



By: TA | AP Brief

US deportation practices violate the law - UN refugee agency



The head of the U.N. refugee agency suggested Monday that President Donald Trump's America has carried out deportation **practices** that violate international law, and criticized a wider "backlash" in some countries against migrants and refugees.

Filippo Grandi, the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, used a speech to lament that drastic funding cuts and shortages have forced his agency, UNHCR, to slash nearly 5,000 jobs this year, or nearly a quarter of its workforce. The cuts may not be finished, he said.

"This was certainly not an easy year for any of us," Grandi told the opening of UNHCR's executive committee. "But remember, please: There has never been an easy year to be a refugee — and there never will be."

He did cite some bright spots and praised the Trump administration-led peace efforts in Congo, where conflict has displaced millions of people.

At the U.N. General Assembly last month, the Trump administration — which has **slashed** support this year for international humanitarian aid — **pitched** other countries on its view that the global system of seeking asylum has been abused and needs to be revamped, in part by cracking down on migration.

Other traditional **donors** have cut back their aid outlays for UNHCR this year.

In recent years, the agency has received roughly \$5 billion a year — or half its budgetary requirements — even as conflict and repression in places like Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sudan, Venezuela and Ukraine have led the number of people fleeing their homes to roughly double over the last decade — to 122 million.

In the politically charged environment of today, Grandi said, "putting the (U.N.) Refugee Convention and the **principle** of asylum on the table would be a catastrophic error." He insisted that "national sovereignty and the right to seek asylum" are not incompatible.

They are complementary."

Erosion of respect for international law

Grandi, whose term is up at the end of this year, decried an erosion of respect for international law in certain developed countries and noted that most refugees are taken in by poorer ones.

"I am worried that the current debate — in Europe, for example — and some current deportation practices — such as in the United States — address real challenges in manners not consistent with international law," he said.

Tommy Pigott, a U.S. State Department spokesman, defended U.S. immigration and migration policies and said Trump's **speech** at the United Nations was "a call to action against the destructive policies promoting mass and illegal migration that globalist bureaucrats have pushed for years."

More than 1 million refugees from Syria have now returned home

"Our actions are consistent with U.S. law and the will of the American people, who demand secure borders and a lawful immigration system," Pigott said.

Grandi also cited some optimistic developments: More than 1 million refugees from Syria have now **returned** home. A "glimmer of hope" has emerged in the eastern Congo conflict between Rwanda-backed forces and Congo's armed forces.

"Thanks to peace efforts spearheaded by the United States, instead of speaking only of more bloodshed, or more refugees, we can start to think — cautiously, but a little bit more optimistically — of stability and returns," he said.