



**U.S. Catholic Sisters  
Against Human Trafficking**  
*Ending Slavery Is Everyone's Work*

## The Nexus between Migration and Human Trafficking

U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking (USCSAHT), a faith-based, national network that works to eradicate modern-day slavery, deplors the increase in human trafficking in the United States and around the world. Much of this trafficking results from forced migration and is exacerbated by U.S. government domestic and international policy.

People on the move and newly arrived immigrants are too often exploited by human traffickers because of their precarious social and economic circumstances. Undocumented immigrants are at even greater risk because they live in constant fear of apprehension, detention, and deportation. Xenophobia, anti-immigrant rhetoric, punitive policies, and increased enforcement only serve to push immigrants further into the shadows and gives a chilling advantage to traffickers who use people's immigration status as a tool to steal their labor or coerce them into the sex trade.

At a time when an unprecedented 70.8 million people<sup>1</sup> have been forced to flee their homes by violence of all kinds including poverty, armed conflict, abuse, and persecution, the United States must be true to its historic promise as a beacon for those most in need and a haven for those seeking refuge. We call on the administration and Congress to ensure that our refugee admissions goals, resettlement program, and asylum system are adequate to meet the unprecedented need.

In order to protect those in need and deal with the threat of human trafficking, we must also continue to fund important international agencies like UNHCR, UNICEF, the Bureau of International Labor Affairs, and the World Food Program, that support people on the move who are vulnerable to human trafficking.

We call on Catholics, and all people of good will, to take prophetic action consistent with Pope Francis' call to pray for, welcome, protect, promote, and integrate migrants into our hearts and our communities in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of traffickers.

We call on all elected leaders to insist that our nation "welcome the stranger" and care for those seeking refuge. We demand that U.S. migration policy focus on the prevention of human trafficking and the protection of the safety, dignity, human rights, and fundamental freedoms of all people regardless of their migratory status.

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR Global Trends <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2018/>