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Empowering refugees and immigrants since 1983

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ECDC Opposes the Administration's Termination of Parole in Central American Minors (CAM) Program

Arlington, VA— ECDC is disappointed in the U.S. government's decision to no longer consider or authorize humanitarian parole for children and families in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to come to the United States as part of the Central America Minors (CAM) program. The high levels of forced gang recruitment, alarmingly high level of violence against women and children, and poverty in the region have made daily childhood activities a dangerous gamble for much of the youth in the region.

The parole option for Central American Minors allowed youth who faced compelling humanitarian needs to come to the United States to live with their U.S.-based parents in peace and security. Many of these concerned parents have patiently waited as their petitions went through a long and expensive process only to find that without warning their previously approved petitions have been invalidated. ECDC's offices and affiliated agencies have received distraught calls throughout the U.S. from parents who are concerned about their children's future without the option for parole. These children have few other places to seek safety. Violence and poverty have put the lives of tens of thousands of vulnerable children and families at risk in the region.

ECDC requests the current administration to follow through with its commitment to these children and their parents who are lawfully present and contribute to their local communities. ECDC also asks that the U.S. government stand by its pledges in the San Jose Action Statement of 2016 to continue to work with other countries in the Americas to offer increased durable solutions for these young victims of violence and to continue to demonstrate leadership in this joint humanitarian response.

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ECDC is one of nine resettlement agencies working in partnership with the Department of State and the Office of Refugee Resettlement to provide initial placement and support services to refugees being resettled in the United States. ECDC promotes cultural, educational and socio-economic development programs to assist refugees and immigrants in becoming productive members of their new homeland.