

March 5, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20016

**RE: REQUEST TO DESIGNATE AND REDESIGNATE 18 COUNTRIES FOR  
TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS AND PROTECT 2.3 MILLION IMMIGRANTS**

Dear President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas:

On behalf of the undersigned 314 state, local, and national immigrant, labor, faith, civil rights, and legal organizations, we write to request that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in consultation with the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), designate or redesignate the following countries for Temporary Protected Status (TPS): the **Bahamas, Cameroon, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Hong Kong, Lebanon, Mauritania, Nepal, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Venezuela, and Yemen**. These countries all are currently experiencing country conditions that satisfy one or more conditions of TPS under 8 U.S.C. § 1254a. Altogether, TPS for these countries would provide employment authorization and protection from deportation for upwards of 2.3 million people. We also write to respectfully request a virtual engagement with Secretary Mayorkas to discuss the recommendations in this letter.

The previous administration failed to even consider the use of initial designations and redesignations, resulting in four years' worth of accrual of countries and peoples who are eligible for TPS. Previous administrations, including both Republican and Democratic administrations, applied the TPS criteria too narrowly; as a result, TPS has atrophied and never reached its true potential. TPS is a valuable and underused executive tool that would protect millions of people from being returned to dangerous country conditions—in accordance with congressional intent—while simultaneously providing immigration relief to people in our country who have lived for decades without legal status or protection.

TPS extends protection to foreign nationals in the United States from civil, political, and humanitarian crises in their home country that make it unsafe for them to return. After consultation with the State Department and USCIS, the DHS Secretary may designate a country for TPS if conditions there meet certain requirements regarding ongoing armed conflict, natural disasters (including epidemics), or other extraordinary and temporary conditions that temporarily prevent safe return.<sup>1</sup> TPS is renewable if country conditions continue to meet the criteria for designation, but it does not provide a path to permanent legal status. TPS protects recipients from deportation and provides work authorization for the duration of the designation.

Each of the listed countries meets one or more of the condition criteria necessary to designate it for TPS, and we direct you to the footnote for more details on specific country conditions.<sup>2</sup> Though Venezuela was recently designated for Deferred Enforced Departure (DED), TPS

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<sup>1</sup> *Temporary Protected Status*, U.S. Cit. & Immigr. Servs., U.S. Dep't of Homeland Sec., <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status> (last updated Jan. 29, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> For an in-depth directory of country conditions for the listed countries, see Temp. Protected Status Advoc. Working Grp., *List of Countries with Conditions that Satisfy Grounds for TPS*, Google Sheets, <http://bit.ly/TPSChart> (last updated Jan. 29, 2021).

provides a stronger and more stable source of protection in line with your campaign promises.<sup>3</sup> Over two million people living in the United States are in need of such protection, a number made all the larger by the previous administration's attempts to dismantle TPS by unlawfully terminating existing designations and refusing to create new ones. Critically, over 400,000 current TPS holders from El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, and Sudan are at serious risk of losing their status due to such attempts, despite the continuing violence and humanitarian crises in these countries. There is no numerical limit on the number of people who can hold TPS, and it will take time to undo the damage to the immigration system of the past four years. Congress created TPS as a mechanism to provide immediate relief to those who cannot and should not be returned to dangerous conditions. A bold use of TPS remains in line with both the letter and spirit of the program.

In your campaign, you committed to a full review of TPS decisions from the Trump administration and promised TPS for Venezuela. We are grateful for your work thus far to keep these promises and we urge you to use every executive tool available to provide relief to *everyone* who cannot safely return to their home countries. Utilizing TPS to its fullest extent is a major part of upholding your commitment to immigrant communities. This relief will not only benefit millions of individuals in the United States, but also their families, employers, and communities here and in their countries of origin.

Finally, we respectfully request a virtual engagement with Secretary Mayorkas and a small number of our organizations to discuss this request. To coordinate this engagement, or if you have questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact Jose Magaña-Salgado at [jose@masadc.com](mailto:jose@masadc.com) or (480) 678-0040.

Sincerely,

**National**

Adalah Justice Project  
Adorers of the Blood of Christ, US Region  
Advancement Project, National Office  
African American Ministers In Action  
African Communities Together  
African Public Affairs Committee  
Alianza Americas  
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas  
Alliance4Action Immigration Action Group  
America's Voice  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)  
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)  
American Friends Service Committee  
American Humanist Association  
American Immigration Lawyers Association  
Amnesty International USA  
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence  
ASISTA Immigration Assistance  
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)

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<sup>3</sup> *Joe Biden and the Latino Community*, Biden for President, <https://joebiden.com/todos-con-biden-policy/> (last visited Jan, 29, 2021).

AsylumConnect  
Black Alliance for Just Immigration  
Border Network for Human Rights  
Bridges Faith Initiative  
Capuchin Franciscans  
CASA  
CASA in Action  
Catholic Legal Immigration Network  
CBF FAMILIA - Latino Network  
Center for Democracy and Development in the Americas  
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Center for Popular Democracy  
Center for Victims of Torture  
Christian Churches Together Latino Network  
Church World Service  
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Community Change Action  
Community of the Holy Spirit  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
Congregation of Saint Joseph  
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes  
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship  
Corazon Latino  
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)  
Daily Kos  
David Kennedy & Associates, Attorneys at Law, PC  
Detention Watch Network  
Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel  
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries  
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)  
Faith in Action  
Faith in Public Life  
Families Belong Together  
Farmworker Justice  
Fellowship Southwest  
First Focus on Children  
Franciscan Action Network  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Generous Heart Buddhist Sangha  
Generous Heart Sangha  
Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart  
HIAS  
Hispanic Federation  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA-JPIC  
Human Rights First  
Human Rights Observation/Honduras  
Ignatian Solidarity Network  
Immigrants Rising, a project of Community Initiatives  
Immigration Hub

Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH)  
InterReligious Task Force on Central America (IRTF Cleveland)  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Just Futures Law  
Justice for Migrant Women  
Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Commission, Priests of the Sacred Heart, U.S. Province  
Kids in Need of Defense  
Latin America Working Group (LAWG)  
Lawyers for Good Government (L4GG)  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)  
Little Sisters of the Assumption  
Little Sisters of the Assumption Family in Mission  
Little Sisters of the Assumption, US Territory  
Local Progress  
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service  
Marianist Social Justice Collaborative Steering Committee  
MomsRising/MamásConPoder  
Muslim Advocates  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans  
National Council of Churches  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Education Association  
National Employment Law Project  
National Health Law Program  
National Immigrant Justice Center  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Immigration Litigation Alliance  
National Immigration Project (NIPNLG)  
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)  
National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights  
National Partnership for New Americans  
New American Economy  
New American Leaders Action Fund  
New Sanctuary Coalition  
NNAAC (National Network of Arab American Communities)  
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)  
Northeastern University School of Law Immigrant Justice Clinic  
Pax Christi USA  
People for the American Way  
Poder Latinx  
Precious Blood Sister  
Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration  
Priests of the Sacred Heart, US Province  
Project Blueprint  
Quixote Center  
RAICES  
RaisetheVoices / Civic Works 501(c)(3)

Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services (RAICES)  
Refugee Congress  
Refugee Council USA  
Resilience Force  
School Sisters of Notre Dame, Central Pacific Province  
Sister of Charity of Leavenworth  
Sister of Mercy  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership  
Sisters of Charity, BVM  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Albany Province  
Sisters of the Holy Cross  
Sisters of the Precious Blood, Dayton, Ohio  
Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Sojourners  
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center  
Stuart Center  
The Jus Semper Global Alliance  
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI)  
UndocuBlack Network  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Union of Sisters of the Presentation of the BVM US Province  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee  
United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries  
UNITED SIKHS  
US Campaign for Palestinian Rights  
Veterans for American Ideals  
Voice for Refuge Action Fund  
We Are All America  
Westwood Hills Congregational United Church of Christ  
Win Without War  
Working Families United  
World Relief  
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights

**State and Local**

Accompaniment & Sanctuary Coalition Colorado Springs (ASC COS)  
Adhikaar  
Advocate Visitors with Immigrants in Detention  
Advocates for Immigrant Rights and Reconciliation (AIRR)  
AGS Immigrant Center, Inc.  
Alianza Sacramento  
American Friends Service Committee, Colorado  
Americans for Immigrant Justice  
Archdiocese of Miami  
Arizona Justice For Our Neighbors  
AsylumWorks  
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore

Benme Legal  
Black Immigrant Collective (BIC)  
Border Crit Institute  
Buen Vecino Ventura County  
Building One Community  
Cabrini Immigrant Services of NYC  
Caminando Juntos - Presentation Sisters Hispanic Ministry  
Campaign for Immigrant Detention Reform (CIDR)  
Carolina Immigrant Alliance, Inc.  
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston  
Catholic Charities Boston  
Catholic Charities MRS  
Catholic Charities of Arkansas  
Catholic Charities of Central & Northern Missouri  
Catholic Charities of Southwest Kansas  
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington  
Catholic Diocese of Jackson  
Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami  
Central American Resource Center  
Centro Romero  
Children's Legal Center  
Church of the Ascension, NYC  
Church of the Brethren  
Church of the Nativity UCC  
Cleveland Jobs with Justice  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)  
Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition  
Comité TPS Massachusetts  
Connecticut Shoreline Indivisible  
Convencion Bautista Hispana de Texas  
Conversations with Friends (MN)  
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Texas  
Diocesan Migrants & Refugee Services (DMRS)  
Diocese of El Paso  
Diocese of Stockton  
Dominican Sisters ~ Grand Rapids  
Dominican Sisters of Houston  
Dominican Sisters of San Rafael  
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant  
EEUU Center for Legal Immigration & Labor  
El Pueblo  
End Streamline Coalition  
Equal Justice Center  
Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project  
Faith In Florida

Farmworker Association of Florida  
First Congregational Church of Rockport, Massachusetts, UCC  
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project  
Global Cleveland  
Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition  
Greenville Multicultural Church  
Haitian Americans United, Inc.  
Human Rights Initiative of North Texas  
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
Immigrant Connection - Greenville Multicultural  
Immigrant Defenders Law Center  
Immigrant Justice Clinic at Economic Justice Institute  
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota  
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project  
Integrity Law Firm  
J. Wescoat Sandlin, Attorney & Counselor at Law  
Jefferson County Immigrant Rights Advocates  
Jesuit Social Research Institute  
Jewish Voice for Peace, Atlanta Chapter  
Just Neighbors  
Keep Tucson Together / No More Deaths  
Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Center  
La Casa de Amistad, Inc.  
La Comunidad, Inc.  
LA Voice  
Latin American Coalition  
Law Office of Miriam Osorio  
Law Offices of Tenzin Wangyal  
Legal Aid Justice Center  
Lowcountry Immigration Coalition  
LUCHA Ministries, Inc.  
Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer and Gethsemane Lutheran Church  
Lutherans Engaging In Advocacy Ministry NJ  
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute  
Miami Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project  
Mission Graduates  
Morongo Basin Coalition for Social Justice  
Motivation Motivates  
Nacoochee Presbyterian Church  
National Lawyers Guild of Los Angeles  
New American Welcome Center at the University YMCA  
New Hope Free Methodist Church  
New Sanctuary Movement of Atlanta  
Newcomer and ELL Services

NHCUCC Immigrant and Refugee Support Group  
North Georgia Immigrant Justice Group  
Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors  
Office of Hispanic Ministry, Diocese of Belleville  
Ohio Immigrant Alliance  
OneAmerica  
Our Lady of Sorrows Social Justice Committee  
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church  
Pax Christi Illinois  
Pennsylvania Council of Churches  
Refuge - Bowling Green  
Resource Services (Assistance for Seniors)  
Rian Immigrant Center  
Robertson Immigration Law Firm  
Seattle Immigrant Rights Action Group  
Shir Tikvah Congregation  
Showing Up for Racial Justice Ventura County  
SIREN (Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network)  
Sisters and Brothers of Immigrants (SBI)  
Sisters of Charity of New York  
Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, PA  
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York  
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia  
Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God  
Sisters of St. Francis of Tiffin, Ohio  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange  
Sisters of the Most Precious Blood  
Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco  
SOA Watch  
Spring Hill United Church of Christ  
St. James Cathedral Immigrant Assistance  
St. Paul's Monastery  
SURJ VC  
TASSC (Torture Abolition & Survivors' Support Coalition) International  
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition  
Texas Civil Rights Project  
The Legal Project  
The Resurrection Project  
True Alliance Center, Inc. / GBNCC  
Tucson Together  
UCLA Labor Center  
Unitarian Universalist Massachusetts Action Network  
United Latinos  
United Methodist Church  
Venezuelans and Immigrants Aid, Inc.



Ventura County Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice  
VIDAS Legal Services (North Bay)  
Wallingford Indivisible  
Wayne Action for Racial Equality  
Wilco Justice Alliance (Williamson County, TX)  
Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center  
Women Watch Afrika, Inc.  
Workers Center of Central New York

**Cc:** Anthony Blinken, Secretary, U.S. Department of State