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, 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. 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. Though Venezuela was recently designated for Deferred Enforced Departure (DED), TPS

provides a stronger and more stable source of protection in line with your campaign promises. 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 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 | AAJIC
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
ASISTA Immigration Assistance
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)

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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 Refugee 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