



## Joint Public Statement Denouncing President Donald Trump's Ban of Immigrants

We, the Dominican Sisters Conference and the Dominican Justice Promoters in the U.S., are appalled by President Trump's recent executive order. This nation has a long history of welcoming immigrants and sheltering refugees. Women and men religious have been blessed to accompany and serve immigrant and refugee communities across this country throughout their histories. We remain committed to welcoming refugees who come here after passing through the U.S. government's already rigorous screening process. Halting or undermining the U.S. refugee resettlement program leaves vulnerable refugees, including women and children fleeing violence, in extreme danger and diminishes us all.

President Trump's order, which bans residents of seven Muslim majority countries from entering the U.S. for 90 days, suspends refugee resettlement entirely for four months, and bars resettlement of Syrian refugees indefinitely. This is unconscionable in the face of the unprecedented global refugee crisis. More than 61 million people have been displaced from their homes, more than at any time since World War II. Some 21 million are refugees; most are children who have been forced from their homes by unthinkable violence.

We are told this is not the "Muslim ban" that had been proposed during the presidential campaign. However these actions focus on Muslim-majority countries, with exceptions made for Christians and non-Muslim minorities. Ironically, this ban does not include the home country of 15 of the 19 September 11<sup>th</sup> hijackers. Yet, people from Iraq, especially those who assisted our military in a destructive war, are excluded.

Our Christian story is rooted in a journey that includes the plight of Mary and Joseph, called out of their homeland to protect the child Jesus. Our Dominican story is 800 years old. St. Dominic founded the Order to preach truth. Our heritage as Dominicans calls us to stand for truth and to raise our voices for truth, especially as we are now faced with the lie about whom this executive order is targeting. This calls for dialog, seeing the other with dignity, and listening to the other's voice.

Our own Dominican sisters and brothers in Iraq have cried for that respect and dignity during these past years of war. Now is not the time to turn away from their plight, their oppression and desperation. Nor is it the time to turn away from their Muslim sisters and brothers.

This executive order gives aid and comfort to those forces which are bent on willful destruction. It harkens back to the darker moments of our own history of slavery and internment camps. It lowers our estimation in the eyes of the many peoples who want to know America as a defender of human rights and religious liberty, not a nation that targets religious populations and then shuts its doors on them.

In 2015, Pope Francis addressed Congress reminding them, “It is time to put aside fear and join together to recover who we are and what we represent to a world badly in need of hope and solidarity. If we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities.”