



## **Coalition of Immigrant Rights Groups Oppose Trump Administration's Decision To Expand Ban Targeting African and Asian Nations**

*Hateful policies will forcibly separate Americans from their foreign-born families*

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**Norcross, GA, January 31, 2020** — Value Our Families, a national coalition of organizations advocating to strengthen the U.S. family-based immigration system, issues the following statement as Trump expands the Muslim ban to 6 more countries that are African, Central and East Asian nations: Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Eritrea, Nigeria, Sudan and Tanzania.

While this Ban expands beyond Muslim-majority countries it is firmly rooted in the same white nationalism that seeks to change the future composition of America. Trump has a record of using explicitly racist terms when referring to African nations.

Henny Ohr, executive director at EMBARC in Iowa, stated:

"For decades, the minority Rohingya Muslims of Burma have been exposed to human rights violations. Now, those who reside in the United States are living in fear of being separated from their family due to Trump's expansion of the Muslim ban. Anything that tears apart our families threatens our nation. That's why today, immigrant families in Iowa and throughout our nation affirm our belief that having family values means keeping families together no matter their creed or where they were born."

Nneka Achapu from UndocuBlack Network, stated:

"The potential threat of the expansion of the Muslim ban to include Nigeria would be devastating across the U.S. Nigerians in the US have strong, deep ties here and abroad, we can not stand for this. I can't imagine the damage that could be caused by this; it would continue to separate thousands of families by putting their lives on hold. The implications of this potential ban would not only affect Nigerians as a community of people, but would also strain business and economic ties. This ban would effectively further erode the trust of the people in the American government and demonstrate that this administration is not concerned with the people of Nigeria or Africa in general.

This Muslim ban expansion emphasizes what we already know: no amount of money or class status can compete with the Administration's commitment to keep Black and Brown folks policed and criminalized."

Simone Jacobson, Restaurant co-owner of the only Burmese restaurant in DC, stated:

"I feel an obligation to oppose the travel ban for citizens of Myanmar and beyond. Without my mom and the rest of our family being able to emigrate to the U.S. in the 1970s from Burma, Washington would never have known a top culinary destination—named the 2019 Restaurant of the Year in Eater DC—our family's new restaurant, Thamee, or our Toli Moli Burmese Bodega that preceded it. Thamee means 'daughter' in Burmese, and my mom, who is now a U.S. citizen, is the executive chef, while I - a first generation Burmese American - run front of house operations.

Ultimately, immigrant food is American food, and without immigrants, Americans could not enjoy access to the countless cuisines and cultures of nations beyond our physical borders. To limit the entry of foreign nationals to the U.S. is an attack on both the stomachs and the hearts of Americans who eat, which is to say these policies

adversely impact all Americans. I think we'd be hard pressed to find any American in any part of this country who doesn't eat food prepared by, supplied by, and creatively driven by a richly diverse group of individuals from outside of the United States."

Aarti Kohli, executive director at Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus, stated:

"The expansion of this xenophobic policy counters who we are as a nation, threatens our freedom of religion, and will only separate more families and their loved ones in communities across the United States under the guise of national security."

Value Our Families is a national coalition of organizations seeking to strengthen the U.S. family-based immigration system.

### **About Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta**

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta (formerly Asian American Legal Advocacy Center or AALAC) is the first non-profit law center dedicated to Asian immigrants and refugees ("Asian Americans") in the Southeast.

Our goal is to engage, educate and empower under-represented Asian Americans to greater civic participation.

We are one of five independent organizations that make up the national Asian Americans Advancing Justice. Together with our affiliates in Chicago, DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco, we bring more than 100 years of collective experience in addressing the civil rights issues faced by Asian Americans and other vulnerable and underserved communities. Visit [www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org](http://www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org).