Building a new home: How the Afghan experience can inform Ukrainian resettlement in the U.S.

Last summer, the U.S. evacuated more than 75,000 people from Afghanistan as the Taliban reclaimed power during the chaotic departure of American troops. Today, the U.S. is still resettling and incorporating Afghan evacuees as it prepares to potentially welcome up to 100,000 refugees from Ukraine. What lessons were learned in the past seven months, and what should change to build a more resilient refugee resettlement system in the U.S.?

A new brief by the Center for the Middle East's Kelsey Norman, Ana Martín Gil and Fazal Muzhary explores the challenges Afghan evacuees continue to face in their new communities, as well as solutions that could make the process easier. Despite language barriers, administrative constraints, unclear or absent pathways to lawful permanent residency and other obstacles, the authors write that resettlement has also brought new opportunities — for refugees and host communities alike.

Read the full brief, and join the Women's Rights, Human Rights and Refugees Program this Thursday for the second event in a two-part series examining the rapid 2021 evacuation mission, the subsequent resettlement process and the integration of Afghan refugees in Houston and elsewhere. If you have not yet registered, a livestream will be available on our website and on our YouTube page.

Video of the first event in the series, featuring Dr. Sima Samar, a renowned Afghan women's and human rights advocate and activist, is available here.

State Department diplomacy museum commemorates Secretary Baker’s historic contributions

A bronze bust of former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, was recently unveiled as part of the permanent collection of the National Museum of American Diplomacy in Washington, D.C. The specially commissioned bust honors “the most important unelected official in America since World War II,” said Secretary of State Antony Blinken at the unveiling ceremony. Learn more about the event and watch a video of it here.
“Delineating a border to disengage Israelis and Palestinians from each other is the only way to secure a Jewish-democratic Israel ... as well as political self-determination for the Palestinians. It is still attainable — albeit, gradually.”

Gilead Sher, Isaac and Mildred Brochstein Fellow in Middle East Peace and Security in Honor of Yitzhak Rabin, in Just Security
Baker Institute advisory board member Dr. Huda Zoghbi moderates conversation with Nobel laureate Ardem Patapoutian

On April 13, Dr. Huda Zoghbi, director of the Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute (NRI) and a member of the Baker Institute board of advisors, moderated a special conversation at the NRI with Nobel laureate Ardem Patapoutian.

Patapoutian, who is affiliated with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Scripps Research Institute, was co-awarded the 2021 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for the discovery of the fundamental ion-channel sensors for temperature and pressure. The first Nobel laureate of Armenian origin, Patapoutian emigrated with his family to the United States from Lebanon.

From left to right in the photo above are Dr. Rola El-Serag, director of the Baker Institute Center for Health and Biosciences; Françoise Djerejian; Patapoutian; Zoghbi; and Baker Institute Director Ambassador Edward Djerejian.

Latest research

**Powerless: López Obrador’s Failed Electricity Reforms.** A congressional vote against Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador’s bid to limit private investment in the country’s power sector is a stand against his vision for Mexico, write experts Tony Payan and Miriam Grunstein. Read their post in the Baker Institute Blog.

**The Horror in Ukraine: No End in Sight.** Russia’s likely initial goal — a quick decapitation strike against Kyiv and the installation of a pro-Moscow government — has proven an embarrassing and costly failure. But the war in Ukraine continues, trailing fresh horrors in its wake, writes fellow Joe Barnes. Read his post on the ongoing crisis in the Baker Institute Blog.
Eight New Points on the Porcupine: More Ukrainian Lessons for Taiwan. With experts suspecting Chinese President Xi Jinping may try to reclaim Taiwan, Center for Energy Studies fellow Gabriel Collins and co-author Andrew S. Erickson outline strategies Taiwan might adopt from watching Russia's similar invasion of Ukraine. Read their commentary in War on the Rocks.

The SECURE Act 2.0: Saving More for Retirement. Public finance fellow Joyce Beebe reviews key provisions of the Securing a Strong Retirement Act of 2022, which was passed in late March by the U.S. House of Representatives, and considers its potential impacts on American workers in a new post on the Baker Institute Blog. Read it here.

Mexico’s 2021 Dark Network Alliance Structure. A paper by nonresident scholar Nathan P. Jones and co-authors Irina Chindea, Daniel Weisz-Argomedo and John P. Sullivan maps out the network of alliances between the two most powerful cartels in Mexico and reveals key structural differences that could have important implications for policymakers. Read their paper here.
Upcoming events

**Director’s Lecture Series: Reflections on 28 Years at the Baker Institute.** Baker Institute Director Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian looks back on the institute’s near three-decade history at a special Director’s Lecture Series event. In conversation with Rice historian John Boles, the Ambassador will also address the role of think tanks in a time of deep partisan division and how think tanks can remain relevant and effective. **May 12 | 6:00 p.m. CDT**

**Webinar — Restoring Confidence in American Elections.** At this virtual conference — a collaboration between The Carter Center and the Baker Institute — experts address the U.S. electoral landscape, state-level legislative changes to voting access and more. **April 29 | 8:45 a.m. CDT**

**Trends in Global and Regional Trade: The View from North America.** Renowned historian, economist and author Marc Levinson discusses developments in globalization during the keynote address, and a panel of experts explores changes to the international trade regime. **May 4 | 7:30 a.m. CDT**

**Webinar — A Low-Carbon Future and the Role of Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage.** Jerrad Thomas, business development manager at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, and Kenneth B. Medlock, senior director of the Center for Energy Studies, consider how carbon capture, utilization and storage technologies can be used to decarbonize various heavy industry sectors. **May 12 | 3:00 p.m. CDT**

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