



President Joseph R. Biden Jr.
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

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By ESEC at 7:31 am, Mar 15, 2022

Vice President Kamala Harris
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20395

The Honorable Antony Blinken
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

March 14, 2022

Re: Designate Cameroon for Temporary Protected Status

Dear President Biden, Vice President Harris, Secretary Mayorkas, and Secretary Blinken:

On behalf of the We Are Home campaign, a nationwide campaign to fight for immigrant communities, we urge you to designate Cameroon for Temporary Protected Status (“TPS”) or Deferred Enforced Departure (“DED”) due to country conditions of armed conflict, political violence, and multiple humanitarian crises across the country that create extraordinary and temporary conditions characterized by massive internal displacement, state-sponsored violence, war crimes, and critical shortages of essentials including water, food, housing, and healthcare making safe return impossible for Cameroonians in the United States.

The We Are Home campaign is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-generational coalition that has come together to protect millions of immigrants who call this country home and build an immigration system that recognizes the humanity and rights of the immigrants and their families. With more than 250 partner organizations, We Are Home represents millions of people across the country.

We strongly encourage the administration to use the TPS program as intended by Congress to protect people in the U.S. when it is unsafe to return to their home countries due to ongoing armed conflict, disruption due to natural disaster, or other extraordinary and temporary conditions. The TPS program recognizes the need for protection from deportation for groups of people in the U.S. due to conditions in their home countries, as well as the inability of their countries of origin to safely receive them without greater security and stability.

The administration should immediately designate Cameroon for TPS or DED due to ongoing armed conflict in several regions of the country, as well as political violence and human rights abuses by the government and growing humanitarian crises affecting millions of people. Ongoing deadly confrontations between and among government forces and separatist groups in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon have left civilians [increasingly vulnerable to armed violence, with at least 700,000 civilians forced to flee](#). In the Far North region of Cameroon, the armed group Boko Haram has also carried out deadly attacks [in crowded civilian areas](#) since 2014, with a sharp rise in recent years, displacing hundreds of thousands of people. The government in turn has [arbitrarily arrested and tortured](#) individuals accused of supporting Boko Haram. Along with these conflicts, human rights experts have raised alarms about [political and human rights abuses](#) by the government of Cameroon, as well as [other violence](#) in different areas of the country. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that [3.9 million people in Cameroon](#) are in need of humanitarian assistance. In 2020, before the height of the pandemic and escalation of conflict in some regions, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimated that [1.1 million people would experience](#) severe to acute food insecurity.

An estimated [38,790 Cameroonian nationals](#) living in the United States could potentially benefit from a TPS or DED designation for Cameroon.

The urgency to enact such a designation is only further underscored by [devastating new reporting](#) on the human rights violations experienced by people who fled Cameroon to seek asylum in the U.S., only to be detained by ICE, denied asylum, then deported by the United States to Cameroon between 2019 and 2021. Upon being forced to return to Cameroon, many of these individuals and their families experienced rape, torture, physical abuse, arbitrary arrest and detention, degrading treatment in detention, extortion, and threat by agents of the states.

We thus urge the designation of Cameroon for TPS or DED without delay. For questions, please contact We Are Home Campaign Director Bridgette Gomez at bridgette@wearehome.us.

Sincerely,

We Are Home Steering Committee Members:

America's Voice
CASA
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Community Change/Action
Detention Watch Network
FIRM/Action
FWD.us
Immigration Hub
LA RED/Faith in Action
Make the Road New York
NAKASEC
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Immigration Law Center
New York Immigration Coalition
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
UFW Foundation
UNITE HERE
UndocuBlack Network
UnidosUS
United Farm Workers (UFW)
United We Dream



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

April 28, 2022

Bridgette Gomez
Campaign Director
We Are Home
bridgette@wearehome.us

Dear Ms. Gomez:

Thank you for your March 14, 2022 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regarding a request to designate Cameroon for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and to protect thousands of Cameroonians from returning to ongoing armed conflict. Secretary Mayorkas asked that I respond on his behalf, and I apologize for the delay.

On Friday, April 15, 2022, DHS announced the designation of Cameroon for TPS for 18 months. The United States recognizes the ongoing armed conflict in Cameroon, and we will provide temporary protection to those in need. Cameroonian nationals currently residing in the United States who cannot safely return will be able to remain and work in the United States until conditions in their home country improve.

Individuals eligible for TPS under this designation must have continuously resided in the United States since April 14, 2022. Individuals who attempt to travel to the United States after April 14, 2022, will not be eligible for TPS. Cameroon's 18-month designation will go into effect on the publication date of the forthcoming Federal Register notice. The Federal Register notice will provide instructions for applying for TPS and an Employment Authorization Document. TPS applicants must meet all eligibility requirements and undergo security and background checks.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Please share this response with the other organizations that cosigned your letter. Should you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me at Public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ur M. Jaddou" followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Ur M. Jaddou
Director