

Donald Trump administration enacts another restriction for asylum-seekers



Washington, July 30 (RHC)-- U.S. Attorney General William Barr enacted a new obstacle for asylum-seekers Monday, ruling that being persecuted on the basis of threats against a family member is not enough to be granted asylum in the United States.

Barr overruled a decision by the Board of Immigration Appeals, finding that the jury improperly ruled that a Mexican man was eligible for asylum because of threats against him came after a drug cartel first threatened his father.

For decades, U.S. migration courts have considered that families ties fall under the category of pertaining to a “particular social group,” which by law, with race, religion, nationality, political opinion, are the basis for asylum protection if proven that persecution was based on any of those criteria.

But Barr’s decision found that virtually every asylum-seeker is a member of a family and that, “there is no evidence that Congress intended the term ‘particular social group’ to cast so wide a net.”

“So suddenly reversing that trend is likely to affect thousands of cases,” said Bradley Jenkins, a litigator for Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc. This is just a new obstacle expedited by U.S. President Donald Trump’s administration, which is actively seeking to reduce the number of asylum cases in the U.S.-Mexico border as part of the president’s 2020 reelection campaign.

Prior to Barr’s ruling, on July 15, the U.S. Departments of Justice and Homeland Security issued a joint rule that blocks all migrants from applying for asylum at the southern border, requiring them first to attempt international protection in a safe third country (STC).

Almost ten days later, Trump threatened Guatemala with economic sanctions in order to make them cave in and become an STC. This means that now asylum seekers en route to the U.S. have to request their asylum from Guatemala, shifting the burden to that Central American nation.

Although a federal judge in the state of California blocked this rule last week by issuing a preliminary injunction pending trial, Trump’s government filed a motion on Monday asking the judge to suspend the injunction.

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