There are currently 500 to 1,000 Uyghurs caught up in the U.S. asylum system, with some having waited upwards of eight years for resolutions to their cases; Asylum seekers are experiencing significant stress on multiple fronts, including on their physical and mental health, as well as financial strains as a result of limited incomes; Separation from family in East Turkistan amounts to an additional source of stress and anxiety, which leads to feelings of re-traumatization and survivor’s guilt; Uyghurs waiting for adjudication of their asylum claims have fled persecution in East Turkistan, which escalated in 2016 to atrocities that constitute genocide and crimes against humanity; The updated guidelines for the “last in, first-out” procedure for processing asylum applications has significantly delayed many Uyghur asylum cases;

Key Takeaways
- There are currently 500 to 1,000 Uyghurs caught up in the U.S. asylum system, with some having waited upwards of eight years for resolutions to their cases;
- Asylum seekers are experiencing significant stress on multiple fronts, including on their physical and mental health, as well as financial strains as a result of limited incomes;
- Separation from family in East Turkistan amounts to an additional source of stress and anxiety, which leads to feelings of re-traumatization and survivor’s guilt;
- Uyghurs waiting for adjudication of their asylum claims have fled persecution in East Turkistan, which escalated in 2016 to atrocities that constitute genocide and crimes against humanity;
- The updated guidelines for the “last in, first-out” procedure for processing asylum applications has significantly delayed many Uyghur asylum cases;

Recommendations
- **Congress** should direct USCIS to implement procedures to allow for priority processing of asylum-seekers who are victims and survivors of genocides and atrocity crimes recognized by a U.S. policy determination;
- **Members of Congress** should continue to highlight the urgency of funding to address USCIS asylum-processing backlogs;
- **The White House Office of Management and Budget** should propose a USCIS budget with necessary resources for resolving the asylum backlog, and Congress should appropriate the necessary funds;
- **The State Department** should provide leadership on the issue of providing safe refuge with counterparts in other countries where asylum cases may also be hampered by inadequate documentation;
- **Charities and humanitarian organizations** should establish partnerships with Uyghur community organizations in the U.S. to offer additional assistance in dealing with the application process, work permit applications, and other needs arising from long-delayed asylum decisions;

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