

## Upcoming Meetings & Events

**THE RESILIENCE OF MIGRANT WOMEN DURING THE PANDEMIC – MAR 16**

On Tuesday, March 16 at 11 AM EDT, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) will host an online discussion on the impact of the hardships and challenges of COVID-19 on migrant women. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

**LOST IN THE SYSTEM: ASYLUM SEEKING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM – MAR 18**

On Thursday, March 18 at 2 PM EDT, ROMILDAMOR will host a virtual panel to discuss the following question: how truly welcoming and navigable is the UK asylum process for those who make it to the United Kingdom? For more information and to register, click [here](#).



## this issue

U.S. Issue Updates **P.1**

Around the World in International Migration **P.3**

Whispers from Washington **P.4**

Global Gigabyte **P.4**

## United States Issue Updates

### • Supreme Court Agrees to Dismiss Challenge to Public Charge Rule

On March 9, the Supreme Court agreed to an Administration request to dismiss an upcoming case challenging the prior administration's "public charge" rule, which limited access to green cards for those deemed likely to accept public assistance. The Court had agreed last month to hear challenges to the 2018 rule, but the Administration in its request noted that all parties had agreed to ask the court to dismiss the case. The Department of Justice (DOJ) also dropped objections to a ruling before the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, upholding a federal judge's November order striking down the rule nationwide. In February, the Administration mandated a review of the public charge rule by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), signaling the likelihood of the Administration to scrap the rule on its own.

### • Central American Minors Program Reinstated

On March 10, the U.S. Department of State (DOS) announced that it would reinstate the Central American Minors (CAM) program to reunite qualified children from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras with their parent or parents who are lawfully present in the United States. The program was originally established in 2014 and terminated in 2017. According to a DOS statement, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration along with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services have already identified all suspended cases eligible for reopening and will coordinate with domestic resettlement agencies to contact eligible parents in order to verify that they are still lawfully present in the United States and wish to reopen their child's case.

## Upcoming Meetings & Events (cont'd)

### A NEW ERA IN IMMIGRATION? PART 2 – MAR 24

On Wednesday, March 24 at 1:00 PM EDT, St. Edward's University Social Work Program, the Texas Law Immigration Clinic, and the William Wayne Justice Center for Public Interest Law at Texas Law will host the second part of a three part series on immigration law and policy changes following the inauguration of the new Administration. In this installment, panelists will discuss the future of DACA, TPS, and undocumented immigrants. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

## United States Issue Updates (cont'd)

### • Administration Grants Venezuela Temporary Protected Status

On March 8, the Administration [announced](#) that it would grant Venezuelans Temporary Protected Status (TPS), designating the status through September 9, 2022. An estimated 320,000 Venezuelans came to the United States after fleeing the deteriorating humanitarian crisis in the country. Since a disputed election in 2018, some 5 million Venezuelans have fled the country. Those who remain continue to face widespread hunger, economic collapse, threats from non-state armed groups, crumbling infrastructure, limited access to health care amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and violent crackdowns on free speech.

### • Immigration Detention Data Transparency Act Reintroduced

On March 9, Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Representative Joaquin Castro (D-TX-20) [reintroduced](#) the bicameral COVID-19 in Immigration Detention Data Transparency Act, which would require immigration detention facilities to collect and publicly report data about COVID-19 cases, vaccine distribution, and the preventative measures in place in these facilities. If passed, the Act would (1) require relevant agencies and facilities to collect and submit data (that cannot be used against them in immigration proceedings) to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on a weekly basis, (2) require relevant agencies and facilities to collect and submit data on COVID-19 vaccination progress to the CDC on a weekly basis, (3) mandate that relevant agencies report to Congress on the health and medical protocols and practices in place at each detention facility, (4) require relevant agencies and facilities to report to Congress on the efforts made to ensure detained individuals have access to legal counsel, and (5) ensure that detained individuals tested for COVID-19 have confidential access to all their test results and medical records, in their preferred language.

### • Members of Congress Demand End to Troop Deployment at the Southern Border

On March 9, Representative Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ-3) led 22 Members of Congress in a [letter](#) to the Administration demanding an end to the troop deployment at the United States' southern border with Mexico. This troop deployment, authorized by the former Administration, continues to consist of more than 3,600 soldiers. In February, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report in February finding that, "The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) anticipates needing at least the current amount of [Department of Defense (DOD)] support for the next three to five years, possibly more." The Members of Congress noted in their letter that, "The financial waste of this unnecessary deployment could be used in a myriad of ways to address our shared priorities on behalf of the American people—especially the impacts of COVID-19."

# Around the World in International Migration

## • India Deports Rohingya Refugees to Myanmar

On March 7, officials in India reported that police detained more than 150 Rohingya refugees found living undocumented in the northern territory of Jammu and Kashmir and began deporting them to Myanmar. Dozens more are now in a makeshift holding center at Jammu's Hira Nagar jail. They were identified after local authorities conducted biometric and other tests on hundreds of people to verify their identities. In 2019, the Indian government split the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, revoking its former limited autonomy and increasing New Delhi's control over the Muslim-majority region. As such, the government has instituted a policy to address undocumented Rohingya, which it regards as a security risk. It has ordered that thousands of them living in scattered settlements be identified and deported. Minority Rohingya Muslims have for decades fled to neighboring Bangladesh and other countries, including India, largely to escape discrimination, violence and poverty. Last year it was estimated that 40,000 Rohingya refugees lived in India, scattered across different states. Around 6,500 of them live in Jammu.

## • Central African Refugees to be Relocated

On March 2, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced that it would implement a plan to move refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) who are currently in dangerous conditions and remote border areas to safer locations within the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). At least 100,000 people have been displaced within the country by recent violence. Another 107,000 fled to neighboring countries, including Cameroon, Chad, and the DRC. Congolese authorities estimate that 92,000 refugees have arrived from the CAR after election-related violence erupted in December. UNHCR said in a statement that it and the DRC's National Refugee Commission (CNR) "will prepare four relocation sites for some 35,000 refugees to live alongside local communities and grow their own crops, attend local schools, and benefit from other services that serve their Congolese hosts. Settling refugees in local communities will allow them to live with greater dignity and independence."

## • Bosnia and Herzegovina Moves Migrants to Shelters

On March 8, authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) announced that over 100 migrants who had been homeless have been moved into asylum centers. Of the 115 migrants who were living in abandoned buildings and outside, 53 were children. They were relocated to a camp in the region that hosts vulnerable groups in particular, according to a statement by the Bosnian Service for Foreigners' Affairs. Thousands of migrants and refugees are currently stranded in BiH in the middle of the country's harsh weather conditions. Most seek to cross into the European Union through Croatia, which recently enacted a series of measures to restrict the flow of migrants. An estimated 10,000 migrants live in Bosnia, with the majority staying in government-run camps.

## • More Refugees Relocated from Greece to Germany

On March 3, the Federal Minister of the Interior of Germany, Horst Seehofer, decided to admit 106 refugees consisting of 50 adults and 56 minors who had been residing in a camp in Greece. Since April 2020, Germany has admitted 2,060 refugees from Greece. The refugees will be relocated to the various federal states based on a plan developed by the federal government along with the governments of all 16 federal states. This plan also takes into account criteria such as family ties and specific medical needs.

# Whispers from Washington

*Current Capitol Hill Considerations*

## **Merrick Garland Confirmed as Attorney General**

On March 10, Merrick Garland was confirmed in a 70-30 vote as the Attorney General of the United States.

During the confirmation hearing process, the Senate Judiciary Committee pressed Garland on a broad array of issues that fall under the Department of Justice's (DOJ) responsibility, including U.S. immigration law.

Judiciary Chairman Dick Durbin (D-IL) focused on questions regarding the former administrations "zero tolerance" policy, under which all U.S. attorney's offices along the United States' border with Mexico were directed to prosecute all Department of Homeland Security (DHS) referrals of section 1325(a) of the United States Code, which prohibits illegal entry. Chairman Durbin's question specifically related to conducting oversight into the origin and application of the policy, to which Garland affirmed his commitment to such a process. In addition, Garland added, "I think that the policy was shameful. I can't imagine anything worse than tearing parents from their children, and we will provide all the cooperation that we possibly can."

## Global Gigabyte

Refugee Maya Ghazal has been named a Marie Claire Changemaker for 2021.

Maya Ghazal is a Syrian refugee, a student, an activist, a Goodwill Ambassador for UNHCR and the first female Syrian refugee pilot.

Four years ago, Ghazal fled Syria and arrived in the United Kingdom without knowing a word of English. Now she's a passionate public speaker. In a 2019 TED talk, Ghazal made the case for investing in the limitless potential of refugees, explaining how no one believed she would ever succeed in becoming a pilot because of her sex. Ghazal wants to be a role model for refugee girls, showing they can achieve any dreams they set themselves.

"I want my story to smash stereotypes about refugees being uneducated, or women not being able to succeed in STEM careers. I want to prove the haters wrong and to inspire other refugees to believe in themselves and their abilities," she says.

Read more about the story [here](#).

If you have any questions  
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