



April 1, 2022

The Honorable Antony Blinken Secretary
United States Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Re: Request for Review and Engagement on TPS Designation Delays at the U.S. State Department

Dear Secretary Blinken:

The 68 undersigned organizations write to express our deep concern at reports that the State Department is obstructing immigrants in the United States from receiving life-saving protection under Temporary Protected Status. This includes failing to issue country conditions reports in a timely fashion as well as not supporting TPS designations that experts find clearly warranted under the law and in the service of vital domestic and foreign policy interests.

In your first major speech as Secretary of State, you said that “if we do our jobs right, you’ll be able to check our work, to see the links between what we’re doing around the world and [our] goals and values.”¹ Those goals and values included working toward a “humane and effective immigration system.”² After checking your work, it is our conclusion that the Department’s handling of TPS designations does not align with your stated values.

The State Department has a unique role and perspective in developing TPS recommendations for the Secretary of Homeland Security.³ We are concerned that your Department’s conduct falls short of providing objective assessments of existing country conditions. In doing so, the Administration’s standing with immigrants and similarly vulnerable communities, and our systems of humanitarian protection, are undermined. TPS continues to be one of the few blanket protections in our immigration system and a key piece of our humanitarian and foreign policy strategy. The State Department’s objective consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security on whether people returned to countries from the United States would face life- or freedom-threatening circumstances is a key factor in the integrity of these protections.

We respectfully request that the Department immediately review, at a minimum, Cameroon, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Lebanon, and Mauritania for a TPS designation. Additionally, we request an urgent stakeholder engagement with your office, the Office of Population and International Migration, and representatives of the relevant regional bureaus to discuss these issues. Please contact Lora Adams at lora@masadc.com.

Sincerely,

¹ Anthony J. Blinken, “A Foreign Policy for the American People” (speech, Washington DC, March 3, 2021), U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/a-foreign-policy-for-the-american-people/>.

² Ibid.

³ Playing Politics With Humanitarian Protections: How Political Aims Trumped U.S. National Security and the Safety Of TPS Recipients, S. Prt. 116-15, at 12 (2019).

National

Adhikaar
African Communities Together
Alianza Americas
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
American Muslim Bar Association (AMBA)
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Amnesty International USA
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)
Border Network for Human Rights
Cameroon Advocacy Network
Catholic Labor Network
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice
Church World Service
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Disciples Refugee and Immigration Ministries
Emgage Action
Franciscan Action Network
Haitian Bridge Alliance
Human Rights First
ICNA Council for Social Justice
Immigration Hub
Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti
Justice Action Center
Justice in Motion
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
MPower Change
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Council of Jewish Women
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project (NIPNLG)
National Partnership for New Americans
Presbyterian Church USA
Presente.org
Refugees International
Revolutionary Love Project
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society
UndocuBlack Network
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United Stateless
UNWLA National
Win Without War
Witness at the Border

State/Local

Central American Resource Center
Central American Resource Center of Northern CA - CARECEN SF
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America - CRLN
Connecticut Shoreline Indivisible
CRECEN
Familias Unidas en Acción
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative
Immigrant Legal Center of Boulder County
Interfaith Welcome Coalition - San Antonio
Legal Aid Justice Center
Make the Road New York
New York Immigration Coalition
NH Conference United Church of Christ Immigrant and Refugee Support Group
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Haitian Legal Network, Inc.
The Legal Aid Society (New York)
The Legal Project
United African Organization
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center
Yemeni American Merchants Association

cc: Catherine Holt, Director, PRM/PIM