

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 16, 2024

The Honorable Ur M. Jaddou  
Director  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
5900 Capital Gateway Drive  
Camp Springs, Maryland 20588

Dear Director Jaddou,

We write today regarding the humanitarian and significant public benefit parole provisions administered by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)<sup>1</sup> as related to individuals from Cameroon.

As the state with the largest population of Cameroonians,<sup>2</sup> our offices have been contacted by community members of Cameroonian descent about the urgent need for expanded opportunities for their relatives and friends to obtain authorization to enter the United States. With conditions in their home country continuing to deteriorate, our constituents have asked us to ensure that their concerns are shared with appropriate USCIS officials. As their representatives in Congress, it is our honor to represent them in this regard.

We appreciate Secretary Mayorkas's extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for individuals from Cameroon present in the United States since October 5, 2023 through June 7, 2025<sup>3</sup>. However, we are concerned about the dire circumstances facing individuals still living in Cameroon and the limited avenues available for Cameroonians to seek and obtain safe refuge in the United States.

In its initial TPS designation and subsequent extension announcements, DHS has recognized the urgent need for safety from the strife facing Cameroonians from foreign terrorist organizations including Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), as well as from regional separatist movements.<sup>4</sup> The instability resulting from multifaceted attacks to individual safety and security in Cameroon continues to threaten those on the ground, and the Cameroonian

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<sup>1</sup> 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)(A)

<sup>2</sup> Evin Millet, *Estimates of TPS-eligible Populations from Cameroon and Sudan by State and Year of Arrival*, CENTER FOR MIGRATION STUDIES (Apr. 29, 2022), <https://cmsny.org/tps-cameroon-sudan/>.

<sup>3</sup> 87 Fed. Reg. 34,707-11 (June 7, 2022)

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*; 88 Fed. Reg. 69,945 (Oct. 10, 2023).

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community in Maryland is requesting information regarding how a country or population may be designated for additional protection through Humanitarian Parole.

DHS has the authority to award Cameroonians eligibility for Humanitarian Parole and has used this authority in the past to provide an avenue to lawful presence in the U.S. to other populations facing similar dangerous circumstances.<sup>5</sup> We respectfully request the Department provide Congress with its reasoning for any decisions made regarding the designation or non-designation of Cameroonians for this discretionary program.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



David Trone  
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

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<sup>5</sup> See 87 Fed. Reg. 25,040 (April 27, 2022) (establishing Ukrainian eligibility); 88 Fed. Reg. 1,243 (establishing Haitian eligibility); 87 Fed. Reg. 63,507 (establishing Venezuelan eligibility).



**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**

February 23, 2024

The Honorable David Trone  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Trone:

Thank you for your February 16, 2024 letter to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

The Department of Homeland Security (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, 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

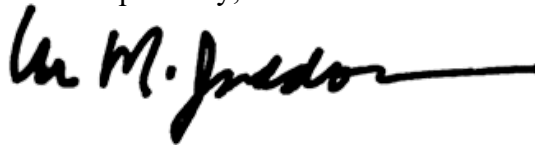
The Honorable David Trone

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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", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ur M. Jaddou  
Director