



# The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

March 2011

# USRAP Mission

To offer resettlement opportunities to persons overseas who are of special humanitarian concern, while protecting national security and combating fraud.



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## USRAP Admissions

The President, in consultation with Congress, establishes the number and groups of refugees eligible for admission each fiscal year. As a ceiling, this determination sets the maximum numbers of refugees that may be admitted.

	FY 2009 Ceiling	FY 2010 Ceiling	FY 2011 Ceiling
Africa	12,000	15,500	15,000
East Asia	19,000	17,000	19,000
Europe and Central Asia	2,500	2,500	2,000
Latin America/Caribbean	4,500	5,000	5,500
Near East/South Asia	37,000	35,000	35,500
Unallocated Reserve*	5,000	5,000	3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>

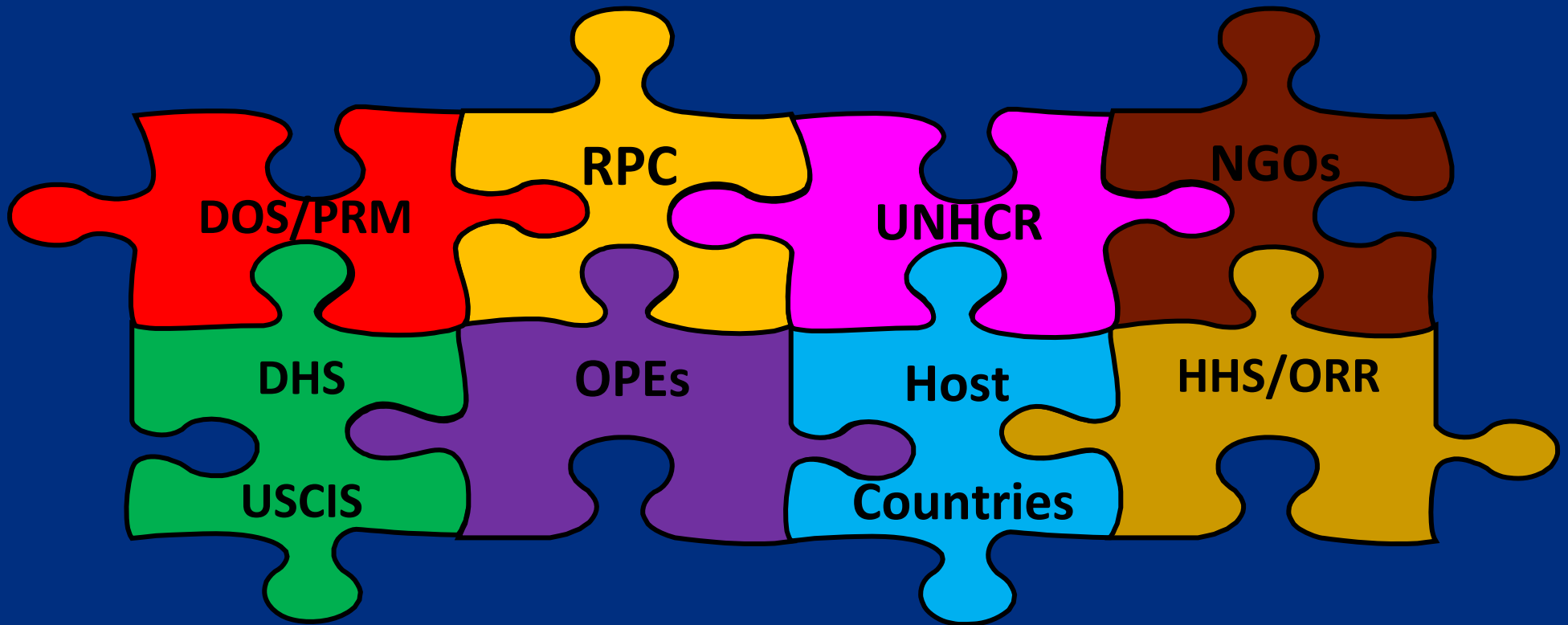


# Processing Priorities

- Each year, processing priorities are established to determine which of the world's refugees are of special humanitarian concern to the United States.
- Only those individuals who qualify under one of the processing priorities are eligible for a refugee status interview with USCIS. Qualifying under a processing priority does not guarantee refugee status approval.
- FY2009 Processing Priorities include:
  - P-1: Individual referrals by U.S. Embassy, UNHCR or designated NGO.
  - P-2: Specific groups of concern identified by the USRAP, usually specific groups within a certain nationality.
  - P-3: Family reunification cases for designated nationalities. (P-3 currently suspended).

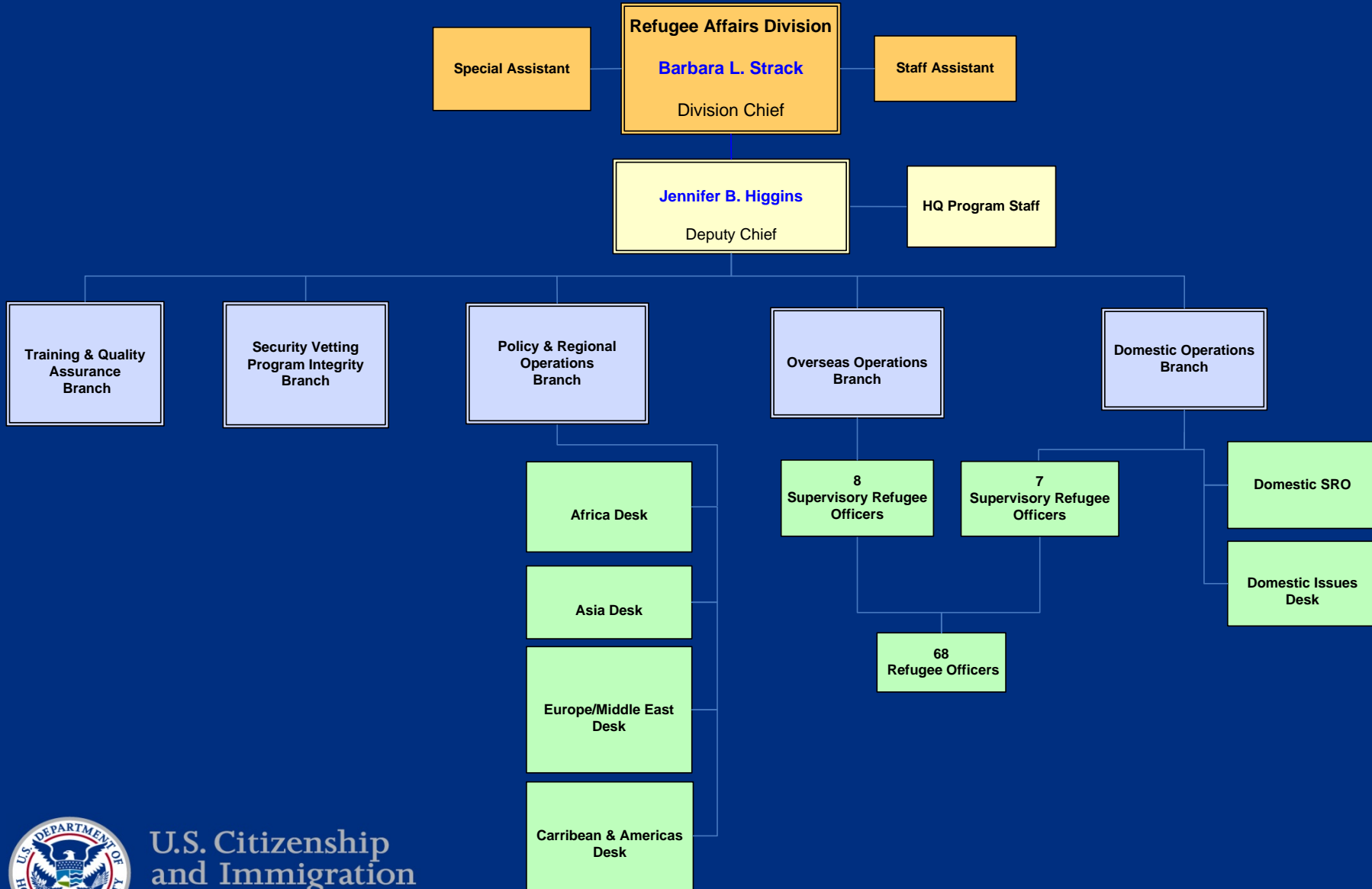


A complex interagency effort involving several governmental and non-governmental partners both overseas and in the United States.



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# RAD Organizational Structure



# Role of USCIS in the USRAP

USCIS officers conduct personal interviews with applicants to determine eligibility, generally with an interpreter.



Pursuant to the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRFA), all refugee adjudicators must complete specialized training.

Refugee Corps established in FY2006; processing demands supplemented by Asylum Corps and other specially-trained USCIS adjudicators.



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# Refugee Definition

## INA 101(a)(42)



*Person outside his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return because of persecution, or a well-founded fear of persecution, on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.\**

\* Excludes persecutors or those who have assisted in the persecution of others.



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# USCIS Eligibility Determination

1. Access - Does the principal applicant qualify under a processing priority (*i.e.*, P-1, P-2 or P-3)?
2. Refugee Definition - Does the principal applicant meet all aspects of the refugee definition under INA 101(a)(42)?
3. Firm Resettlement – Has the principal applicant been permanently resettled in a 3rd country with legal status, and does applicant enjoy rights and privileges afforded other such permanent status members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> country?
4. Admissibility - Is the principal applicant otherwise admissible or do any of the grounds of inadmissibility under INA Section 212(a) apply?

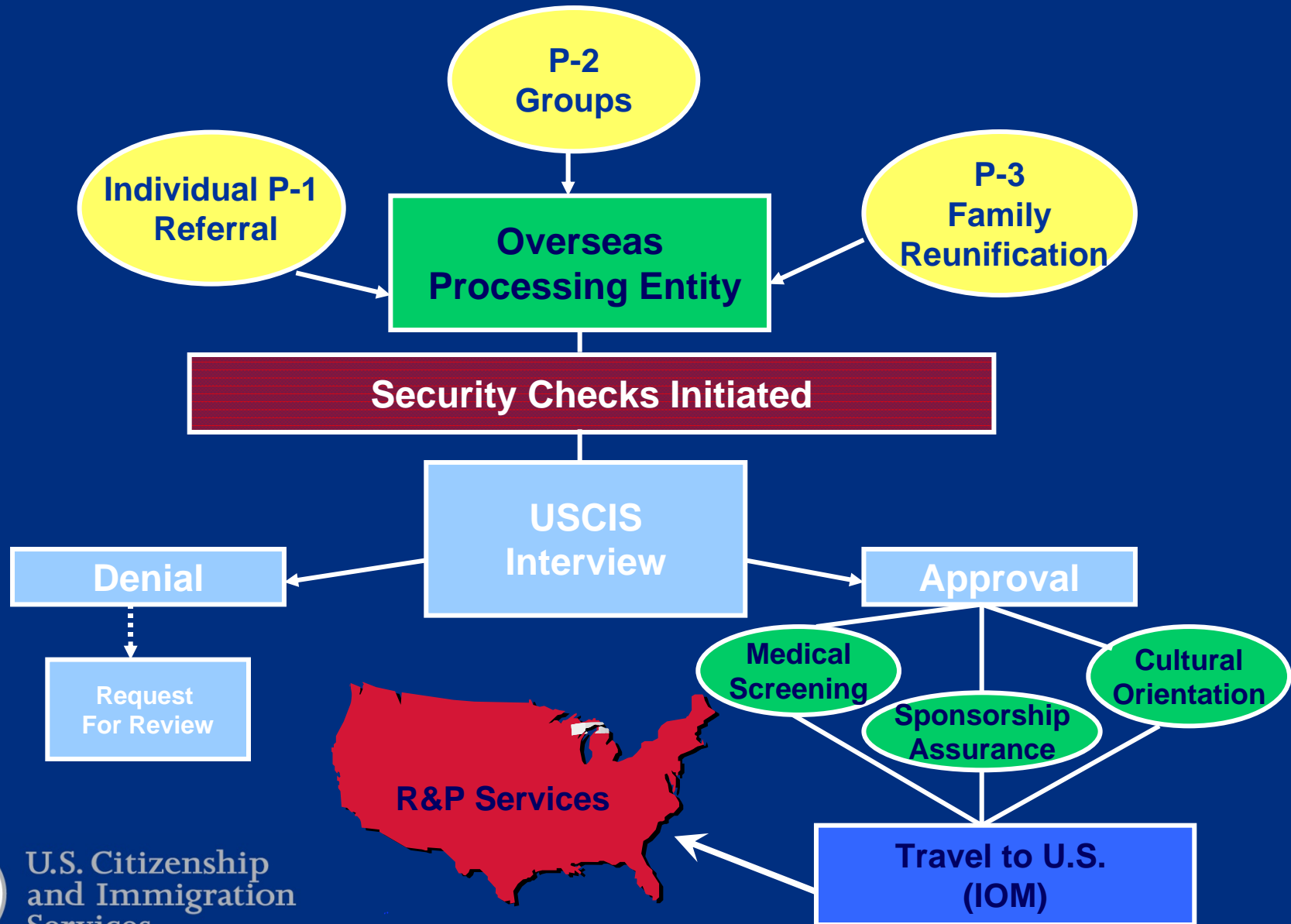


# Benefits of Refugee Status

- Indefinite status granted upon admission; work authorized incident to status.
- Derivatives (*i.e.*, spouse and unmarried children under the age of 21) may accompany or follow to join the principal refugee.
- Receive certain social and health service benefits.
- Must apply for adjustment as LPR after one year.
- Eligible to apply for naturalization after five years.



# Process Flow



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## Worldwide Statistics

	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010
<b>Allocated Ceiling</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>72,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>
<b>Applicants Interviewed</b>	<b>69,609</b>	<b>99,916</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>95,000</b>
<b>Actual Admissions</b>	<b>48,281</b>	<b>60,192</b>	<b>74,654</b>	<b>73,311</b>

### FY2010 accomplishments:

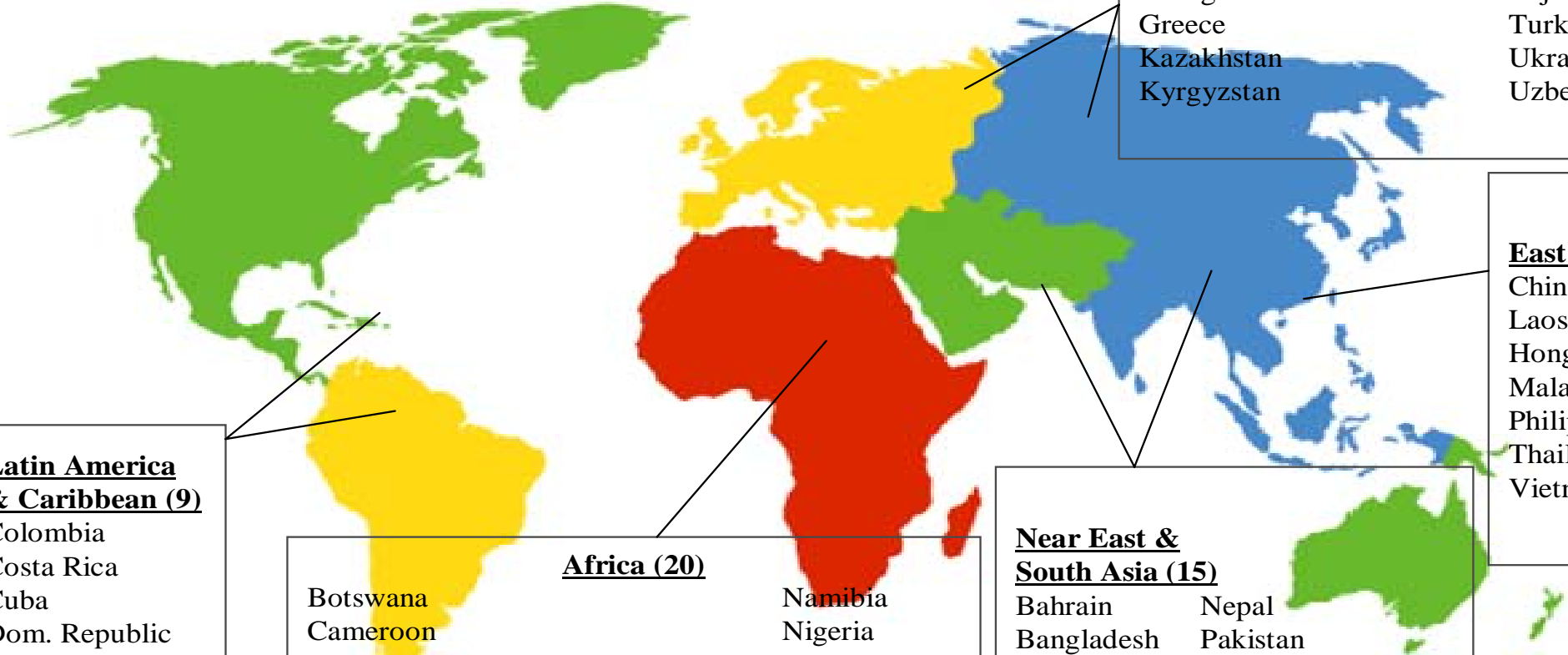
- Completed sufficient interviews to support allocated admissions levels, including nearly 30,000 Iraqi nationals.
- Deployed more than 100 officers/quarter on a total of 100 circuit rides to 67 countries.
- Interviewed applicants representing 68 nations.

### FY2011 Q1 accomplishments:

- 19,296 refugee applicants were interviewed, including 4,671 Iraqis.
- RAD deployed 117 officers to a total of 17 countries.
- 15,146 refugees from 47 nations were admitted, including 3,875 Iraqis.



# USCIS REFUGEE INTERVIEW LOCATIONS FISCAL YEAR 2010 67 COUNTRIES TOTAL



- Europe & Central Asia (16)**
- |            |            |
|------------|------------|
| Armenia    | Malta      |
| Austria    | Moldova    |
| Azerbaijan | Romania    |
| Belarus    | Russia     |
| Georgia    | Tajikistan |
| Greece     | Turkey     |
| Kazakhstan | Ukraine    |
| Kyrgyzstan | Uzbekistan |

- East Asia (7)**
- China
  - Laos
  - Hong Kong
  - Malaysia
  - Philippines
  - Thailand
  - Vietnam

- Near East & South Asia (15)**
- |            |                      |
|------------|----------------------|
| Bahrain    | Nepal                |
| Bangladesh | Pakistan             |
| India      | Palau                |
| Iraq       | Sri Lanka            |
| Israel     | Syria                |
| Jordan     | United Arab Emirates |
| Kuwait     | Yemen                |
| Lebanon    |                      |

- Africa (20)**
- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| Botswana    | Namibia      |
| Cameroon    | Nigeria      |
| Djibouti    | Rwanda       |
| Egypt       | Senegal      |
| Ethiopia    | Sierra Leone |
| Ghana       | South Africa |
| Ivory Coast | Tanzania     |
| Kenya       | Uganda       |
| Mozambique  | Zambia       |
| Malawi      | Zimbabwe     |

- Latin America & Caribbean (9)**
- Colombia
  - Costa Rica
  - Cuba
  - Dom. Republic
  - Ecuador
  - Haiti
  - Jamaica
  - Panama
  - Trinidad & Tobago

# FY2010 Initiatives

- Developed revised I-590 refugee application to consolidate and streamline existing forms creating greater efficiency in processing.
- Continued to assess and improve the current security check process.
- Worked with DOS to finalize new procedures so P-3 processing may resume.
  - ✓ New AOR (DOS form; filing timeframe; anchor age requirement)
  - ✓ DNA Testing Requirement
  - ✓ Resumption in FY2011
- Consulted with UNHCR and other countries on the use of biometrics, including the development of data sharing exchanges to address fraud.
- Launched systematic quality assurance reviews and enhanced training strategy for refugee adjudicators and supervisors.



# FY2011 Initiatives

- Interview approximately 95,000 refugee applicants to support the President's authorized refugee admissions level.
- Continue to assess and improve the current security check process, and consult with UNHCR and other countries on the use/exchange of biometrics.
- Pursue new IT solutions to streamline and modernize refugee processing activities in the field, including consideration of a web-based case management system.
- Develop a standardized approach to regional pre-departure trainings and enhance practical exercises to better prepare adjudicators for CRs.
- Launch additional quality assurance reviews, including a study on the quality of RFR adjudications.



# Confidentiality Policies

- Federal Regulations at 8 CFR 208.6 generally prohibit disclosure of information contained in or pertaining to asylum applications to third parties, without the applicant's consent, except under certain limited circumstances.
- As a matter of policy, refugee case information is treated as confidential in the same way as asylum information.
- Relatives & other U.S. Government agencies are considered 3rd parties, but information may be disclosed to a U.S government agency or contractor having a need to examine the information in connection with adjudication of the application, or if another exception applies.





# Confidentiality Compromised

Confidentiality is breached when info contained in or pertaining to a refugee application is disclosed to a third party in violation of the regulations, including:

- the fact that the applicant has applied for refugee status
- specific facts or allegations pertaining to the individual refugee claim
- facts sufficient to give rise to a reasonable inference that the applicant has applied for refugee status



More detailed information on  
the U.S. Refugee Admissions  
Program is available at  
[www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) under  
“Humanitarian” programs.



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