



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

March 30, 2018

The Honorable Kirstjen Nielsen
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528-0001

The Honorable John Sullivan
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

2018 APR -4 AM 10:36
SCANNED/RECEIVED
BY EXEC SEC

Dear Madam Secretary and Deputy Secretary Sullivan:

On behalf of the 7,600 New Yorkers born in Nepal—the largest Nepalese community in the United States—I urge you to extend Nepal's Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for a full 18 months so that our residents are not forced to return to an unstable and unsafe country still recovering from a calamitous natural disaster.

The Department of Homeland Security initially designated Nepal for TPS in 2015, after the nation suffered two catastrophic earthquakes. A 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck Nepal on April 25, 2015, followed by a 6.8-magnitude earthquake on May 12. The earthquakes triggered landslides, avalanches, and powerful aftershocks, devastating the country's infrastructure, isolating rural areas, exacerbating existing sanitation problems, and severely impeding rescue and rebuilding efforts. Nepal's government estimates that as a result of these disasters, 8,790 people died, more than 500,000 houses were damaged or destroyed, and a total of 8 million people (more than a third of Nepal's population) were affected by the devastation.

Nepal's recovery has been painfully slow and remains incomplete. The earthquakes initially displaced hundreds of thousands of people. Though the international community raised billions of dollars to support the country's recovery, independent reports show that only a small portion of the funds have reached those in greatest need. Nepal continues to experience political instability, further impeding recovery efforts. In June 2015, I called on your predecessors, Jeh Johnson and John Kerry, to designate Nepal for TPS. In recognition of these ongoing challenges, DHS extended the TPS designation for Nepal in 2016. At that time, DHS referenced Nepal's then-Prime Minister, who estimated that it would take two years to rebuild all private homes and three years to rebuild destroyed schools. This timeline, which laid the basis for DHS's extension, has not been achieved and rebuilding is nowhere near complete.

Today, Nepal's TPS designation remains important to the City of New York and to Nepalese New Yorkers who would return to a country with inadequate housing, infrastructure, healthcare, and schools if their TPS status is terminated. Conditions in Nepal have not improved enough for the nation to reabsorb individuals who currently hold TPS status. Nepalese New Yorkers with TPS would be forced to abandon the stability and livelihoods that they have found in New York. I urge you to recognize the extraordinary hardships caused by the country's still-incomplete recovery and extend Nepal's TPS designation for an additional 18 months.

Sincerely,

Bill de Blasio
Mayor



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

June 11, 2018

The Honorable Bill de Blasio
Mayor of New York
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

Thank you for your March 30, 2018 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Secretary Nielsen asked that I respond on her behalf.

The Secretary of Homeland Security's authority to designate a country for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and to extend or terminate a country's existing designation is based upon specific statutory criteria. *See* Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) § 244(b). U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is principally responsible for advising the Secretary on TPS issues and implementing the program.

Prior to the current expiration date for an existing TPS designation, the Secretary of Homeland Security reviews conditions in the foreign country and, after consultation with other appropriate federal agencies, determines whether the statutory conditions for TPS continue to be met. Under the INA, if the Secretary determines that the conditions for designation continue to be met with respect to a given country, the Secretary extends the designation. But if the Secretary determines that the conditions are no longer met with respect to that country, she is required to terminate the designation. Additional information regarding TPS designations is available in the *Federal Register* and on the USCIS website. Recent TPS decisions are the subject of ongoing litigation; therefore, we are unable to comment further.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L. Francis Cissna".

L. Francis Cissna
Director