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**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\***

***Legal Aid Statement on Supreme Court Decision Allowing Trump to Use Alien Enemies Act for Rapid Deportations***

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement in response to a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in *J.G.G., et al., v. Trump* on Monday, which allows the Trump Administration to resume deporting Venezuelan asylum seekers to a prison in El Salvador by invoking the Alien Enemies Act of 1798. Two Legal Aid clients are plaintiffs in the litigation:

“The Supreme Court's decision gives a green light to the Trump Administration's use of the Alien Enemies Act to allege—without evidence—that Venezuelan asylum seekers over the age of 14 are gang members, that Venezuelans are at war with the United States, and that these so-called ‘Alien Enemies’ can be expelled however this Administration sees fit.

“While the Court acknowledged yesterday that Venezuelans must be given notice and opportunity to contest their deportation under the Alien Enemies Act, it lifted a lower court's order blocking these rapid deportations from taking place. In doing so, the Court removed any legal barrier to the Trump Administration's ultimate use of the Alien Enemies Act.

“This ruling allows for an unprecedented expansion of executive power—authorizing our federal government to disregard Venezuelan asylum seekers' right to seek humanitarian protection in this country and use the Alien Enemies Act as a blunt weapon to effectuate rapid and mass deportations of non-citizens in this country.

“Today, it is Venezuelan asylum seekers who are being denied due process, and tomorrow, it could be whoever this Administration unilaterally determines is an Alien Enemy.

“Our clients, G.F.F. and J.G.O., are two Venezuelan asylum seekers at risk of immediate expulsion from this country because of the Alien Enemies Act. And, yet, they have done everything the law requires. They have complied with every step of the immigration process, do not have any criminal convictions, have lawfully applied for asylum protection, and still await their opportunity to have an Immigration Court consider their well-founded fear of returning to Venezuela. They are not gang members—they are people seeking safety, justice, and humanitarian protection authorized by Congress.

“It is critical to note that these Venezuelans are not being expelled from the United States to a safe location, but are being directly deported to the Center for Terrorism Confinement (CECOT) in El Salvador, a prison notorious for torture, human rights abuses, and inhumane conditions.

“Our clients have not been convicted of crimes in El Salvador, but they still could be detained in a prison there indefinitely. Their only “crime” is being Venezuelan and coming to the United States to seek asylum.

“The Legal Aid Society condemns this ruling in the strongest terms. This decision undermines the constitutional principles of fairness and justice, and it will have devastating consequences for countless people fleeing violence and persecution. We remain committed to defending the rights of the people we serve and fighting for a system that upholds dignity and due process for all.”

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*The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For nearly 150 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. <https://www.legalaidnyc.org>*