

U.S. Department of State

Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration

U.S. REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM NEWS

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Refugee Interviews to Resume in Kenya

New fingerprinting technology to be employed by late September

Despite numerous setbacks relating to security which prevented DHS adjudicators from traveling to Nairobi and Kakuma camp in the last several months, DHS officers departed for Kenya on August 21, 2003 to conduct interviews. There are approximately 12,000 Somali Bantu whom we hope to be able to interview within the coming months. On this circuit ride, the officers will interview in both Nairobi and Kakuma and plan to conduct interviews of 414 cases during this circuit ride.

In May, in response to security concerns in Kakuma camp, PRM funded approximately \$500,000 of upgrades to the camp, which included the construction of high fences and guard towers. These enhancements have made it possible for the DHS officers to return. Another structural improvement is the construction of an air-conditioned facility where a fingerprinting machine will be installed.

The ability to fingerprint approved refugees before they travel to the United States, will enhance security and also ease the processing at U.S. ports of entry. In-camp fingerprinting will provide the USG with the capability to check fingerprints against various U.S. security and intelligence databases, before the refugees have actually traveled to the U.S. It will also shorten the process for arriving refugees since they will already have been fingerprinted.

Plans are currently in place to have a fingerprinting system installed and operational at Kakuma by late September. The International Organization for Migration, one of PRM's partners in handling refugee processing at the Kakuma camp, hired the American-citizen fingerprinting technicians.



Amina and her family are among the first Somali Bantu to arrive in the U.S. The family is quickly adapting to its new life in Salt Lake City, Utah with help from the International Rescue Committee.

In addition, DHS is working to finalize a contract where mobile fingerprinting systems that are lighter-weight and less susceptible to severe climates may be utilized. This contract is expected to be settled within the next month or two. If the mobile systems are selected for Kakuma, they would help to supplement the stationary fingerprinting system there.

PRM is actively working with UNHCR and refugee advocates to identify other persons or groups in need of resettlement in Kakuma and elsewhere in Africa. ♦

FY 2003 ADMISSIONS STATISTICS (as of September 15, 2003)

Region	Regional Ceiling	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	Totals
Africa	20,000	49	273	211	127	232	550	866	1,362	1,459	1,347	1,261	906	8,643
East Asia	4,000	28	190	209	172	168	257	166	57	71	86	163	44	1,611
Europe	16,500	318	1,051	880	778	827	951	978	1,095	955	1,064	983	178	10,310
Latin America & Caribbean	2,500	0	7	0	6	12	12	62	74	31	43	74	0	321
Near East & South Asia	7,000	33	401	351	118	316	293	395	474	532	572	277	275	4,037
Unallocated Reserve	20,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
TOTAL	70,000	428	1,922	1,651	1,201	1,555	2,063	2,467	3,062	3,048	3,112	2,758	1,655	24,922

Source: Refugee Processing Center, Rosslyn, VA

PRM Working to Identify New Groups for Resettlement

PRM is currently working to identify possible groups of refugees for resettlement to the United States for FY 2004. PRM makes these determinations on an annual basis by reviewing recommendations from staff, and consulting with UNHCR, Refugee Council USA, and the public at-large. As part of the consultation process, PRM Deputy Assistant Secretary Kelly Ryan hosted a public outreach event on July 31, 2003 at the Refugee Processing Center in Rosslyn, VA. To read a transcript of the public meeting, please click on the link below. <http://www.state.gov/g/prm/rls/2003/23566.htm> At this meeting, representatives of resettlement agencies and refugees voiced their proposals for various

improvements or changes to the program and for a wide range of groups to be designated for resettlement interviews. PRM will take these recommendations into consideration as this year's proposal is put forth. Meskhetian Turks in Krasnodar Krai, Russia are an example of one group currently under review for possible resettlement. The USG plans to participate in a multilateral assessment trip led by the OSCE in late September to assess the vulnerability and feasibility of resettling this group. PRM is also actively working with UNHCR to identify new groups in West and East Africa. ♦

PRM Seeks to Improve the U.S. Refugee Admissions Process

PRM has engaged David Martin, a prominent professor in immigration law at the University of Virginia and former General Counsel of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, to conduct the first-ever government sponsored study of the U.S. Refugee Admissions process. The purpose of the study is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current program and to provide recommendations for its improvement.

Although still in the early stages, Professor Martin has already consulted a wide-range of persons deeply interested in refugee issues: from advocates in non-government organizations to administrators in government agencies. In September, he will travel to Europe and Africa to meet with those who work in the field. With multiple perspectives and a diversity of ideas, PRM expects the study to provide valuable insight into the current process and produce a series of concrete recommendations for streamlining and reform.