

# URGENT ACTION

## STOP ILLEGAL EXPULSIONS TO EL SALVADOR

Following a presidential proclamation invoking the Alien Enemies Act by President Trump, targeting alleged members of the Tren de Aragua (TdA) criminal group, 255 individuals have been illegally removed from the USA to El Salvador and are now being held at the Centro de Confinamiento Contra el Terrorismo (CECOT), a prison notorious for its inhumane conditions. We call on the Trump administration to immediately return those that were illegally removed to El Salvador back to the US and halt any subsequent expulsions or deportations of Venezuelans or other third country nationals, complying with the decisions of the US Judiciary.

### TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **UA 34.25**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

**The Honorable Kristi Noem**  
**Secretary of Homeland Security**  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20528  
USA  
Email: [dhssecretary@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:dhssecretary@hq.dhs.gov)

Dear Secretary Noem,

I am extremely concerned over the **recent unlawful expulsions of individuals from the United States to El Salvador** under the purported authority of the Alien Enemies Act.

Despite a court order prohibiting their removal, 238 individuals were expelled to El Salvador on March 16, followed by 17 more on March 30. These individuals include people who were engaged in ongoing legal proceedings, had no criminal record or ties to a gang, or had already been granted protection under U.S. law, including the Convention Against Torture. Many were expelled without removal orders, a violation of established legal processes. Disturbingly, these individuals have been transferred to the Centro de Confinamiento Contra el Terrorismo (CECOT), a prison notorious for its inhumane conditions. The families of those unlawfully sent to El Salvador have not received any official information about their loved ones' whereabouts.

The United States must uphold the principle of non-refoulement, which unequivocally prohibits states from returning, removing, or transferring individuals to any country where they would face a real risk of serious human rights abuses, including arbitrary detention, torture or ill-treatment. By expelling these individuals to El Salvador, the U.S. government has placed them in grave danger. Further removals, particularly any subsequent transfer to Venezuela, would constitute additional violations of international law.

I urge you to immediately return those that were illegally removed to El Salvador so that they can continue their immigration proceedings in the US, and halt any subsequent expulsions, complying with the decisions of the US Judiciary.

Yours sincerely,

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

On March 15, 2025, President Trump invoked the Alien Enemies Act, 50 USC 21, claiming that the Tren de Aragua (TdA) criminal group “is perpetrating, attempting, and threatening an invasion or predatory incursion against the territory of the United States” and warning that “Venezuelan citizens 14 years of age or older who are members of TdA, are within the United States, and are not actually naturalized or lawful permanent residents of the United States are liable to be apprehended, restrained, secured, and removed as Alien Enemies.” The Alien Enemies Act is a power granted to the President only in times of actual or imminent war against another country. The Act was last used to detain over 120,000 Japanese Americans in internment camps in the U.S. during World War II.

On March 15, a class action lawsuit was filed on behalf of five Venezuelan individuals at risk of removal under the presidential proclamation on the Alien Enemies Act. The District Court in D.C. issued a temporary restraining order (TRO) for the plaintiffs and scheduled a hearing to further address extending this order to the described class. Later that day, the court preliminarily certified a class –extending the TRO to everyone detained who is designated under the proclamation– and ordered the government to turn back any flights on their way to El Salvador. The government appealed the TRO to the D.C. Circuit, which upheld the restraining order. The administration has now appealed to the Supreme Court.

On March 16, after the above orders were issued, the government unlawfully expelled 238 individuals to the Centro de Confinamiento Contra el Terrorismo (CECOT), an infamous prison in El Salvador, under the purported authority of the Alien Enemies Act. On March 30, an additional 17 individuals, both Salvadoran and Venezuelan, were deported to El Salvador. According to available public information, those expelled include individuals who were in the midst of ongoing court processes, were arrested while complying with their immigration obligations, were already granted protections in the United States including under the Convention Against Torture, and were labelled as gang members for their tattoos or connection to the Venezuelan state of Aragua with no other evidence. In fact, even U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials have since admitted “many” had no criminal record at all and some were removed because of a perception they may commit crimes in the future. Importantly, these expulsions are not deportations, a legal process defined in U.S. law. Those that were expelled on March 16 were expelled without removal orders. The individuals have been removed from the ICE Locator meaning that their current “official” locations are unknown.

Amnesty International has extensively [documented](#) the inhumane conditions within detentions centers in El Salvador, including the CECOT, where those removed are now being held.

The principle of non-refoulement unequivocally prohibits states from returning, removing, or transferring individuals to any country where they would face a real risk of serious human rights violations. By removing individuals to El Salvador under these circumstances, the United States has placed them in grave danger and failed to uphold its legal obligations.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** English or your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** July 1, 2025

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Migrants and people seeking safety (all pronouns)