

Originators: *Evangelical Lutheran Church of America*

Forum Endorsement: *ACT North America Forum*

ACT Alliance public statement on family unity

As the world continues to grapple with the fallout from changes in U.S. immigration policies and practices that have resulted in the separation of children from their parents, the ACT Alliance reiterates its call for international, regional and domestic migration policies that keep families together.

Families are a fundamental group in society and are critical to the wellbeing of all its members. Migration policies should not create delays or prevent the reunification of families on the move. Asylum, refugee, and immigration policies should be rights- and evidence-based and honor our call to welcome the stranger and walk alongside those fleeing their communities.

While the U.S. border policy to separate children from their parents is a most blatant example of a national policy that causes family separation, we acknowledge that many other immigration policies from countries around the world lead to the separation of families. These policies include the reduction of refugee admissions, limited family reunification visas, absence of or weak asylum policies that focus on reunifying families in safe countries, and safe third country agreements.

Affirming the ACT Alliance's June 2018 statement on family separation, we call upon ACT Alliance members to:

- Strongly encourage regional, international and national advocacy for migration policies that keep families together.
- Provide resources to work with children and families that have fled their countries of origin.
- Build awareness in their respective communities about policies and practices that separate families, and the challenges migrants face along the way.
- Participate in national and local church networks to accompany and strengthen protection of migrant families.

In addition, we call upon national governments to reverse immigration policies and practices that have or could result in the separation of children from their parents. We also urge national governments to ensure asylum, refugee and immigration policies are in line with human rights and human dignity.