News

Children from Congo who have received refugee status in the U.S. stand outside a temporary

Children from Congo who have received refugee status in the U.S. stand outside a temporary hotel residence in Boise, Idaho, Oct. 29, 2021. President Joe Biden announced Sept. 27, 2022, the nation's cap on refugee admissions is 125,000 for the 2023 fiscal year. (CNS photo/Shannon Stapleton, Reuters)



by Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Washington — September 29, 2022

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

A While House goal to welcome up to 125,000 refugees in fiscal year 2023 received support from two agencies working to resettle newcomers in the United States.

Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, and Joan Rosenhauer, executive director of Jesuit Relief Service/USA, welcomed the Biden administration announcement in separate statements Sept 28.

"This is an ambitious and worthwhile goal for our nation, which has benefited from many blessings throughout its history including the generations of refugees wo have already enriched American communities," Dorsonville said.

He added that the U.S. bishops remain committed to the Catholic Church's long tradition of welcoming people who are fleeing war, violence, natural disasters, political instability and persecution.

The USCCB's Migration and Refugee Services department is one of the largest agencies working to resettle refugees in the U.S.

Rosenhauer said the White House announcement comes at a time when "the world is witnessing the highest levels of global displacement on record with more than 100 million people forced to flee their homes."

Advertisement

In June, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees released a report enumerating the rising number of refugees around the world who are leaving their homelands, citing food insecurity, climate change, wars and lack of safety as leading causes.

The White House announced the goal of resettling 125,000 refugees Sept. 28 as the Biden administration rebuilds the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program following declining refugee quotas and cutbacks in services in recent years.

The federal program also had set a goal to resettle the same number of refugees in fiscal year 2022, which ends Sept. 30. However, State Department figures released in August show that fewer than 20,000 refugees had been resettled. In fiscal year 2021, the U.S. admitted fewer than 8,000 refugees, the lowest number ever, according to agency data.

Since the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program was established in 1980, it has settled about 3.5 million refugees.

Dorsonville said that as the number of refugees admitted returns to higher levels, the USCCB will continue to "embrace this ministry given to us by Jesus," adding that "we look to the president and Congress for their continued support of a robust resettlement program, consistent with our national values."

Giulia McPherson, director of advocacy for JRS/USA, in a statement from the agency called on the White House to "meaningfully invest in rebuilding" the federal admissions program while doing "everything in our power to increase refugee arrivals in the United States."