

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 26, 2024

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
301 7th St, SW
Washington, DC 20528

RECEIVED
By ESEC at 11:58 am, Jan 29, 2024

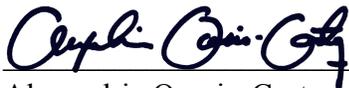
Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

We write today urging you to consider the humanitarian and significant public benefit parole provisions by the Department of Homeland Security to grant Cameroon a Parole Program. Recently, due to “ongoing armed conflict and extraordinary and temporary conditions in Cameroon that prevent individuals from safely returning,” you redesignated and extended Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Cameroon. While this is an excellent first step in protecting Cameroonians already present in the United States, it does nothing for the people currently facing ongoing armed conflicts in Cameroon.

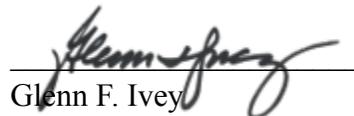
Section 212(d)(5)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act grants the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security the authority to establish Parole programs for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefits. Since 2016, over 6,000 people have been killed as a direct result of violence in the west. According to the UN, more than 1.7 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, and 638,421 people have been internally displaced, while more than 87,402 have fled to Nigeria.¹ Further, Boko Haram, which has been designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the US Government since 2013, has taken advantage of the chaos to launch deadly attacks on villages in Cameroon’s Northern region.²

Given the levels of violence, we believe that the people of Cameroon deserve urgent humanitarian relief.

Sincerely,



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



Glenn F. Ivey
Member of Congress

¹ Cameroon. Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. (2023, December 1).
<https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/cameroon/>

² Kindzeka, M. E. (2023, April 19). Cameroon’s large-scale Boko Haram attacks leave thousands homeless. Voice of America.
<https://www.voanews.com/a/cameroon-s-large-scale-boko-haram-attacks-leave-thousands-homeless-/7057215.html>



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

February 26, 2024

The Honorable Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Ocasio-Cortez:

Thank you for your January 26, 2024 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). I am responding on behalf of the Department.

DHS recognizes the seriousness of the situation in Cameroon. In response to the conditions in Cameroon, as noted in your letter, on October 6, 2023, Secretary Mayorkas announced the extension and redesignation of Cameroon for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months, from December 8, 2023, through June 7, 2025. On December 7, 2023, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) held a national stakeholder engagement to provide an overview and answer questions on the extension and redesignation of TPS for Cameroon.

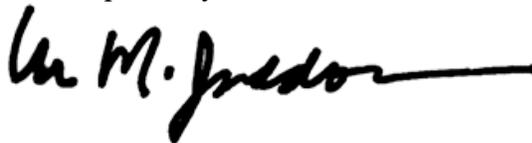
We acknowledge your request for a humanitarian parole program for nationals of Cameroon and will take this suggestion under advisement as we consider the most appropriate ways to continue to assist Cameroonians. Please know, however, that noncitizens, regardless of nationality, outside the United States may request an Advance Parole Document on a case-by-case basis for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit by filing Form I-131, Application for Travel Document, with all required supporting documentation. If granted, the Advance Parole Document permits the noncitizen to appear at a port of entry and seek parole into the United States. We note that parole is not intended to be used in place of established refugee or visa processing channels or to provide protection to individuals at generalized risk of harm.

DHS remains steadfast in its commitment to assist with the resettlement of qualified refugees from Africa and elsewhere in the United States. In fiscal year (FY) 2024, the Presidential Determination (PD) for total proposed refugee admissions is 125,000, including 30,000-50,000 refugees from Africa. In the first quarter of FY 2024, USCIS completed initial interviews of 14,840 refugee applicants from Africa and issued 17,390 final decisions, of which over 17,000 were approvals. In FY 2023, the PD for total proposed refugee admissions was also 125,000, including 40,000 refugees from Africa. In FY 2023, USCIS completed initial interviews of 42,470 refugee applicants from Africa and issued 44,663 final decisions, of which over 44,000 were approvals. Ultimately, 22,348 refugees were admitted to the United States from Africa in FY 2023, which is 38% of the total refugee admissions for the year. Noncitizens outside of the United States who believe they are in need of protection due to persecution or fear of persecution

on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion should contact the UN Refugee Agency to determine whether resettlement is the best option for them or their families. More information can be found at <http://www.unhcr.org>. For further information on access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, please see <http://www.state.gov/refugee-admissions>.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. The cosigner of your letter will receive a separate, identical response. Should you require any additional assistance, please have your staff contact the USCIS Office of Legislative Affairs at (240) 721-3801.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ur M. Jaddou", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ur M. Jaddou
Director