees who would have been forced otherwise to remain in refugee camps or survive under similar precarious circumstances have been approved to enter the United States and begin their lives anew. The Administration has proposed legislation to expand this discretionary authority to allow the admission of members of certain organizations engaged in conflict with repressive regimes where that would serve our national interests and not compromise homeland security.

We begin FY 2008 with new opportunities to move forward proactively in resolving some of the most protracted global refugee situations. We will resettle large numbers of Burmese and Bhutanese refugees, most of whom have been trapped in camps and despair for over 15 years. Significantly, the agreement by the Government of Nepal to allow third-country resettlement for Bhutanese refugees comes after more than a decade of diplomatic efforts.

In the 18 months since the President submitted the FY 2008 budget request, large numbers of Iraqis have continued to leave their homeland, with most going to Syria and Jordan. Some displaced Iraqis have been targeted as a result of their association with the U.S. military, civilian agencies, U.S. companies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Because of our strong commitment to offer them assistance and refuge, the Administration has substantially built up its Iraqi refugee processing activities in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey. Within four months of offering expanded access to our program, the first of these Iraqi refugees arrived in the United States in June 2007. Several thousand are projected to arrive in the coming months. The UNHCR has referred over 9,000 Iraqis as of the time of this writing and will continue to refer thousands of Iraqis to the U.S. program during the next year. We are also receiving referrals of Iraqi cases from embassies and NGOs. Thus we are planning a substantial increase in our Iraq program during FY 2008.

There is also significant potential for expanded resettlement of other refugees in other processing locations, including Austria, Chad, Cuba, and Sudan. We propose to admit the full number of refugees within each geographic region to maximize arrivals as much as possible.

The President's budget requests funding for 70,000 refugees to be admitted to the United States in FY 2008. This proposal includes an unallocated reserve for 10,000 additional refugee admissions from any region of the world to reflect our intention to expand our capacity so as to be able to resettle larger numbers in future years. Should admissions processing proceed at a pace that would allow us to exceed 70,000 this year, funding necessary to support the extra numbers up to 10,000 would be identified within the FY 2008 enacted levels for the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA), Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) accounts, or other enacted foreign assistance levels as determined by the Secretary of State.

In the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, there are always unexpected operational challenges, including outbreaks of communicable diseases, political instability, obstacles placed by other governments to the entry of our personnel, and exit permit problems. We recognize that the program must be flexible and proactive to overcome such challenges. To this end, we plan to go into the fiscal year with an aggressive operational plan so that many refugees would be able to arrive as early as possible in the year. Our plan will also include measures to develop greater operational capacity within all components of the U.S. Refugee

Admissions Program in support of more than 70,000 admissions in FY 2008 and beyond.

We also plan in FY 2008 to continue to put more emphasis on the development of Priority 2 groups for processing. In many instances, the work leading up to the designation of a group under Priority 2 takes a year or more, necessitating advance planning to ensure that the population can be admitted in future years. In recent years, we have enjoyed excellent collaboration with UNHCR in a targeted funding program to support UNHCR's capacity to identify and refer cases to the U.S. program. The Priority 2 designations covering ethnic minority refugees from Burma in effect in Thailand and Malaysia, and the recently completed Priority 2 designation for the Bhutanese in Nepal are several examples of the superb results of this collaboration. Looking ahead, we will continue to work closely with UNHCR and other partners to begin to address the needs of other refugee groups around the world, such as the Darfurian population in Chad.

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program enjoys broad support from U.S. citizens and Congress because it is a life-saving program that creates great opportunities for refugees to renew their lives and futures in the United States. The refugees who are admitted, the communities that welcome them, and the international and non-governmental organizations supporting their resettlement and integration recognize the benefits of resettlement to the refugees, their communities, and our country.

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I. OVERVIEW OF U.S. REFUGEE POLICY

By the end of 2006, the estimated refugee population worldwide had increased to 14.3 million, with nearly 10 million under the care of the UNHCR. This increase reverses a downward trend in global refugee numbers, which in 2005 had reached their lowest level in 25 years at 12.8 million. Previous declines had resulted in large part from the achievement of durable solutions – voluntary return, local integration, or third-country resettlement – in which the United States has played a leadership role within the international community. The United States actively supports all efforts to provide protection, assistance, and durable solutions to refugees, as these are important foreign policy goals of the United States. Combined with humanitarian diplomacy, U.S. financial contributions to international and non-governmental organizations are vital to achieving these goals. Under the authority in the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as amended, the United States contributes to the programs of the office of UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and other international and non-governmental organizations that provide protection and assistance to refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and victims of conflict. These contributions address the legal and physical protection needs of refugees as well as their basic assistance needs for water, sanitation, food, health care, shelter, education, and other services. The United States monitors these programs to ensure the most effective use of resources, maximizing our humanitarian impact for the benefit of refugees and IDPs.

During FY 2007, the United States has continued to support the achievement of durable solutions for refugees through voluntary repatriation programs around the world. In seeking durable solutions for refugees, the United States and UNHCR recognize that for many refugees safe voluntary return to their homelands is preferable. The United States and UNHCR also recognize resettlement in third countries as a vital tool to provide protection and a durable solution. Local integration in countries of asylum can also provide a durable solution for many who cannot return to their homes. Refugee repatriation operations to countries including

Afghanistan, Liberia, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Sudan have proceeded on a significant scale during FY 2007, representing significant progress in the protection of individuals and families, as well as in their home countries' reconstruction and development.

Where peace and opportunities for return remain elusive, the United States pursues local integration. The Department of State works diplomatically to encourage host governments to uphold their responsibilities to protect refugees and IDPs through local integration and provides assistance to meet these humanitarian needs. Somali refugees in Ethiopia, Burundians in Tanzania, and Afghans in Pakistan are among those populations for whom we pursue and support opportunities for local integration.

UNHCR estimates that over 15 million people worldwide are not recognized as nationals by any state and are therefore legally or *de facto* stateless. Without citizenship in any country, many exist in refugee-like situations, unable to claim rights and denied even the most basic protections of law. The United States has supported UNHCR's efforts to achieve solutions for stateless persons, including addressing gaps in citizenship laws and promoting fair application of those laws.

Resettlement to third countries, including the United States, is considered for refugees in urgent need of protection as well as for those for whom other durable solutions are not feasible. For some refugees, resettlement is the best, or perhaps only, alternative. The United States also encourages UNHCR to refer for resettlement stateless individuals and groups for whom other durable solutions are not possible, even if they are located in their country of habitual residence.

Recognizing the importance of ensuring UNHCR's capacity to identify and to refer refugees in need of resettlement, the U.S. government has provided financial support to expand and improve the organization's resettlement infrastructure over the past eight years. As a result of this initiative, UNHCR has boosted referrals to the U.S. resettlement program by thousands each year.

The United States has also supported UNHCR's efforts to expand the number of countries active in resettlement and engaged bilaterally on the issue. In 2007, UNHCR referred refugees to 20 countries for resettlement.

The majority (86 percent) were referred to the United States, Canada, and Australia. Smaller numbers of referrals were accepted by New Zealand, Chile, Brazil, and the traditional Western European resettlement countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Ireland). In addition, Argentina, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, France, Germany, and Italy each accepted some refugees.

While the overall number of refugees referred by UNHCR and the percentage resettled by various countries fluctuate from year to year, the United States aims to provide U.S. resettlement consideration to at least 50 percent of all UNHCR referrals, depending on availability of funds. We encourage UNHCR to make further strategic use of resettlement and to expand the number of referrals it makes annually. In calendar year 2006, the United States resettled some 49 percent of the total number of UNHCR-referred refugees resettled in third countries (see Table IX).

The overall foreign policy interests of the United States are often advanced by our willingness to work with first-asylum and -resettlement countries to address refugee issues. In some locations, the prompt resettlement of politically sensitive cases has helped defuse regional tensions. During the past few years, U.S. resettlement efforts in Africa, the Middle East, and East Asia have helped energize efforts by UNHCR and other countries to ensure that resettlement is accorded to those in need and that first asylum is maintained for the larger population.

During its 27-year history, the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program has responded to changing refugee circumstances. Even before the events of September 11, 2001, the end of the Cold War had dramatically altered the context in which the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program operates worldwide. Having shifted its focus away from large groups concentrated in a few locations, primarily refugees from Vietnam, the former Soviet Union, and the former Yugoslavia, the program began to offer resettlement to refugees of 50-60 nationalities per year, conducting interviews in often remote locations. The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program has continued to work to balance humanitarian commitments and national security concerns following the events of September 11, 2001.

Refugees resettled in the United States contribute positively to the diversity and enrichment of our country. The U.S. program emphasizes the goal that refugees become economically self-sufficient as quickly as

possible. Department of Health and Human Services-funded programs administered by individual states and the District of Columbia provide cash and medical assistance, training programs, employment, and other support services to arriving refugees. A variety of institutional providers perform these services, including the voluntary agencies that provide initial reception and placement services under cooperative agreements with the Department of State.

The Department of State works domestically with agencies participating in the Reception and Placement (R&P) program to ensure that they are able to provide services according to established standards. A significant proportion of arriving refugees do not have close family members living in the United States to help with their adjustment and integration. Refugees are increasingly diverse linguistically, with wide-ranging educational and employment histories. The shortage of available affordable housing, particularly in urban areas, continues. All of these factors challenge the resettlement agencies to adjust their practices to meet the needs of refugees in the program continually.

II. REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM FOR FY 2008

PROPOSED CEILINGS

TABLE I
REFUGEE ADMISSIONS IN FY 2006 AND FY 2007,
PROPOSED REFUGEE ADMISSIONS BY REGION FOR FY 2008

REGION	FY 2006 ACTUAL ARRIVALS	FY 2007 CEILING	FY 2007 REVISED CEILING	FY 2007 PROJECTED ARRIVALS	PROPOSED FY 2008 CEILING
Africa	18,182	22,000	22,000	16,500	16,000
East Asia	5,659	11,000	16,000*	16,200	20,000
Europe and Central Asia	10,455	6,500	6,500	5,500	3,000
Latin America/Caribbean	3,256	5,000	5,000	3,000	3,000
Near East/South Asia	3,725	5,500	9,000*	8,800	28,000
Regional Subtotal	41,277	50,000	58,500	50,000	70,000
Unallocated Reserve		20,000	11,500		10,000
Total	41,277	70,000	70,000	50,000	80,000

* A total of 8,500 numbers from the Unallocated Reserve was allocated as follows during the fourth quarter of FY 2007: 5,000 to East Asia and 3,500 to Near East/South Asia, because refugee arrivals from these regions were projected to exceed the original ceilings.

In addition to the proposed regional allocations, the President specifies that special circumstances exist so that, for the purpose of admission under allocations established above and pursuant to INA § 101(a)(42)(B), certain persons, if they otherwise qualify for admission, may be considered as refugees of special humanitarian concern to the United States although they are within their countries of nationality or, in the case of persons having no nationality, within the country in which such persons are habitually residing. The FY 2008 proposal recommends continuing such in-country processing for specified groups in Cuba, Vietnam, and the countries of the former Soviet Union, stateless individuals referred by UNHCR, as well as for individual protection cases for whom resettlement is requested by a U.S. ambassador in any location in the world, with the understanding that individuals will only be referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program following consultation with DHS/USCIS.

Unallocated Reserve

The President's FY 2008 budget proposal would support 70,000 arrivals. The ultimate need may be much greater than the 70,000 ceiling would accommodate in FY 2008. This proposal includes 10,000 unallocated additional admissions numbers to be used if needed for additional refugee admissions from any region. Provided that admissions processing proceeds at a pace to reach 80,000, the funding necessary to support the extra 10,000 would be identified within the FY 2008 enacted levels for the MRA, and ERMA accounts, or other enacted foreign assistance levels as determined by the Secretary of State. The unallocated numbers would only be used following notification to Congress.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

Eligibility Criteria

The Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) is responsible for coordinating and managing the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. A critical part of this responsibility is determining which individuals or groups from among the millions of “refugees” worldwide will have access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, thereby allowing them to apply for refugee resettlement in the United States. PRM coordinates within the Department of State, as well as with the Department of Homeland Security U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (DHS/USCIS) and other agencies in carrying out this responsibility.

Section 207(a)(3) of the INA states that the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program shall allocate admissions among refugees “...of special humanitarian concern to the United States in accordance with a determination made by the President after appropriate consultation.” Which individuals are “of special humanitarian concern” to the United States for the purpose of refugee resettlement consideration is determined through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program priority system. There are currently three priorities or categories of cases that have access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program:

- Priority 1 – Individual cases referred to the program by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement;
- Priority 2 – Groups of cases designated as having access to the program by virtue of their circumstances and apparent need for resettlement;
- Priority 3 – Individual cases from eligible nationalities granted access for purposes of family reunification.

(Note: Refugees resettled in the United States may also seek reunification in the United States with immediate family members abroad by filing a “Following to Join” petition which obviates the need for separate refugee claim adjudication. This option is described in more detail in the discussion of Visas 93 below.)

Access to the program under one of the above-listed processing priorities does not mean an applicant meets the U.S. statutory “refugee” definition or is admissible to the United States. The ultimate determination as to whether an applicant can be admitted as a refugee is made by DHS/USCIS in accordance with criteria set forth in the INA. Applicants who are eligible for access within the established priorities are presented to DHS/USCIS officers for an interview.

Although the access categories to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program are referred to as “processing priorities,” it is important to note that assignment to a certain priority does not necessarily establish precedence in the order in which cases will be processed. Once cases are established as eligible for access under one of the three processing priorities, they all undergo the same processing steps.

Priority 1 – Individual Referrals

Priority 1 allows consideration of refugee claims from persons of any nationality², in any location, for whom resettlement appears to be the appropriate durable solution. Priority 1 cases are identified and referred to the program by UNHCR, a U.S. embassy, or a designated NGO. UNHCR, which has the international mandate worldwide to provide protection to refugees, has historically referred the vast majority of cases under this priority. NGOs providing humanitarian assistance in locations where there are large concentrations of refugees may also undergo training by PRM in order to be eligible to provide Priority 1 referrals.

Process for Priority 1 Individual Referral Applications

Priority 1 referrals from UNHCR and NGOs are generally submitted to the appropriate Regional Refugee Coordinator, who reviews the submissions for completeness and to determine whether they meet the standard of being of special humanitarian concern to the United States. If they meet this requirement, the Refugee Coordinator then forwards them to the appropriate Overseas Processing Entity (OPE) for case processing and scheduling of the DHS/USCIS interview.

² Referrals of North Koreans and Palestinians require State Department and DHS concurrence before they are accepted for access.

PRM's Office of Admissions reviews embassy referrals for completeness and to ensure that the cases are of special humanitarian concern to the United States and may consult with DHS in considering these referrals.

A U.S. ambassador may make a Priority 1 referral for individuals still in their country of origin if the ambassador determines that a case meets the general referral criteria. Such an in-country Embassy referral can be made with the understanding that Significant Public Benefit Parole (SPBP – a program administered by the Department of Homeland Security) may be a more appropriate option in most cases.

Priority 2 – Group Referrals

Priority 2 includes specific groups (within certain nationalities, clans or ethnic groups, sometimes in specified locations) identified by the Department of State in consultation with DHS/USCIS, NGOs, UNHCR, and other experts as in need of resettlement. Some Priority 2 groups are processed in their country of origin. The process of identifying the group and its characteristics includes consideration of whether the group is of special humanitarian concern to the United States and whether members of the group will likely to be able to be admitted as refugees under U.S. law. Groups may be designated as Priority 2 during the course of the year as circumstances dictate and the need for resettlement arises.

Priority 2 group referrals are typically developed with the involvement of UNHCR, Refugee Coordinators, NGOs, PRM program officers, or other State Department officials. PRM plays the coordinating role for all group referrals to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. There is no minimum or maximum number of applicants required for a group referral.

There are two distinct models of Priority 2 access to the program: open access and predefined group access. Under both models, Priority 2 designations are made based on shared characteristics that define the group. In general, the possession of these characteristics is the reason the group has been persecuted in the past or faces persecution in the future.

The open-access model for Priority 2 group referrals allows individuals to seek access to the program on the basis of meeting designated

criteria. To establish an open-access Priority 2 group, PRM, in consultation as appropriate with UNHCR, DHS/USCIS, and others, defines the specific criteria for access. Once the designation is in place, applicants may approach the program at any of the processing locations specified as available for the group to begin the application process. Applicants must demonstrate that they possess the required characteristic(s) to establish eligibility for inclusion.

The open-access model has functioned well in the in-country programs including the long-standing programs in the former Soviet Union, Cuba, and Vietnam. It was also used successfully for Bosnian refugees during the 1990s and is now in use for Iranian religious minorities.

The OPE(s) responsible for handling open-access Priority 2 applications, working under the direction of PRM, make a preliminary determination as to whether the applicants qualify for access and should be presented to DHS/USCIS for interview. Applicants who clearly do not meet the access requirements are “screened out” prior to DHS/USCIS interview.

A predefined group is clearly identified both in number and location and linked to a specific list of eligible refugee applicants. Once PRM has established the access eligibility criteria for the group, the referring entity provides a list of eligible refugee applicants for processing. This type of group referral is advantageous in situations in which the intensive labor required to generate individual referrals would be impracticable, potentially harmful, or counterproductive. Often predefined groups are composed of persons with similar persecution claims. The predefined group referral process is a step-saver and can conserve scarce resources, particularly for UNHCR. Predefined group referrals with clear, well-defined eligibility criteria and several methods for crosschecking group membership can serve as a fraud deterrent as well, preventing non-group members from gaining access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program by fraudulently claiming group membership after the membership has been set. It can also speed the resettlement process in cases where immediate protection concerns are present.

FY 2008 Priority 2 Designations

In-country processing programs

The following ongoing programs that process individuals still in their country of origin under Priority 2 group designations will continue in FY 2008:

Former Soviet Union

This Priority 2 designation applies to Jews, Evangelical Christians, and Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox religious activists identified in the Lautenberg Amendment, Public Law No. 101-167, § 599D, 103 Stat. 1261 (1989), as amended (“Lautenberg Amendment”), with close family in the United States.

Cuba

Included in this Priority 2 program are human rights activists, members of persecuted religious minorities, former political prisoners, forced-labor conscripts (1965-68), persons deprived of their professional credentials or subjected to other disproportionately harsh or discriminatory treatment resulting from their perceived or actual political or religious beliefs or activities, and persons who have experienced or fear harm because of their relationship – family or social – to someone who falls under one of the preceding categories.

Vietnam

This Priority 2 designation includes the few remaining active cases eligible under the former Orderly Departure Program (ODP) and Resettlement Opportunity for Vietnamese Returnees (ROVR) programs. In addition, it includes the Humanitarian Resettlement initiative opened during FY 2006 to permit consideration of individuals who, due to no fault of their own, were unable to access the ODP program prior to its cut-off date. It also includes Amerasian immigrants, whose numbers are counted as refugee admissions.

Groups of Humanitarian Concern outside the Country of Origin

The following Priority 2 groups are already designated and, in most cases, undergoing processing with significant arrivals anticipated

during FY 2008. (Additional Priority 2 groups may be designated over the course of the year.)

Ethnic Minorities and others from Burma in camps in Thailand

Under this existing Priority 2 designation, individuals who have fled Burma and who are registered in nine refugee camps along the Thai/Burma border and who are identified by UNHCR as in need of resettlement are eligible for processing.

Ethnic Minorities and others from Burma in Malaysia

Under this existing Priority 2 designation, individuals who have fled Burma and who are recognized by UNHCR as refugees in Malaysia and identified as in need of resettlement are eligible for processing.

Burundians in Tanzania

Under this existing Priority 2 designation, UNHCR-identified Burundian refugees who originally fled Burundi in 1972 and who have no possibility either to settle permanently in Tanzania or return to Burundi are eligible for processing.

Bhutanese in Nepal

Under this existing Priority 2 designation, Bhutanese refugees registered by UNHCR in the recent census and identified as in need of resettlement are eligible for processing.

Iranian Religious Minorities

Under this existing Priority 2 designation, Iranian members of certain religious minorities are eligible for processing.

Sudanese Darfurians in Iraq

Under this recent Priority 2 designation, Sudanese Darfurians living in a refugee camp in Anbar Governorate in Iraq would be eligible for processing if a suitable location can be identified.

Priority 3 – Family Reunification

The Priority 3 category is family-based and only open to designated nationalities. At the beginning of each fiscal year, PRM, in consultation with DHS/USCIS, establishes the list of nationalities eligible for processing under this priority. The list may be modified by the PRM Assistant

Secretary at any time, but additions or deletions are generally made to coincide with the fiscal year.

Fundamentally, inclusion on the Priority 3 list represents a finding by PRM that the nationality is of special humanitarian concern to the United States for the purpose of family-reunification refugee processing. Eligible nationalities are selected following careful review of several factors. UNHCR's annual assessment of refugees in need of resettlement provides insight into ongoing refugee situations which could create the need for family-reunification processing. In addition, prospective or ongoing repatriation efforts and U.S. foreign policy interests must be weighed in determining which nationalities should be eligible.

To qualify for access under Priority 3, an applicant must be outside of his or her country of origin, have an Affidavit of Relationship (AOR) filed on his or her behalf by an eligible "anchor" relative in the United States during a period in which the nationality was included on the eligibility list, and be cleared for onward processing by the DHS/USCIS Refugee Access Verification Unit (RAVU).

The following relatives of the U.S.-based anchor are eligible for inclusion on the case: spouses, unmarried children under 21, or parents. Qualifying anchors are persons who were admitted to the United States as refugees or were granted asylum, including persons who are lawful permanent residents or U.S. citizens who were initially admitted to the United States as refugees or were granted asylum.

FY 2008 Priority 3 Nationalities

Nationalities identified for eligibility in FY 2008 are listed below.

- Afghanistan
- Burma
- Burundi
- Colombia
- Congo (Brazzaville)
- Cuba
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)
- Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
- Eritrea

Ethiopia
Haiti
Iran
Iraq
Rwanda
Somalia
Sudan
Uzbekistan

Visas 93 – Family Reunification Following-to-Join Petitions

Under 8 CFR Section 207, a refugee admitted to the United States may request following-to-join benefits for his or her spouse and unmarried children under the age of 21 if the family has become separated. Once in the United States and within two years of admission, the refugee may file an I-730 Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition³ for each eligible family member with the DHS/USCIS. If the I-730 is approved by DHS/USCIS (signifying adequate proof of a qualifying family relationship), the petition is then forwarded for processing to the embassy or consulate nearest to the location of the beneficiaries of the petition by the National Visa Center. (Note: In locations where the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program has a significant processing operation, these cases are often processed by the OPE rather than the consular section within the embassy.)

Cases gaining access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program through an approved I-730 petition are interviewed by DHS/USCIS or consular officers to verify the relationships claimed in the petition, as well as examine any applicable bars to status and admissibility to the United States. These interviews are not refugee adjudications. The applicants are not required to demonstrate a persecution claim, as they derive their status from the refugee (or asylee) relative in the United States who filed the petition. Beneficiaries of I-730 petitions may be processed within their country of origin or in other locations.

³ This petition is used to file for the relatives of refugees and asylees – known as Visas 93 and Visas 92 cases respectively. The Refugee Admissions Program handles only Visas 93 cases, which are counted within the annual refugee admissions ceiling. Visas 92 cases are not considered to be refugee admissions cases and are not counted in the number of refugees admitted annually.

Anchor relatives in the United States may file an I-730 Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition and seek Priority 3 access (if eligible) simultaneously. In some cases, the I-730 will be the only option as the family members are still in their country of origin. It is also important to note that the I-730 or “follow-to-join” process is more limited than Priority 3 in that it does not allow the relative in the United States to petition for parents.

DHS/USCIS REFUGEE ADJUDICATIONS

Section 207(c) of the INA grants the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) authority to admit, at his/her discretion, any refugee who is not firmly resettled in a third country, who is determined to be of special humanitarian concern, and who is admissible to the United States. The authority to determine eligibility for refugee status has been delegated to DHS/USCIS. Beginning in FY 2006, DHS/USCIS restructured the Refugee Affairs Division and established the Refugee Corps. The Refugee Corps is staffed by DHS/USCIS officers dedicated to adjudicating applications for refugee status. The Refugee Corps provides DHS/USCIS with the necessary resources and flexibility to respond to an increasingly diversified refugee admissions program. DHS/USCIS has also substantially enhanced its anti-fraud training and policy-setting capacity related to refugee processing.

The Eligibility Determination

In order to be approved as a refugee, an applicant must establish that he or she has suffered past persecution or has a well-founded fear of future persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, as specified in INA § 101(a)(42). A person who has ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion is, by definition, not a refugee. Likewise, an applicant who has been “firmly resettled” in a third country may not be admitted under INA § 207, and applicants are subject to various statutory grounds of inadmissibility, including criminal, security, and public health grounds, some of which may be waived.

A DHS/USCIS officer conducts a face-to-face interview of each applicant in a non-adversarial manner designed to elicit information about the applicant's claim for refugee status and any grounds of ineligibility. The officer asks questions about the applicant's experiences in the country of origin, including problems and fears about returning (or remaining), as well as questions concerning the applicant's activities, background and criminal history. Background information concerning conditions in the country of origin is considered, and the applicant's credibility and claim are assessed.

PROCESSING ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Overseas Processing Services

In most processing locations, PRM engages an NGO, an international organization (IO), or U.S. embassy contractors to manage an OPE to assist in the processing of refugees for admission to the United States. OPE staffs pre-screen applicants to determine preliminarily if they qualify for one of the applicable processing priorities and to prepare cases for DHS/USCIS adjudication. The OPEs assist applicants in completing documentary requirements and schedule DHS/USCIS refugee interviews. If an applicant is approved for resettlement, OPE staff guide the refugee through post-adjudication steps, including obtaining medical screening exams and attending cultural orientation programs. The OPE obtains sponsorship assurances and, once all required steps are completed, refers the case to IOM for transportation to the United States.

In FY 2007, NGOs worked under cooperative agreements with PRM as OPEs at locations in Austria, Kenya (covering East Africa), Ghana (covering West Africa), and Thailand (covering East Asia). International organizations and NGOs (IOM and the International Catholic Migration Commission [ICMC]) support refugee processing activities in Egypt, Russia, and Turkey. The admissions program operates under "in-house" arrangements at U.S. government (USG) installations in Cuba and Vietnam. IOM will open a new regional OPE in Nepal in July 2007.

Cultural Orientation

The Department of State strives to ensure that refugees who are accepted for admission to the United States are prepared for the significant life changes they will experience by providing cultural orientation programs

prior to departure for the United States. It is critical that refugees arrive with a realistic view of what their new lives will be like, what services are available to them, and what their responsibilities will be.

Every refugee family receives *Welcome to the United States*, a resettlement guidebook developed with input from refugee resettlement workers, resettled refugees, and state government officials. *Welcome to the United States* is produced in 13 languages: Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, Farsi, French, Karen, Kirundi, Kiswahili, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Through this book, refugees have access to accurate information about the initial resettlement period before they arrive. The *Welcome to the United States* refugee orientation video has been translated into 14 languages: Af-Maay, Arabic, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, Farsi, French, Hmong, Karen, Kirundi, Kiswahili, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. In addition, the Department of State enters into cooperative agreements for one-to-three day pre-departure orientation classes for eligible refugees at sites throughout the world. In an effort to further bridge the information gap, for certain groups, brief video presentations featuring the experience of recently resettled refugees of the same ethnic group are made available to refugee applicants overseas.

Transportation

The Department of State funds the transportation of refugees resettled in the United States through a program administered by IOM. The cost of transportation is provided to refugees in the form of a loan. Refugees are responsible for repaying these costs over time, beginning six months after their arrival.

Reception and Placement (R&P)

PRM currently funds cooperative agreements with ten entities – nine private voluntary agencies and one state government agency – to provide initial resettlement services to arriving refugees. The R&P agencies agree to provide initial reception and core services (including housing, furnishings, clothing, food, and medical referrals) to arriving refugees. These services are now provided according to standards of care developed jointly by the NGO community and U.S. government agencies in FY 2001, and

implemented in FY 2002. The ten organizations maintain a nationwide network of some 370 affiliated offices to provide services.

Using R&P funds supplemented by cash and in-kind contributions from private and other sources, the R&P agreement obligates the participating agencies to provide the following services:

- Sponsorship;
- Pre-arrival resettlement planning, including placement;
- Reception on arrival;
- Basic needs support (including housing, furnishings, food, and clothing) for at least 30 days;
- Community orientation;
- Referrals to health, employment, and other services as needed; and
- Case management and tracking for 90-180 days.

Refugees may be lawfully employed upon arrival in the United States. After one year, a refugee is required to apply for adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident. Five years after admission, a refugee who has been granted lawful permanent resident status is eligible to apply for citizenship.

III. REGIONAL PROGRAMS

TABLE II
PROPOSED FY 2008 REGIONAL CEILINGS BY PRIORITY

<u>AFRICA</u>	
Approved pipeline from FY 2007	6,000
Priority 1 Individual Referrals	2,500
Priority 2 Groups	4,000
Priority 3 Family Reunification Refugees	3,500
	<u>Total Proposed: 16,000</u>
<u>EAST ASIA</u>	
Approved pipeline from FY 2007	1,000
Priority 1 Individual Referrals	500
Priority 2 Groups	18,400
Priority 3 Family Reunification Refugees	100
	<u>Total Proposed: 20,000</u>
<u>EUROPE / CENTRAL ASIA</u>	
Approved pipeline from FY 2007	1,000
Priority 1 Individual Referrals	150
Priority 2 Groups	1,800
Priority 3 Family Reunification Refugees	50
	<u>Total Proposed: 3,000</u>
<u>LATIN AMERICA / CARIBBEAN</u>	
Approved pipeline from FY 2007	1,500
Priority 1 Individual Referrals	100
Priority 2 Groups	1,350
Priority 3 Family Reunification Refugees	50
	<u>Total Proposed: 3,000</u>
<u>NEAR EAST / SOUTH ASIA</u>	
Approved pipeline from FY 2007	1,000
Priority 1 Individual Referrals	11,000
Priority 2 Groups	16,000
	<u>Total Proposed: 28,000</u>
<u>UNALLOCATED RESERVE</u>	10,000
	<u>TOTAL PROPOSED CEILING: 80,000</u>

In the following regional program overviews, a description of refugee conditions and religious freedom in each region is provided. In addition, prospects for voluntary repatriation, resettlement within the region, and third-country resettlement are discussed.

AFRICA

FY 2007 saw continued progress on several fronts for major refugee populations in Africa. A comprehensive peace agreement in Sudan and successful elections and new governments formed in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Liberia laid the groundwork for large-scale returns. In FY 2007, UN-organized repatriations were underway for refugees from Sudan, Burundi, and the DRC, and were completed in Liberia and Angola. At the same time, continuing violence in the Darfur region of Sudan, Somalia, eastern Chad, and the Central African Republic (CAR) has created new refugee flows or threatened refugees in their countries of first asylum. Smaller but significant numbers of Eritreans continue to seek asylum in neighboring countries due to political tensions and an onerous national service requirement. In Zimbabwe, a mix of government-sponsored political repression and a grave economic situation have led to increased migration and some limited refugee outflows as well.

The principle of first asylum is still honored by most African countries. Traditionally, refugees in Africa have been allowed to remain – and in many cases to integrate locally – until voluntary repatriation is possible. In most cases, however, this is *de facto* and not *de jure* local integration, and does not include granting of citizenship or voting rights. In addition, the African tradition of tolerance toward refugees has been challenged in recent years in countries that have hosted large numbers of refugees for decades, such as Tanzania and Kenya.

There are approximately three million refugees across the African continent, roughly 25 percent of the worldwide population of refugees.

Religious Freedom

In sub-Saharan Africa, people are typically free to practice their chosen religion. Governments generally provide for and respect freedom of religion, although in some countries religious freedom is limited, particularly in the midst of ethnic and other conflicts. The Government of Ethiopia has implemented policies that reflect traditional Christian and Muslim commitment to inter-religious harmony. The Government of Eritrea, however, has in recent years engaged in serious religious repression, harassing, arresting, and detaining members of independent evangelical groups (including Pentecostals), Jehovah's Witnesses, who lost certain basic

rights of citizenship for not participating in the 1993 national referendum, and a reform movement within the Eritrean Orthodox Church. It has also sought greater control over the four approved religious groups: the Eritrean Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church, and Islam. The government reportedly holds individuals who are jailed for their religious affiliation at various locations, including facilities administered by the military, as well as police stations inside Asmara and other cities, some in harsh conditions that include extreme temperature fluctuations. Often detainees have not been formally charged, accorded due process, or allowed access to their families. While many were ostensibly jailed for evasion of military conscription, significant numbers were being held solely for their religious beliefs.

In Sudan, regional distinctions in the constitution negotiated as part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) have resulted in disparities in the treatment of religious minorities in the north and south. Whereas the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) generally respects the rights of Christians and Muslims in the ten states of the south as provided for in its separate 2005 Constitution of Southern Sudan, the Government of National Unity (GNU) continues to place restrictions on Christians in the North. The Constitution preserves Shari'a as a source of legislation in the North, while the Constitution of Southern Sudan establishes "the traditional laws, religious beliefs, values, and customary practices of the people" as a source of legislation in the south.

In the north, obtaining permits to build new houses of worship remained a long and tortuous process for Christians, despite past improvements. In addition, the GNU pressured existing churches and Christian facilities in central Khartoum to move to less conspicuous locations on the outskirts of the capital. Most existing churches in the capital date from the colonial era and are located near the city center and cannot accommodate Christians who live in the IDP camps on the outskirts of Khartoum. Relatively few Christians have the time or means to travel over 20 miles to church during their two hours of "religious time" off from work on Sunday mornings. This policy not only limits the ability of Christians to practice their faith, but also enables the government to claim publicly that new churches are not needed because the existing ones are under-utilized.

There was some improvement in respect for religious freedom in the period covered by this report. The 2005 adoption of the Interim National Constitution and the Constitution of Southern Sudan continued to improve government and societal acceptance of minority religious groups in both the north and the south. In February 2007 the President established the Commission for the Rights of Non-Muslims in the National Capital, a CPA mechanism for protecting religious freedom, by appointing the commission's chairperson. Dialogue between Christian and Muslim groups continued under the auspices of the Sudan Inter-Religious Council, an NGO supported by the GNU and the Sudan Council of Churches.

Christian missionary activity is limited in the north due to Shari'a, strong social pressure against proselytizing, and existing laws against apostasy. The GNU promoted Islam through mandatory Islamic education for all students in the north, even non-Muslims enrolled in private Christian schools. The GOSS generally respected the rights of southerners to practice the religion of their choice, but some members of the Muslim community in Khartoum noted hindrances in the practice of Islam in some areas under GOSS control. Although there is no penalty for converting from another religion to Islam, converting from Islam to another religion is punishable by death in the north. This penalty has never been imposed by the current government, but the strong prejudice against conversion is sometimes expressed through ostracizing of the convert and sometimes through physical chastisement of the missionary.

The Secretary of State has designated both Eritrea and Sudan as "Countries of Particular Concern" (CPCs) for particularly severe violations of religious freedom. The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program continues to be available to Sudanese, Eritrean, and other refugees who are victims of religious intolerance through Priority 1 referrals. Refugees from Eritrea and Sudan also have access to the program through the Priority 3.

Voluntary Repatriation

Despite a number of protracted refugee situations throughout Africa, voluntary repatriation to a secure environment remains the most common and desirable durable solution. From the beginning of UNHCR's official Liberian repatriation in October 2004 to its official end in June 2007, some 300,000 Liberians returned home both spontaneously and with UNHCR assistance.

According to UNHCR, on the other side of the continent some 150,000 refugees have returned to southern Sudan from DRC, CAR, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Egypt, Kenya, and Uganda in the past year. The UN anticipates an upswing in spontaneous and organized repatriation to southern Sudan in late 2007, bringing the expected total to nearly 200,000 by the end of 2007. Despite the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement in 2006, conflict continues. Sudanese refugees from Darfur now in Chad are not expected to return home in the near term.

Beginning in October 2004 and following a successful series of elections in 2005 and 2006, Congolese returnees from eight host countries to several provinces in the DRC increased in 2007. UNHCR anticipates that over 150,000 will be returned by the end of the year. UNHCR began an organized return of Congolese from Zambia in May 2007.

In Burundi, more than 340,000 Burundians have returned home since 2002, mostly from Tanzania. Burundian repatriation will continue through 2007 and 2008, but has been slowed by continued sporadic conflict and land shortages in Burundi.

In Angola, over 400,000 refugees returned by the end of UNHCR's organized repatriation in March 2007. A residual caseload of 40,000 continues to reside in Zambia.

Local Integration

In the 1960s and 1970s, many African countries accepted significant numbers of refugees and provided them with land to cultivate. More recently, however, large refugee outflows combined with increased pressure on land in most African countries have resulted in African refugees' increasing confinement to refugee camps or settlements. As a result, local integration is often an interim solution, rather than a durable solution for most African refugees. There are some notable exceptions. In 2005, Guinea stated its willingness to offer local integration to Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees who were unwilling or unable to go home; and in 2006, UNHCR undertook a local integration project for some 1,500 Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea. In 2004, the Ugandan government expanded a self-reliance strategy for Sudanese refugees, which included the provision of land and integration of children into the national education system. While

the governments of Kenya, Uganda, and Zambia have stated intentions to provide refugees with local integration opportunities and citizenship, none of the three governments has yet passed legislation that creates the pathway to these benefits. We anticipate Zambia may do so in 2008 to accommodate spontaneously settled Angolan refugees and other relatively well-integrated groups. Nigeria is planning to close the Oru refugee camp this year and to disperse the refugee population among local villages. Language instruction in the local Yoruba dialect is currently underway.

Third-Country Resettlement

Resettlement in third countries outside the region is an essential durable solution for some African refugees. Third-country resettlement is an important element of protection, given the political and economic volatility in many parts of Africa. With limited opportunities for permanent integration in countries of asylum and often-protracted periods in refugee camps before voluntary repatriation becomes an option, the need for third-country resettlement of African refugees is expected to continue despite the overall decrease in the refugee population on the continent. In recent years, UNHCR has increasingly viewed resettlement as an important tool of protection and a durable solution for refugees in Africa. All resettlement countries, in particular the United States, Canada, and Australia, accept African refugees for resettlement, but the United States resettles far more than any other country.

FY 2007 U.S. Admissions

We anticipate admitting some 16,500 refugees from Africa in FY 2007. Five countries of origin (Somalia, Burundi, Liberia, Eritrea, and the DRC) account for the majority of U.S. admissions. In East and Central Africa, we expect to complete processing the 8,500 “1972 Burundians” in Tanzania, with nearly half of approved cases arriving in FY 2007. In Burundi, we processed 650 Congolese Banyamulenge survivors of the 2004 Gatumba camp massacre, and expect nearly all of those approved to travel to the United States in FY 2007. Of some 1,200 Eritrean Kunama interviewed during FY 2007, over 700 will arrive before the end of the fiscal year. Refugees of many other African nationalities are also being resettled in smaller numbers.

FY 2007 saw continued improvement in the security conditions in some processing locations in Africa, with several new locations cleared for DHS/USCIS interviews. Processing was halted for several months in Guinea due to violence and insecurity. There were similar delays in processing in CAR and Cote d'Ivoire. Processing in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia was moved to Addis Ababa due to insecurity at the Ethiopia-Somalia border.

DHS/USCIS has continued to verify claimed family relationships between U.S. anchor relatives and refugee applicants in the Priority 3 caseload in order to address the historically high levels of relationship fraud in the Priority 3 program. Through its RAVU, DHS/USCIS has been able to screen out many fraudulent applications and has thereby increased the productivity and integrity of adjudications overseas.

FY 2008 U.S. Resettlement Program

The proposed number of African refugees to be admitted in FY 2008 is 16,000. PRM has actively engaged all appropriate offices within the Department of State, the voluntary agency community, UNHCR, and DHS/USCIS to help identify caseloads appropriate for resettlement that would likely qualify under U.S. law. As a result of these discussions, PRM has identified a number of groups for priority processing during FY 2008.

The estimate of 6,000 individuals in the pipeline of approved refugees who will likely arrive during FY 2008 includes mostly Priority 1 and Priority 3 cases approved during FY 2007. Among these are disabled refugees and refugees living in protracted circumstances in Kenya; Eritreans and Sudanese in Ethiopia; Somalis in Kenya; Burundians in Tanzania, and smaller numbers of Sudanese and Somalis in Egypt. Smaller numbers of DRC Congolese will arrive from the Republic of Congo, along with Somalis from Syria and Saudi Arabia.

In East and Central Africa, we expect approximately 4,000 of the "1972 Burundians" processed in Tanzania in FY 2007 to arrive in the United States in FY 2008. We also estimate that some 200 additional Eritrean Kunama and as many as 2,900 Somalis from Kenya will also arrive in FY 2008. The Department of State recently designated for Priority 2 group eligibility 142 Sudanese refugees from Darfur living in Iraq. We will continue discussing an appropriate processing location for these cases with our U.S. Refugee Admissions Program partners. Any proposed processing

location, whether inside or outside Iraq, will require an appropriate security review and clearance before processing can commence. In Chad, we are aggressively exploring options with UNHCR for enhancing referrals and processing capacity for Darfurian refugees, but insecurity in eastern Chad makes large-scale resettlement extremely challenging at present.

In 2006, PRM undertook a mission to Sudan to discuss with UNHCR the referral of some Eritrean refugees living in camps in eastern Sudan. We will continue to urge UNHCR to verify and register this vulnerable population and to identify and refer cases beginning as soon as possible in FY 2008.

In West Africa, although the U.S. program ceased accepting AORs for Liberians at the end of FY 2006, we are still processing residual Liberian Priority 3 cases. This caseload is expected to account for over half of FY 2008 arrivals from West Africa. In addition, we expect to process up to 200 mostly Congolese refugees from Gabon. Priority 1 referrals of particularly vulnerable cases are expected from Ghana, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gabon, Benin, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Niger, Togo, Guinea, and Mali.

Currently, refugees located in Southern Africa are processed on a circuit-ride basis by OPE Nairobi. Although refugee populations in southern Africa remain small (fewer than 200,000), UNHCR is looking into expanding its capacity and reallocating resources in the region. The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program would welcome increased referrals by UNHCR from countries in the region.

The Administration remains deeply concerned about conditions in Darfur, and PRM plans a mission to eastern Chad in late FY 2007, security permitting, to explore enhanced resettlement opportunities for Darfur refugees.

In the Near East region, we anticipate small numbers of Sudanese, Somali, and other African refugees to be processed in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia.

Proposed FY 2008 Africa program:

<i>Approved pipeline from FY 2007</i>	<i>6,000</i>
<i>Priority 1 Individual Referrals</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Priority 2 Groups</i>	<i>4,000</i>
<i>Priority 3 Family Reunification</i>	<i>3,500</i>
<u><i>Total Proposed Ceiling</i></u>	<u><i>16,000</i></u>

Possible Future Groups

We are looking beyond FY 2008 at possible caseloads for FY 2009. We anticipate significant numbers of UNHCR referrals of Eritreans living in camps in Eastern Sudan in FY 2009. We are also monitoring the situation of Congolese Banyamulenge in various countries of first asylum, and will look at residual caseloads of Congolese in Angola, and Angolans in Zambia.

EAST ASIA

East Asian countries host a large and diverse refugee population. Recent years have seen important developments for these groups, particularly involving the strategic use of resettlement as a durable solution.

Thailand continues to host the largest population of refugees in East Asia and there are signs that the size of the population is straining Royal Thai Government (RTG) resources. More than 140,000 refugees from Burma, mostly ethnic minorities, are recognized by UNHCR and live in nine Thai-administered refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border. The RTG continues to support the international community's efforts to resettle large numbers of refugees from these camps. Nevertheless, the RTG is concerned about the pull factor, because even as thousands of people from the camps are resettled, new refugees are taking their places and the overall camp population is not declining.

The RTG is also concerned about the Lao Hmong population in Thailand and its impact on relations with the Government of Laos. In January 2007, the RTG attempted to return forcibly a group of 152 Lao Hmong seeking refuge who were about to be considered for third-country resettlement. In the face of strong objections from the international

community, the RTG reconsidered the return, but they have not yet allowed UNHCR or the resettlement countries access to these individuals. In 2007, the RTG deported several groups of ethnic Hmong who had been detained in Thailand for illegally entering the country. The United States has urged the RTG not to deport vulnerable people seeking refugee status without first screening them to determine the validity of their claims and their eligibility for protection.

Since 2006, UNHCR Malaysia has operated the second largest refugee status determination program in the world. As of February 2007, there were some 43,600 persons of concern registered with UNHCR in Malaysia – 12,400 Rohingyas from the Northern Rakhine State of Burma, 16,000 other ethnic minorities from Burma, including Chin, as well as refugees from other countries. Malaysia is not a party to the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol. Arrest, detention, harassment, and deportation of asylum seekers is common. We support UNHCR's efforts to use resettlement as a strategic tool to assist a significant number of refugees in Malaysia.

Ethnic minorities from the Central Highlands of Vietnam continued to cross into Cambodia in relatively small numbers. As of August 2007, there were 324 individuals under UNHCR protection in Phnom Penh. UNHCR had found 22 percent of these individuals to be refugees in need of third-country resettlement. International access to the Central Highlands continued to increase throughout the year. UNHCR international staff and/or U.S. mission staff have monitored more than 80 percent of the ethnic minorities who have returned to Vietnam from Cambodia and found no systemic problems. In May 2007, the Department of State announced that, while the United States would continue to accept referrals of ethnic minority refugees in Cambodia from UNHCR, we would expect those who are not found by UNHCR to be refugees in need of resettlement could return to Vietnam with counseling about how they can contact the U.S. mission if they face problems upon returning home.

During the 1990s, more than 230,000 Burmese Rohingya refugees were repatriated from Bangladesh. While UNHCR has the ability to assist repatriation and reintegration of those who wish to return home, few have chosen to do so in the last three years, citing continuing human rights abuses in Burma. Over 20,000 remain in two UNHCR camps in southern Bangladesh. Conditions in the camps deteriorated and reached emergency

levels in 2006, which led to consideration of expediting durable solutions for this group. In addition to those who remain in the camps, some who have previously repatriated have returned to Bangladesh and are living there without UNHCR protection.

As reflected in the North Korean Human Rights Act (NKHRA), the United States is very concerned about the human rights situation of North Koreans both inside the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) and in certain neighboring countries. The United States began resettling North Korean refugees in 2006 and is committed to continuing this lifesaving program. We will continue to work closely with UNHCR, governments in the region, and NGOs to offer U.S. resettlement interviews whenever possible and appropriate.

Religious Freedom

Although many governments in East Asia permit freedom of worship, religious believers face serious persecution in several countries. The DPRK severely restricts religious freedom, including organized religious activity, except that which is supervised tightly by officially recognized groups linked to the government. Even though the DPRK Constitution provides for “freedom of religious belief,” genuine religious freedom does not exist.

The situation in other countries such as China, Vietnam, Burma, and Laos is complex and varied. While the constitutions of these countries ostensibly provide for freedom of religion, in practice these governments restrict or repress activities of some religious organizations. Many independent religious activities may be either prohibited or severely restricted, and dissenters may face possible physical mistreatment or imprisonment.

Despite dramatic increases in religious observance in China, the government continues to harass and interfere with unregistered religious groups, most notably the unofficial Catholic churches loyal to the Vatican, Protestant “house churches,” some Muslim groups, Buddhists loyal to the Dalai Lama, and the Falun Gong spiritual movement. There are many cases of arrest, imprisonment, and alleged torture of religious believers in China. In Laos, we have seen modest improvements in religious freedom; however, problems remain, particularly in Savannakhet and Attapeu Provinces, where Christians occasionally have been detained or asked to renounce their faith.

The DPRK, China, and Burma remain CPCs with respect to religious freedom.

Vietnam has made significant progress on many religious freedom issues since it was designated a CPC. The USG and Government of Vietnam signed a Religious Freedom Agreement in May 2005, which requires Vietnam to implement fully its new legal framework on religion. Vietnam has banned the practice of forced or coerced renunciations of faith, released a number of prominent prisoners of conscience, and reopened a number of churches that had previously been closed and encouraged them to register. The U.S. government will continue to monitor religious freedom issues in Vietnam closely.

Nationals of the DPRK, Vietnam, China, and Burma have access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program through Priority 1 individual referrals. In addition, the United States continues to operate in-country Priority 2 processing for Vietnamese refugees. Certain Burmese will also be processed in FY 2008 under Priority 2. Burmese and North Korean refugees also have access to processing through Priority 3.

Voluntary Repatriation

The pace of repatriation of the 26,000 Rohingyas remaining in camps in Bangladesh remains slow and does not appear to be a viable solution for many. Many Vietnamese Montagnards in Cambodia have chosen to repatriate voluntarily and UNHCR international staff has been able to monitor the return of some 60 percent of those who have repatriated and found no systemic problems.

Local Integration

Countries in the region are traditionally reluctant to integrate refugees or even to grant temporary asylum. We hope that our commitment to resettle a large number of refugees from the camps along the Thai-Burma border will encourage the RTG to take steps to improve the local integration prospects for those refugees who will not be resettled. We recognize that the RTG is concerned that resettlement is not dramatically reducing the camp population as new refugees are coming into the camps to take the place of those who are departing for third countries. The Government of Malaysia has not followed through on an earlier commitment to issue work permits to

the Rohingya population, so local integration remains impossible for this group.

Third-Country Resettlement

The United States continues to be a leader of resettlement in the region. Others, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Nordic countries, continue to process refugee cases from East Asia referred by UNHCR. In FY 2007, the United States processed UNHCR-referred refugee cases in Cambodia, China, East Timor, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. The United States also continues to administer an in-country program in Vietnam, managed by the Humanitarian Resettlement Section at the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City.

FY 2007 U.S. Admissions

The regional ceiling for East Asia in FY 2007 was 11,000 and was intended to include 3,000 Vietnamese refugees through the Humanitarian Resettlement program and 6,000 Burmese refugees from camps in Thailand. In the end, we resettled far fewer Vietnamese than anticipated because only seven percent of those who applied met the eligibility criteria and only 25 percent of those interviewed by DHS were approved. On the other hand, we resettled far more refugees from Burma than originally anticipated. As a result, we anticipate a total of 16,200 arrivals from the region by the end of FY 2007.

The United States continued processing in Tham Hin refugee camp in Thailand throughout FY 2007 and resettled 4,000 refugees from that camp. Working in close consultation with UNHCR and the RTG, we also began processing in Mae La camp. Approximately 17,000 people out of a total camp population of 43,000 came forward for consideration and we expect to admit 9,000 of these refugees by the end of the fiscal year.

Early in FY 2007, the Secretary of State exercised her discretionary authority to render inapplicable the material support inadmissibility provision for refugees who provided material support to the Chin National Front/Chin National Army (CNF/CNA) or the Chin National League for Democracy. UNHCR immediately resumed making referrals to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program of ethnic Chin refugees from Burma, and we

began processing those cases. To facilitate greater numbers of referrals, we created a Priority 2 group designation for Chin refugees and anticipate 3,000 arrivals from this group in FY 2007.

The Humanitarian Resettlement Initiative continued to accept applications from Vietnamese citizens who might have been eligible under three categories of the former Orderly Departure Program (ODP) for consideration for resettlement to the United States. This process is open only to those who were unable to apply or who were unable to complete the application process before the ODP closed on September 30, 1994. Individuals have until June 2008 to apply. As of May 2007, the U.S. Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City had evaluated more than 45,000 completed applications and found fewer than 3,000 eligible for further consideration.

FY 2008 U.S. Resettlement Program

We propose the admission of 20,000 refugees from this region. This will include some 1,000 individuals already approved and pending departure at the beginning of the year. It will also include over 10,000 refugees from Burma living in Umpiem and Nu Po and possibly other camps. In addition, we will continue processing in Tham Hin and Mae La camps and hope to resettle 3,000 additional individuals from those locations. We also will continue processing in Malaysia, from where we hope to resettle another 4,000 individuals. We anticipate resettling about 1,000 people via the Humanitarian Resettlement Initiative in Vietnam and some 100 as Priority 3 beneficiaries in FY 2008.

Proposed FY 2008 East Asia Program:

<i>Approved pipeline from FY 2007</i>	<i>1,000</i>
<i>Priority 1 Individual Referrals</i>	<i>500</i>
<i>Priority 2 Groups</i>	<i>18,400</i>
<i>Priority 3 Family Reunification</i>	<i>100</i>
<u><i>Total Proposed Ceiling</i></u>	<u><i>20,000</i></u>

Possible Future Groups

We will continue planning with UNHCR to pursue expanding processing in other Burmese camps in Thailand in FY 2008.

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

The nations that once comprised the Soviet Union have for over a decade demonstrated a wide divergence of both political progress and economic growth. Important steps have been taken by many of these independent states in Eastern Europe, as well as some in Central Asia, in the direction of democratization, rule of law, civil rights, and tolerance. For example, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are vibrant free-market democracies, members of NATO and the European Union. Each of these governments respects the human rights of its citizens, including freedom of speech, press, and religion. Countries such as Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia have made significant progress in consolidating democratic institutions and instituting the rule of law. All three have acceded to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol; all three are now NATO partner countries. Russia, while achieving certain basic elements of democracy and progress on many market-economy reforms, still experiences attacks against non-Slavic foreigners, immigrants, and refugees within its borders.

The deteriorating conditions in Uzbekistan contributed to the refugee crisis that began following the violence in Andijon in May 2005, which caused at least 1,000 Uzbeks to flee to neighboring countries. In April 2006, UNHCR closed its office in Uzbekistan at the instruction of the government. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) mission in Tashkent assumed some responsibility for refugee-related matters. However, some 1,400 UNHCR-registered refugees, primarily Afghans, were left without effective protection or assistance.

At the end of 2006, UNHCR reported that there were some 4.6 million asylum seekers, refugees, IDPs, or other persons “of concern” throughout Europe and Central Asia. Most had fled conflicts outside the region, such as in Afghanistan, but persons allegedly experiencing persecution within the countries of the former Soviet Union are also included. Furthermore, even those nations that are abandoning totalitarianism and pursuing democratic governance have been slow or

reluctant to recognize, protect, and integrate refugees and at-risk individuals. UNHCR has been working with many of these governments on asylum processes and refugee protection laws, and some modest progress has been made.

According to UNHCR, at the end of 2006 there were approximately 505,000 refugees and IDPs in the Balkans, almost all of whom have been displaced for seven years or longer. An estimated 246,000 persons of this total population are minorities from Kosovo, the majority of whom are IDPs within Serbia. Finding durable solutions for the refugees and IDPs in the Balkans will be ongoing, particularly as the Kosovo status determination process is not yet complete.

Since 1989, the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program has offered resettlement consideration to individuals from certain religious minorities in the nations that made up the former Soviet Union who also have close family ties to the United States. Under the Lautenberg Amendment, Jews, Evangelical Christians, and certain members of the Ukrainian Catholic or Ukrainian Orthodox Churches benefit from a reduced evidentiary standard when seeking eligibility for refugee status.

In addition to those eligible under the Lautenberg Amendment, individuals of all nationalities throughout the region may be referred for Priority 1 processing.

Religious Freedom

Freedom of religion varies widely in Europe and Central Asia. Most states regulate religious groups and activities to some degree, by identifying so-called “traditional” religions that enjoy privileges sometimes denied to other, newer religious groups. In Eastern Europe, majority religions such as the Orthodox Church are often provided with such special treatment and privileges. These same states sometimes view other groups as “dangerous sects and cults.” Many states have enacted restrictive legislation to govern the activities of foreign missionaries, especially those from Protestant or “nontraditional” denominations. In many cases, registration with state bodies has been required, not only to establish a group as a legal entity able to rent or own space, but in some cases to hold religious services, a practice which may be in tension with the right to freedom of religion. In many eastern European countries, onerous membership and legal requirements

restrict new religions from enjoying the privileges of traditional religions, such as the right to appoint military and prison chaplains and receive state subsidies. These so-called “multi-tiered” religion laws, such as the new Romanian one, also exist in Austria, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

Restitution of religious properties seized by Communist regimes and the Nazis is an issue that has not yet been fully resolved, and in some countries progress on this issue has been frustratingly slow and uneven.

Manifestations of anti-Semitism continue, including demonstrations by extremist groups and vandalism of cemeteries and monuments, most often in the western successor states, such as Russia and Belarus, where most of these sites are located. Vandalism has also occurred in Western Europe (e.g., France), where the rise in anti-Semitism indicates a worrying trend. In addition, attacks on individuals, synagogues, and other places where religious groups gather have been reported in Russia. In the Caucasus and Central Asian states, the remaining small Jewish communities enjoy reasonably amicable relations with their Muslim compatriots. Jewish communities from Azerbaijan in the Caucasus to Bukhara and Tashkent in Uzbekistan report societal and governmental support. In contrast, anti-Semitic attacks on individual Jews have continued to occur in Russia. President Putin and the Russian government have condemned such acts and the perpetrator of an attack on a Moscow synagogue was recently brought to trial.

Observant Muslims across Europe and Central Asia have complained of being treated as potential Islamic extremists in some cases. This treatment may consist of legal prohibitions against wearing clothing or beards marking one as an observant Muslim in certain public contexts, frequent requests for identification documents, closing of some mosques, detentions, and arrests in Central Asia and Russia, and the possibility of torture in Uzbekistan. As a result of concerns over this treatment, as well as arrests, detentions and fines of some Christian groups stemming from Uzbekistan’s restrictive religion law, the Secretary of State has designated Uzbekistan a CPC for particularly severe violations of religious freedom.

Religion and ethnicity are closely intertwined in the Balkans, so it is often difficult to identify acts as primarily religious or primarily ethnic in origin. The refugee admissions program has provided protection for persecuted Muslims, Catholics, and Orthodox Christians, as well as

individuals of other religious minorities and mixed marriages. We will continue to work with UNHCR, NGOs, human rights groups, and U.S. missions to identify victims of religious persecution for whom resettlement is appropriate.

Voluntary Repatriation

International efforts are being made to repatriate Afghans and citizens from certain African nations, such as Angola, because of changing country conditions and increased stability in their home nations. Individuals of these nationalities may still be processed as Priority 1 referrals when their specific circumstances would preclude safe repatriation.

The international community continues to support efforts to create favorable conditions for the return of ethnic minorities in the Balkans. In June 2006, a new Protocol on Voluntary and Sustainable Return to Kosovo was signed, which seeks to improve the conditions for return by focusing on three elements: ensuring the safety of returnees; returning property to the displaced and rebuilding their houses; and creating an overall environment that sustains returns. However, with many displaced persons continuing to await the process that will determine Kosovo's future status, the rate of ethnic minority returns remained low throughout FY 2007. On March 10, a year of negotiations between the Serbian and Albanian sides ended without any substantive agreement. In the most favorable post-status scenario, there would be greater numbers of minority returns into Kosovo from Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia; despite their long displacement, many Kosovo refugees and IDPs still express a strong desire to return home.

Local Integration

UNHCR has led efforts to create viable asylum systems and effective legal protections for refugees in the countries that emerged from the former Soviet Union. However, ineffective implementation of these laws, combined with xenophobia throughout the region, make effective local integration difficult for refugees. In Russia, difficulties in local integration and acquisition of citizenship remain for some former Soviet citizens who entered Russia before 1992 and are therefore entitled to become Russian citizens. Like the Meskhetian Turks, they have been unable to obtain recognition of their Russian citizenship and remain effectively stateless. During the past year there has been significant progress in resolving this

issue, with over 500,000 formerly stateless individuals reportedly receiving Russian passports. There are numerous other groups and individuals still waiting for this recognition.

Third-Country Resettlement

The United States and other resettlement countries continue to accept refugees from the region. UNHCR has referred and will continue to refer to the United States, Canada, and other resettlement countries a number of at-risk individuals fleeing various forms of persecution within the region, as well as Afghan and African refugees who are unable to repatriate. Jewish emigration to Israel continues, with some 7,469 individuals from the former Soviet Union availing themselves of this opportunity in 2006.

FY 2007 U.S. Admissions

In FY 2007, we estimate 5,500 admissions from Europe and Central Asia. Religious minorities processed under the Lautenberg Amendment from countries of the former Soviet Union constitute a significant portion of the caseload. A small number will be Meskhetian Turk refugees processed in Krasnodar Krai, Russia. The processing of this group began in 2004 and the final arrivals are anticipated by the end of this fiscal year, bringing the total of Meskhetian Turk arrivals to some 11,500. During FY 2007, circuit rides took place to process refugees in Almaty, Ashgabat, Baku, Belgrade, Bishkek, Chisinau, Kiev, Skopje, Tashkent, Tbilisi, and Valetta (Malta).

FY 2008 U.S. Resettlement Program

The proposed FY 2008 allocation of refugees from the region is 3,000. It includes some 1,000 who will be in the final stage of admissions processing at the end of FY 2007, as well as new cases approved in FY 2008. Priority 2 includes individuals who will be processed under Lautenberg guidelines in the former Soviet Union. The number of applications for this Priority 2 and the percentage approved continue to decline each year. As Uzbekistan was added to the Priority 3 program in FY 2006, we anticipate the processing of some Uzbek beneficiaries during FY 2008.

Proposed FY 2008 Europe & Central Asia Program:

<i>Approved pipeline from FY 2007</i>	<i>1,000</i>
<i>Priority 1 Individual Referrals</i>	<i>150</i>
<i>Priority 2 Groups</i>	<i>1,800</i>
<i>Priority 3 Family Reunification</i>	<i>50</i>
<u><i>Total Proposed Ceiling</i></u>	<u><i>3,000</i></u>

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

According to UNHCR, at the end of 2006, the number of refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, and other people of concern in Latin America and the Caribbean totaled over 3.5 million. The ongoing conflict in Colombia generated the most significant numbers of refugees and IDPs in the region. According to government estimates, there are over three million displaced people in Colombia, 1.8 million of whom are officially registered. In surrounding countries, more than 500,000 Colombians live in refugee-like situations, but only some 50,000 have been recognized as refugees, according to UNHCR. Ecuador, the country with the largest population of Colombian refugees, has an effective asylum process in which UNHCR participates. Several other countries in the region with significant refugee populations, such as Costa Rica, Venezuela, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Peru, are developing asylum processes with assistance from UNHCR.

The number of Colombian asylum seekers in Ecuador continues to rise. As of December 2006, there were 42,811 Colombian refugees and asylum seekers in Ecuador, of whom 13,495 were recognized as refugees. The situation in Ecuador is UNHCR's biggest concern in the region. In Panama, there are approximately 1,250 Colombians recognized as refugees and 901 persons with official temporary status. In a historic move in 2006, Panama recognized 42 Colombian Wounaans – the first indigenous people to be recognized as refugees in Panama. In addition, there are 11,500 Colombians recognized as refugees in Costa Rica, which has revised its asylum system and established a new Refugee Department. There are 4,000 recognized refugees and asylum seekers in Brazil as well as just over 7,000 in Venezuela. Since the establishment of their Refugee Eligibility Commission in August 2003, Venezuela has registered 8,400 asylum

seekers, but adjudicated only 1,100 applications and recognized 600 as refugees.

In response to the dangers faced by certain professions, including police, lawyers, judges, and others in Colombia, the United States began a Priority 1 resettlement program in 2002 to resettle Colombians referred by the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá. As instability continued, we expanded the program and began to interview Colombians referred for resettlement consideration by UNHCR in Ecuador and Costa Rica.

In recent years, however, UNHCR has limited referrals of Colombians to the U.S. program, as many cases were being placed on hold because of the possible applicability of material support inadmissibility provisions in our immigration laws. Application of the waiver recently signed by the Secretary of Homeland Security for material support provided under duress to a designated terrorist organization should increase the number of Colombian refugees eligible for refugee status in the United States. As of May 2007, a total of 1,214 Colombian refugees have been resettled in the United States since FY 2002.

The situation in Haiti remains fragile. Recent steps by the government to crack down on gang-related crime and violence have been successful and there have been some improvements in the security situation. The United States continues to support UNHCR's efforts in the Caribbean to help governments address the needs of Haitian and other asylum seekers and would welcome referrals from UNHCR to the U.S. program. The United States will continue to pursue additional referrals of refugees in Caribbean countries, including the Dominican Republic, for resettlement consideration.

Religious Freedom

In Latin America, religious freedom is widely recognized and enjoyed. The exception is Cuba, where the government engages in efforts to monitor and control religious institutions, including surveillance, infiltration, harassment of clergy and church members, evictions from and confiscation of places of worship, and preventive detention of religious activists. The Cuban government also uses church registration as a mechanism of control; by refusing to register new denominations, it makes religious minorities vulnerable to charges of illegal association. The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program offers resettlement to Cubans persecuted for religious activities.

Voluntary Repatriation

Given the violence in Colombia from illegally armed groups (non-state actors) and the Government of Colombia's inability to provide full protection in many areas, UNHCR does not actively promote repatriation of Colombian refugees. UNHCR has provided some assistance to Haitians in Jamaica and Cuba who have chosen to return home voluntarily.

Local Integration

The Governments of Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Venezuela have maintained policies that allow Colombians in need of protection to obtain asylum and integrate locally. Despite such policies, their capacity to review applications and confer refugee status remains limited, processing is slow, and these countries maintain documentation requirements that are difficult for many applicants to fulfill. Further, as more refugees have fled to these countries, living conditions for Colombians have deteriorated as asylum seekers wait longer for status determinations and are not given the right to work. Additionally, some Colombian asylum seekers in Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Venezuela have begun to experience continued harassment by Colombian illegally armed groups operating in these countries. For asylum seekers in Panama, the situation is more complicated, as the government is reluctant to receive Colombian refugees or confer even minimal protection. Many Colombians in need of protection who enter these countries irregularly must hide in remote border areas or in the shantytowns of larger cities. Some are moving to more secure communities further inland.

PRM is currently supporting UNHCR's efforts to assist the Dominican Republic and other Caribbean countries in developing systems for making refugee status determinations for Haitians and other asylum seekers.

Third- and In-Country Resettlement

In the recent past, local integration has been the most suitable solution to regional refugee problems in Latin America. In recent years, however, third-country resettlement has become an important alternative for those who face physical risks and have urgent protection needs. Canada and the United States offer resettlement to at-risk Colombian refugees in the region for whom resettlement is the appropriate durable solution. Canada also

operates an in-country humanitarian program in Colombia through which many Colombians are resettled each year. Currently, the United States accepts referrals from the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá or from UNHCR and processes these cases in Ecuador or Costa Rica. Under the “Solidarity Resettlement Program,” a component of the Mexico Plan of Action, other countries in the region including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Uruguay are working with UNHCR to develop their capacity and have begun to resettle limited numbers of refugees.

The United States also facilitates the resettlement to other countries of migrants, mostly from Cuba and Haiti, who are interdicted by the U.S. Coast Guard or who enter Guantanamo Naval Station illegally and are found by DHS/USCIS to have a well-founded fear of persecution or torture if repatriated. From 1995 through 2007, some 250 such migrants have been resettled to fourteen different countries, mostly within the region, with a small number going to Europe, Australia, and Canada.

The U.S. government continues to operate an in-country refugee resettlement program in Cuba. Traditionally, Cuban refugee admissions had averaged approximately 2,500 per year. Following 9/11, the number of Cuban refugee admissions fell, due in large part to delays caused by increased security measures. Since then, we have taken steps to ensure that all Cubans eligible for consideration have access to the program and that approved refugees travel as soon as possible. These improvements have greatly increased the number of applications received and have reduced processing time of refugee applications. Unfortunately, unreliable communications with approved applicants, difficulties in receiving exit permits, and insufficient funds to pay for the medical exams and exit permits have impeded travel planning so that as many as 50 percent of the refugees approved and projected to arrive during any fiscal year are unable to travel.

Cubans currently eligible to apply for admission to the United States through the in-country program include the following:

- (1) Former political prisoners;
- (2) Members of persecuted religious minorities;
- (3) Human rights activists;
- (4) Forced labor conscripts (1965-68); and
- (5) Persons deprived of their professional credentials or subjected to other disproportionately harsh or

discriminatory treatments resulting from their perceived or actual political or religious beliefs.

FY 2007 U.S. Admissions

We anticipate resettlement of 3,000 refugees from Latin America and the Caribbean during FY 2007. Cubans comprise the overwhelming majority of refugees resettled from the region. Historically, most Cuban admissions were former political prisoners and forced labor conscripts who served sentences in the 1960s and 1970s. The program was expanded in 1991 to include human rights activists, displaced professionals, and others with claims of persecution, which currently comprise the majority of admissions. The expanded criteria remain in effect today, but changes are being considered by PRM and DHS/USCIS. Until recently, a small group of Cuban cases has been on hold due to possible inadmissibilities under our immigration laws for material support provided to a guerrilla group fighting against Castro in the late 1950s and early 1960s known as the “Alzados.” DHS has finished reviewing more than 200 pending “Alzados” cases. We hope to see the first of these cases traveling to the United States by the end of FY 2007. In addition, we expect some 100 Colombian refugees to be admitted to the United States during FY 2007.

FY 2008 U.S. Resettlement Program

The proposed 3,000 ceiling for Latin America and the Caribbean for FY 2008 comprises Cuban refugees eligible for the in-country Priority 2 program (including the remainder of the “Alzados” cases ready for travel in FY 2008), a small number of UNHCR-referred Priority 1 Colombians, as well as a small number of Priority 3 family reunion cases.

Proposed FY 2008 program for Latin America and the Caribbean:

<i>Approved pipeline from FY 2007</i>	<i>1,500</i>
<i>Priority 1 Individual Referrals</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Priority 2 In-Country Cubans</i>	<i>1,350</i>
<i>Priority 3 Family Reunification</i>	<i>50</i>
<u><i>Total Proposed Ceiling</i></u>	<u><i>3,000</i></u>

NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

The Near East/South Asia region remains host to millions of refugees, primarily Iraqis, Palestinians, Afghans, Iranians, Tibetans, Sri Lankans, and Bhutanese. Few countries in the region are party to the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and/or its 1967 Protocol. Nonetheless, to their credit, many host governments generally tolerate the presence of refugees.

UNHCR, ICRC, UNRWA, and other humanitarian organizations work with refugees in the region. Some countries have provided long-term protection, mainly to Palestinians, Afghans, and some Africans.

Increasing violence in Iraq during 2006 led to increased displacement of Iraqis, with the number of Iraqis seeking refuge in Syria and Jordan reaching an estimated two million. More than 44,000 third-country refugees (including 15,000 Palestinians) remain in Iraq.

Despite the voluntary return of roughly 4.8 million Afghan refugees, Pakistan continues to host approximately 2.25 million Afghans, many of whom have been resident there for years. We are concerned about reports of forced repatriations of Afghans from Iran in recent months, and will continue to monitor this situation.

Other countries in the region have provided long-term asylum for Tibetan, Bhutanese, and Sri Lankan refugees. Refugees identified by UNHCR for third-country resettlement include Iraqis in Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, and Egypt; Bhutanese in Nepal; Afghans in Pakistan, Iran, and India; and Afghans and Iranians in Turkey and Syria.

Religious Freedom

Persecution of religious minorities is common in certain countries in the Middle East and South Asia. In Pakistan, blasphemy laws, anti-Ahmadi laws, and other discriminatory legislation have been used to target religious minorities, including Shi'as, Christians, Hindus, and Ahmadi. Sectarian violence between majority Sunnis and minority Shi'as have claimed hundreds of lives in the past years. Escalating sectarian violence in Iraq has reversed the return flow of Iraqi refugees and has resulted in what UNHCR considers the largest exodus in the Middle East since the Palestinian exodus

following the creation of the State of Israel. In India, state and local government responses to extremist violence against religious minorities, particularly Muslims and Christians, are often inadequate. In Afghanistan, the extent of religious freedom is at times unclear due to constitutional contradictions, legislative ambiguity, and occasional deferments to local interpretations of Shari'a Law.

In Saudi Arabia, Muslims who do not adhere to the officially sanctioned version of Islam can face severe repercussions, and the minority Shi'a Muslim and Ismaili communities are subject to official discrimination. Public worship by non-Muslims is prohibited. In several countries in the region, the conversion of a Muslim to another religion is viewed as a criminal act. In Iran, particularly severe persecution of minority religions continues to be reported.

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program provides access in a variety of ways to refugees who suffer religious persecution. The Specter Amendment, enacted in 2004, establishes that Iranian religious minorities designated as category members are eligible to apply under Priority 2 and may benefit from a reduced evidentiary standard for determining a well-founded fear of persecution. Iranian refugees may also gain access to the Program through Priority 3. In addition, the U.S. program accepts UNHCR and embassy referrals of religious minorities of various nationalities in the region. Nationals of any country, including CPCs such as Saudi Arabia, may be referred to the U.S. program by UNHCR or a U.S. embassy for reasons of religious or political persecution and will be interviewed under Priority 1.

Voluntary Repatriation

Since the fall of the Taliban, voluntary repatriation to Afghanistan has proceeded on a massive scale, both with and without UNHCR assistance. More than 4.8 million Afghan refugees, the majority from Pakistan and Iran, have returned to Afghanistan since 2002. Over 3.6 million were assisted by UNHCR in the most successful refugee repatriation in UNHCR's history. However, this massive repatriation has taxed the capacities of Afghanistan to absorb further refugee returns and there is little expectation that the 2.15 million registered Afghans still in Pakistan will all return. In UNHCR's view, the repatriation of Afghans has reached a new stage and returns are unlikely to continue in large numbers. UNHCR's assessment is

that the continuing migration of Afghans in both directions across the Afghan-Pakistani border is part of a larger process of economic and social migration that has been occurring for centuries. Most Afghans who stay in Pakistan are no longer seeking refuge from violence or persecution. They are, rather, seeking economic opportunities, fleeing poverty, or visiting family. UNHCR is working with the Government of Pakistan and the international community to develop policies and programs to expedite further returns to the extent possible and to manage the population of Afghans that may remain in Pakistan for the longer term.

During 2006, USG support for Iraqis focused on repatriation. Following the February 2006 bombing of the Samarra mosque, the explosion of sectarian violence led to wide-scale displacement within and from Iraq. As a result, there are some two million internally displaced Iraqis and possibly two million refugees in neighboring countries. While the primary goal continues to be to support efforts to create conditions that will allow Iraqis to return home, the current security situation is limiting repatriation. The international community is providing protection and assistance to Iraqis living in host countries and making resettlement opportunities available to greater numbers of Iraqi refugees.

Local Integration

Few countries in the region offer local integration to refugees. UNHCR and the Government of Afghanistan have Tripartite Agreements that provide for the orderly, voluntary return of Afghan refugees with the Government of Iran and the Government of Pakistan. The agreement with Iran is valid until March 19, 2008. The agreement with Pakistan was recently renewed and allows Afghan refugees who hold a “Proof of Registration” card to reside in Pakistan through December 2009. UNHCR is discussing shifting its focus away from assistance to Afghan refugees in South Asia in favor of a more broad-based development plan for the region.

The key to the successful transition from short-term humanitarian maintenance to long-term development is acceptance by the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan that they are best served by a system of managed migration across their border. Progress has been made in this area: some within the government of Pakistan have publicly acknowledged that some Afghans in Pakistan are likely to stay. The majority of Afghans who repatriated in the last few years had fled Taliban rule relatively recently.

The Afghans remaining in Iran and Pakistan are thus the “hard cases,” who left Afghanistan in the early years of the Soviet invasion. They have deeper roots in Pakistan and Iran, and fewer ties to Afghanistan. A sizeable percentage of them have in fact never even lived in Afghanistan, and 74 percent are under age 28. Many of these Afghans are thus unlikely to ever return.

Local integration of Iraqi refugees in Syria and Jordan is not an option, although both governments have permitted Iraqis to remain on a temporary basis. The governments of Jordan and Syria have both made clear that they consider Iraqis in their countries to be visitors rather than refugees. The growing number of Iraqi refugees is straining the ability of Jordan and Syria to provide essential services. Approximately 20,000 Iraqi children are attending school in Jordan. Iraqi children in Syria can attend public school but the classrooms are overcrowded and unable to accommodate more students. Medical care for Iraqis in both countries is overburdened and many Iraqis in Syria and have exhausted their personal resources.

Due to security concerns, Jordan has begun restricting entry access for military-aged Iraqi men. Syrian borders generally remain open to Iraqis. Both countries are contemplating requiring Iraqis to obtain visas prior to entering. The Government of Jordan recently announced that all Iraqis must possess a new “G” series Iraqi passport in order to enter Jordan.

India does not have a clear national policy for the treatment of refugees, and UNHCR has no formal status there. India recognizes and aids certain groups, including Sri Lankan Tamils and Tibetans, in some 130 settlements throughout the country. It also permits UNHCR to assist other groups, primarily Afghans, Iranians, Somalis, Burmese, and Sudanese. Many Tibetans and Sri Lankan Tamils in India are permitted to work and receive social benefits.

Third-Country Resettlement

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program anticipates large-scale processing of Iraqis, Bhutanese, and Iranians during FY 2008. The U.S. government recognizes that the possibility of third-country resettlement must be available to the most vulnerable Iraqi refugees. To this end, the United States supports UNHCR’s efforts to identify and refer for

resettlement in third countries some 20,000 vulnerable Iraqis in calendar year 2007. We are expanding our resettlement processing capacity in the region and will consider all cases referred to us by UNHCR. UNHCR has already referred over 9,000 individuals to the U.S. program and will continue making additional referrals in coming months. We are also facilitating access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for Iraqis under threat due to their employment with the U.S. government, among other especially vulnerable categories of Iraqi refugees.

Middle Eastern and South Asian refugees in most of Europe avail themselves of the asylum systems of the countries in which they are located. In Vienna, however, certain Iranian religious minorities (Baha'is, Zoroastrians, Jews, Mandaeans, and Christians) may be processed for U.S. resettlement using special procedures authorized by the Government of Austria. The United States also processes Iranian religious minorities (primarily Baha'i) in Turkey through special procedures involving fast-track refugee status determination and referral by UNHCR.

The Government of Nepal has recently indicated its willingness to allow third-country resettlement of Bhutanese refugees. Over the next five years, the United States has committed to considering 60,000 or more refugees by establishing a Priority 2 designation for resettlement. We plan to begin processing Bhutanese refugees in late FY 2007.

FY 2007 U.S. Admissions

Current estimates are that we will admit some 8,800 refugees from the region in FY 2007. These will include some 6,000 Iranians processed in Vienna and Istanbul, 2,000 Iraqis, as well as up to 1,000 Afghans and others, from throughout the region.

FY 2008 U.S. Resettlement Program

The proposed regional ceiling for refugees from the Near East and South Asia for FY 2008 is 28,000 and primarily includes vulnerable Iraqis, Bhutanese, and Iranian religious and ethnic minorities. It also includes some 1,000 approved refugees who will not have completed processing by the end of FY 2007. We are working to increase individual UNHCR referrals of various religious and ethnic groups in the region, including Chaldeans, Assyrians, Mandaeans, as well as Iranian Kurds and Iranian Arabs (Ahwazis).

In addition, Ahmadi Muslims in many locations and Afghans in the former Soviet Union, India, and elsewhere may be included. Various smaller refugee populations in Libya, Algeria, and elsewhere are also being considered for individual referrals.

Proposed FY 2008 Near East/South Asia program:

<i>Approved pipeline from FY 2007</i>	<i>1,000</i>
<i>Priority 1 Individual Referrals</i>	<i>11,000</i>
<i>Priority 2 Groups</i>	<i>16,000</i>
<u><i>Total Proposed Ceiling</i></u>	<u><i>28,000</i></u>

**TABLE III
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

**RESETTLEMENT ACCESS FOR REFUGEES FROM COUNTRIES DESIGNATED BY
THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN***

COUNTRY OF CONCERN	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 3
Eritrea	X	X	X
Sudan	X		X
China	X		
Burma	X	X	X
DPRK	X		X
Iran	X	X	X
Saudi Arabia	X		
Uzbekistan	X		X

Countries designated in 2006 in accordance with the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-292, October 27, 1998, 112 Stat. 2787) (IRFA).

IV. DOMESTIC IMPACT OF REFUGEE ADMISSIONS

In FY 2006, the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program admitted 41,279 refugees from 52 countries. Over half were originally from either the countries of the former Soviet Union or from Somalia. (See Table IV.)

The demographic characteristics of refugee arrivals from the 20 largest source countries (representing 99 percent of total arrivals) in FY 2006 illustrate the variation among refugee groups. The median age of all FY 2006 arrivals was 24 years, and ranged from 19 years for arrivals from Burundi and Rwanda to 31 years of age for arrivals from Cuba. In FY 2006, 48.5 percent of all arriving refugees were female. Males predominated among refugees from Eritrea (71 percent), Iraq (67 percent), and Sudan (58 percent). (See Table V.)

Considerable variation among refugee groups can be seen among specific age categories. Refugees under the age of five ranged from a high of over 17 percent among Laotian and Burundian arrivals to a low of four percent of those from Iran. The number of school-aged children (from five to 17 years of age) varied from a high of over 38 percent of arrivals from Burundi, Laos, and Rwanda to a low of 12 percent of those from Eritrea. The number of working-aged refugees (18 to 64 years of age) varied from a high of 83 percent of those from Eritrea to a low of 39 percent of individuals from Laos. Retirement-aged refugees (65 years or older) ranged from a high of nine percent of arrivals from Laos to a low of less than one percent of those from Sudan, Eritrea, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Mauritania, and Congo Brazzaville. Of the total arrivals in FY 2006, some nine percent were under the age of five, 29 percent were of school age, 65 percent were of working age, and four percent were of retirement age. (See Table VI.)

During FY 2006, 66 percent of all arriving refugees resettled in 12 states. The majority were placed in California (13 percent), followed by Minnesota (11 percent), Florida (6 percent), Texas (6 percent), Washington (5 percent), New York (5 percent), and Arizona (4 percent). The states of Georgia, Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio, and Pennsylvania each resettled three percent of the total of newly arrived refugees in FY 2006. (See Table VII.)

TABLE IV
Refugee Arrivals By Country of Origin
Fiscal Year 2006

Country of Origin	Arrivals	
	Number	% of Total
Afghanistan	651	1.58%
Algeria	1	0.00%
Angola	13	0.03%
Bangladesh	2	0.00%
Bhutan	3	0.01%
Burma	1,612	3.91%
Burundi	466	1.13%
Cambodia	9	0.02%
Cameroon	29	0.07%
Central Africa Republic	23	0.06%
Chad	4	0.01%
China	21	0.05%
Colombia	115	0.28%
Congo	66	0.16%
Costa Rica	2	0.00%
Cuba	3,143	7.61%
Democratic Republic of Congo	405	0.98%
Egypt	2	0.00%
Equatorial Guinea	11	0.03%
Eritrea	538	1.30%
Ethiopia	1,271	3.08%
Former Soviet Union	10,426	25.26%
Former Yugoslavia	29	0.07%
Ghana	7	0.02%
Indonesia	10	0.02%
Iran	2,792	6.76%
Iraq	202	0.49%

Country of Origin	Arrivals	
	Number	% of Total
Ivory Coast	23	0.06%
Kenya	5	0.01%
Korea, North	9	0.02%
Laos	830	2.01%
Liberia	2,402	5.82%
Macedonia	1	0.00%
Mauritania	88	0.21%
Nepal	1	0.00%
Niger	1	0.00%
Nigeria	15	0.04%
Pakistan	20	0.05%
Rwanda	112	0.27%
Senegal	2	0.00%
Sierra Leone	439	1.06%
Somalia	10,357	25.09%
Sri Lanka (Ceylon)	6	0.01%
Sudan	1,848	4.48%
Syria	27	0.07%
The Gambia	6	0.01%
Togo	18	0.04%
Uganda	20	0.05%
Venezuela	4	0.01%
Vietnam	3,168	7.67%
Yemen (Sanaa)	11	0.03%
Zimbabwe	13	0.03%
TOTAL	41,279	100.0%

Source: Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Refugee Processing Center

TABLE V
Median Age and Gender of Refugee Arrivals, Fiscal Year 2006

Rank (# of Arrivals)	Country of Origin	Refugees Admitted	Median Age	% Females	% Males
1	Former Soviet Union	10,426	27	49.9%	50.1%
2	Somalia	10,357	23	48.7%	51.3%
3	Vietnam	3,168	25	47.0%	53.0%
4	Cuba	3,143	31	48.0%	52.0%
5	Iran	2,792	31	48.9%	51.1%
6	Liberia	2,402	21	55.5%	44.5%
7	Sudan	1,848	21	41.6%	58.4%
8	Burma	1,612	22	47.9%	52.1%
9	Ethiopia	1,271	24	47.0%	53.0%
10	Laos	830	22	46.1%	53.9%
11	Afghanistan	651	24	45.0%	55.0%
12	Eritrea	538	24	29.0%	71.0%
13	Burundi	466	19	51.7%	48.3%
14	Sierra Leone	439	27	52.6%	47.4%
15	Dem. Rep. Congo	405	21	49.9%	50.1%
16	Iraq	202	27	34.2%	65.8%
17	Colombia	115	24	51.3%	48.7%
18	Rwanda	112	19	50.0%	50.0%
19	Mauritania	88	21	50.0%	50.0%
20	Congo	66	23	56.1%	43.9%
	All Other Countries	348		52.0%	48.0%
TOTAL		41,279	24	48.5%	51.5%

Former Soviet Union includes countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Former Yugoslavia includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, and Yugoslavia.

Source: Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Refugee Processing Center

TABLE VI
Select Age Categories of Refugee Arrivals, Fiscal Year 2006

Rank (# of Arrivals)	Country of Origin	Under 5 Yrs	School Age (5-17)	Working Age (18-64)	Retirement Age (=or > 65)
1	Former Soviet Union	9.5%	26.8%	62.1%	6.0%
2	Somalia	7.4%	34.7%	63.7%	3.4%
3	Vietnam	9.0%	29.9%	62.4%	1.5%
4	Cuba	5.0%	20.3%	73.5%	4.2%
5	Iran	3.7%	17.3%	77.5%	5.6%
6	Liberia	8.8%	37.8%	60.4%	1.2%
7	Sudan	13.7%	25.8%	64.3%	0.5%
8	Burma	12.7%	28.5%	60.7%	1.7%
9	Ethiopia	4.8%	28.3%	75.6%	1.5%
10	Laos	17.8%	39.0%	38.7%	8.7%
11	Afghanistan	6.3%	37.2%	61.9%	1.4%
12	Eritrea	7.8%	11.5%	82.9%	0.2%
13	Burundi	17.0%	39.1%	48.7%	0.6%
14	Sierra Leone	5.5%	23.9%	73.6%	4.8%
15	Dem. Rep. Congo	12.3%	36.5%	56.0%	0.7%
16	Iraq	10.4%	23.3%	68.3%	1.0%
17	Colombia	6.1%	33.0%	63.5%	1.7%
18	Rwanda	11.6%	38.4%	55.4%	0.0%
19	Mauritania	12.5%	34.1%	59.1%	0.0%
20	Congo	13.6%	25.8%	65.2%	0.0%
	Other Countries	9.8%	24.7%	68.4%	1.1%
TOTAL		8.5%	29.0%	64.6%	3.7%

Former Soviet Union includes countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Former Yugoslavia includes countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, and Yugoslavia.

NOTE: Totals may exceed 100% due to overlapping age categories.

Source: Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Refugee Processing Center

TABLE VII
Refugee Arrivals By State of Initial Resettlement, Fiscal Year 2006

STATE	Refugee Arrivals	Amerasian Arrivals	Total Arrivals	% of Total Arrivals to U.S.
Alabama	57	0	57	0.14%
Alaska	24	0	24	0.06%
Arizona	1,649	9	1658	4.02%
Arkansas	1	0	1	0.00%
California	5,163	26	5189	12.57%
Colorado	805	5	810	1.96%
Connecticut	310	6	316	0.77%
Delaware	2	0	2	0.00%
District of Columbia	74	0	74	0.18%
Florida	2,582	3	2,585	6.26%
Georgia	1,442	0	1,442	3.49%
Hawaii	5	0	5	0.01%
Idaho	548	0	548	1.33%
Illinois	1,227	2	1,229	2.98%
Indiana	367	0	367	0.89%
Iowa	344	14	358	0.87%
Kansas	149	0	149	0.36%
Kentucky	701	4	705	1.71%
Louisiana	122	5	127	0.31%
Maine	142	0	142	0.34%
Maryland	675	0	675	1.64%
Massachusetts	853	4	857	2.08%
Michigan	641	6	647	1.57%
Minnesota	4,578	0	4,578	11.09%
Mississippi	5	0	5	0.01%
Missouri	556	0	556	1.35%
Nebraska	301	0	301	0.73%
Nevada	202	0	202	0.49%
New Hampshire	271	0	271	0.66%
New Jersey	561	0	561	1.36%
New Mexico	95	0	95	0.23%

STATE	Refugee Arrivals	Amerasian Arrivals	Total Arrivals	% of Total Arrivals to U.S.
New York	2,561	7	2,568	4.77%
North Carolina	1,259	14	1,273	2.37%
North Dakota	228	0	228	0.42%
Ohio	1,560	0	1,560	2.90%
Oklahoma	136	0	136	0.25%
Oregon	1,024	0	1,024	1.90%
Pennsylvania	1,521	0	1,521	2.83%
Puerto Rico	8	0	8	0.01%
Rhode Island	283	0	283	0.53%
South Carolina	105	0	105	0.20%
South Dakota	214	0	214	0.40%
Tennessee	869	0	869	1.61%
Texas	3,243	2	3,245	6.03%
Utah	753	0	753	1.40%
Vermont	182	0	182	0.34%
Virginia	1,276	0	1,276	2.37%
Washington	2,841	6	2,847	5.29%
West Virginia	3	0	3	0.01%
Wisconsin	1,851	0	1,851	3.44%
Total	53,738	75	53,813	100.0%

Note: Arrival figures do not reflect secondary migration.

Source: Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Refugee Processing Center

TABLE VIII – With DHS
ESTIMATED COSTS OF REFUGEE PROCESSING, MOVEMENT, AND
RESETTLEMENT
FY 2007 ESTIMATE AND FY 2008 BUDGET REQUEST
(\$ MILLIONS)

AGENCY	ESTIMATED FUNDING FY 2007 (BY ACTIVITY)	ESTIMATED FUNDING FY 2008 (BY ACTIVITY)
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY		
<i>United States Citizenship and Immigration Services</i>		
Refugee Processing	\$ 15.7	\$ 16.9
DEPARTMENT OF STATE		
<i>Bureau of Population, Refugee, and Migration</i>		
Refugee Admissions	\$ 192.5*	\$ 213.4
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES		
<i>Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement</i>		
Refugee Resettlement	\$ 492.2**	\$ 492.5**
TOTAL	\$ 700.4	\$ 722.8

* Includes \$5.7 million in recoveries from prior FY.

** Does not include costs associated with the Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, or Supplemental Security Income programs. HHS's Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) refugee benefits and services are also provided to asylees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, certain Amerasians from Vietnam, victims of a severe form of trafficking who have received certification or eligibility letters from ORR, and certain family members who are accompanying or following to join victims of severe forms of trafficking, and some victims of torture. None of these additional groups is included in the refugee admissions ceiling.

TABLE IX
UNHCR Resettlement Statistics by Resettlement Country
CY 2006
DEPARTURES

RESETTLEMENT COUNTRY	TOTAL	PERCENT OF TOTAL RESETTLED
United States*	14,245	48.77%
Canada	5,064	17.34%
Australia	4,640	15.89%
Sweden	1,550	5.30%
Norway	862	2.95%
Denmark	750	2.56%
New Zealand	622	2.12%
Finland	542	1.85%
Great Britain	349	1.19%
Netherlands	307	1.05%
Ireland	119	0.40%
Brazil	50	0.17%
Chile	42	0.14%
Argentina	19	0.06%
Belgium	14	0.05%
Switzerland	13	0.04%
Other**	18	0.06%
TOTAL	29,206	

**Includes departures to the U.S. of individuals referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program by UNHCR*

***Departures to Austria, France, Germany, and Italy*