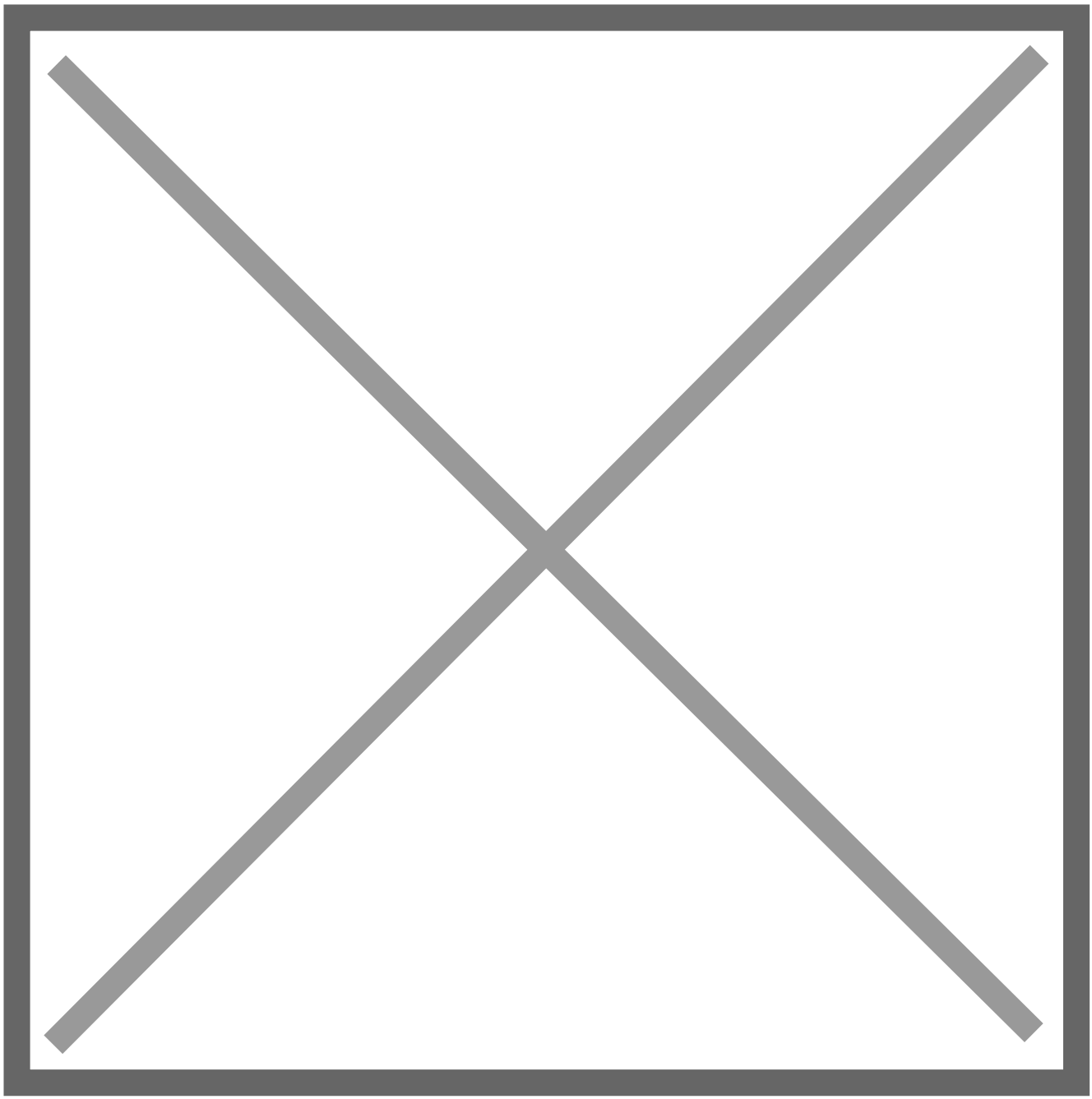
News



A family from the first group of white South Africans granted refugee status for being deemed victims of racial discrimination under U.S. President Donald Trump's refugee plan attend a meet and greet event at Dulles International Airport in Virginia May 12, 2025. The Trump administration announced Oct. 30 that it would restrict the number of refugees it admits annually into the United States to 7,500 and indicated most will be white South Africans. (OSV News/Reuters/Kevin Lamarque)

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The Trump administration indicated it would restrict the number of refugees it admits annually into the country to 7,500, with most of that number to be white South Africans.

In Oct. 30 notices posted to the Federal Register and expected to be published Oct. 31, the White House said that only 7,500 refugees would be accepted during the next fiscal year, from October 2025 to September 2026, calling the cap "justified by humanitarian concerns or is otherwise in the national interest."

The notices added that priority will be given to Afrikaner refugees and "other victims of illegal or unjust discrimination in their respective homelands."

Dylan Corbett, executive director of the Hope Border Institute, a group that works to apply the perspective of Catholic social teaching in policy and practice to the U.S.-Mexico border region, told OSV News, "The administration's refugee resettlement goals are unserious and even worse, they are overtly racially biased."

"At a time when the growing reality of human displacement around the world demands creativity and action, the United States is abandoning its leadership role on the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers," Corbett said.

The new cap marks a significant decrease from the previous fiscal year, when President Joe Biden's administration set the cap at 125,000.

Earlier this year, the Trump administration terminated the government's contract with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' refugee resettlement program as part of its broader effort to enforce its hardline immigration policies. It also ended protections for other groups of migrants, such as those from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela, as well as Afghanistan.

Trump has previously alleged there is an ongoing "genocide" against white farmers in South Africa, showing videos he claimed showed evidence of such violence during a contentious Oval Office meeting between Trump and that country's president, Cyril Ramaphosa, in May.

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However, while South Africa has a relatively high crime rate, there is no evidence that crimes against white farmers are disproportionate, a BBC analysis found. The BBC reviewed data from South African Police Service figures showing there were 26,232 murders in the country in 2024. Of those deaths, 44 were killings of people within the farming community, including Black and white South African victims.

A 2019 country report by the State Department during Trump's first term also disputed that argument, which is sometimes circulated by white nationalist groups.

"Some advocacy groups asserted white farmers were racially targeted for burglaries, home invasions, and killings, while many observers attributed the incidents to the country's high and growing crime rate," the report said, calling those isolated incidents "in line with the general upward trend in South Africa's serious and violent crimes."

At the time, Reuters reported that one of the photos Trump displayed to make his claims was a screenshot of a video it took in Congo in February. A vast distance separates both South Africa and Congo on the African continent, with planes having to cover more than 1,800 miles between the countries' respective capitals.

J. Kevin Appleby, senior fellow for policy at the Center for Migration Studies in New York and former director of migration policy for the U.S. Conference of Catholic

Bishops, told OSV News, "The real tragedy here is that thousands of vulnerable refugees around the world will not receive the protection they need."

"The U.S. refugee program, with help from the church nationwide, has saved the lives of millions of people over the decades but now is leaving them stranded and their lives at risk. It is definitely a moral stain on the nation," he said.

Catholic social teaching on immigration balances three interrelated principles — the right of persons to migrate in order to sustain their lives and those of their families, the right of a country to regulate its borders and control immigration, and a nation’s duty to regulate its borders with justice and mercy.

This story appears in the **Trump's Second Term** feature series. View the full series.