

# From 29,000 to Zero: Persecuted Christian Refugee Admissions Plunge

WASHINGTON – The U.S. is on track for a historic first: an entire year without resettling a single Christian refugee from the countries where believers face the most persecution.

Roughly one in seven Christians, globally, are persecuted for their faith. For decades, those forced to flee their home country found safety through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. But according to a new report from Open Doors USA and World Relief, that path is now effectively closed.



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“Barring a significant change in U.S. policy in the final month of the federal fiscal year, we anticipate that FY2026 will be the first year in at least a quarter century, and likely in the entire history of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, in which persecuted religious minorities have been completely shut out,” concludes the report, released Thursday.

By comparison, in fiscal year 2024, this same report found that more than 29,000 Christians were admitted from one of the 50 countries on the Open Doors USA World Watch List.

This year's findings don't mean the U.S. stopped accepting refugees altogether.

The Trump administration suspended the broader program, but created an exception for Afrikaners from South Africa, saying they face government discrimination and racially motivated violence. Nearly every refugee admitted this fiscal year has

come through that special program.

Ryan Brown, CEO of Open Doors USA, spoke at a recent press conference, saying, "U.S. policy sends a message to the persecuted Church. The thing that we most hear as we come alongside the Church is that they don't want to be when we have policies that close the door to any type of immigration, that does send a message, and it can be a message that can leave our brothers and sisters feeling alone."

Pastor Ara Torosian knows firsthand the plight of the persecuted Christian. He fled Iran in 2010, now he's an American citizen and a pastor in Los Angeles.

"America gave us the stop being need to open our hearts, not close our hearts, but secure our borders. America is always the refuge for the persecuted," he said during Thursday's press conference.

Open Doors USA and World Relief say they're not asking the administration to abandon security screening or bring in persecuted Christians with no limits. They're asking President Trump to restore a priority for Christians and other religious minorities fleeing persecution, a policy he championed during his first term.

*\*Published by agreement with CBN News.*

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