

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 28, 2023

RECEIVED
By ESEC at 4:10 pm, Sep 28, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
301 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

We urge the Department of Homeland Security (Department) to issue an 18-month extension and re-designation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Cameroon, which will expire on December 7, 2023. The Department determined that the designation was warranted because of ongoing armed conflict and the extraordinary and temporary country conditions, including violence against civilians, widespread internal displacement, heinous war crimes, and acute shortages of vital necessities that render safe return impossible. The devastating consequences of the civil war in Cameroon have persisted since the initial designation.

Cameroon continues to grapple with the very same issues the Department highlighted last year in the initial notice of designation. Regrettably, the situation has deteriorated as armed violence persists, and the latest peace process remains at a standstill. The number of Cameroonians in need of humanitarian assistance has grown since 2022. The United Nations estimates that 4.7 million people (or one out of every six people) in Cameroon are affected, marking a 20 percent increase from 2022. Due to the heightened risk of armed violence, kidnapping, and overall crime, the U.S. State Department has issued “Do Not Travel” advisories for six regions in Cameroon. In its most recent human rights report, the State Department has highlighted a disturbing array of “significant human rights abuses.” These include extrajudicial killings, government and non-state armed groups engaging in torture, arbitrary detentions, substantial infringements on the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association, impediments to citizens’ ability to peacefully change their government through free and fair elections, ethnic violence, and targeted violence against LGBTQ community members. Deportees from the U.S. are at particular risk of being targeted for actual or alleged opposition to the government, and they have experienced arbitrary detention and other abuses upon return.

A TPS extension and re-designation for Cameroon would serve as a key and strategic part of the U.S. government’s commitment to human rights and international stability. Re-designating TPS also would allow additional Cameroon nationals to apply for TPS for the first time. An estimated 21,000 Cameroonians currently living in the U.S. would benefit.


Safeguarding Cameroonians in the U.S. from a return to these dangerous conditions is urgent and necessary.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

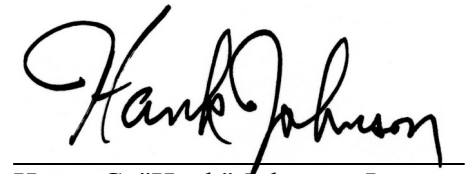
Sincerely,



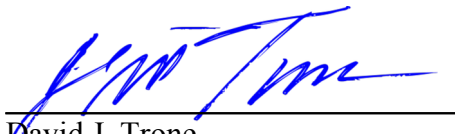
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



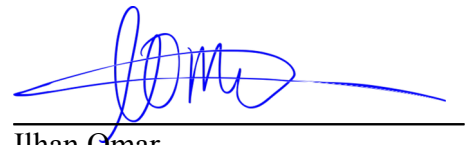
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



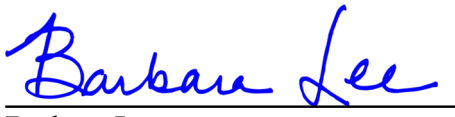
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



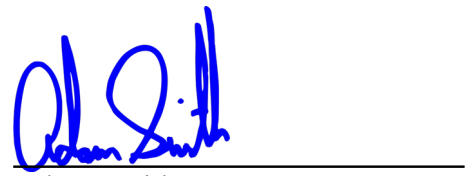
David J. Trone
Member of Congress



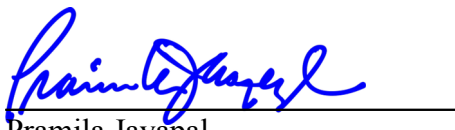
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



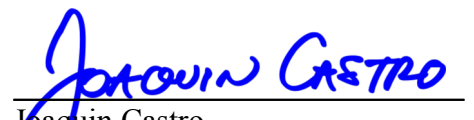
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress




Adam Smith
Member of Congress



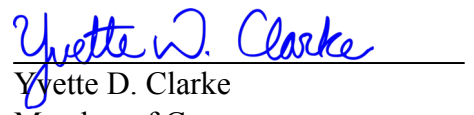
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



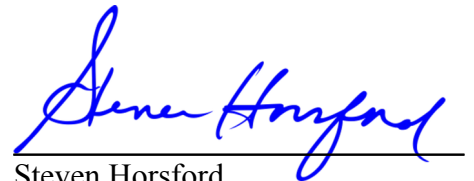
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



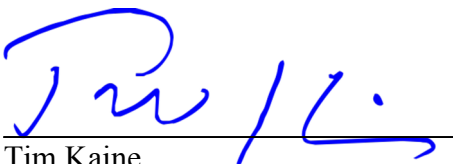
Steven Horsford
Member of Congress



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



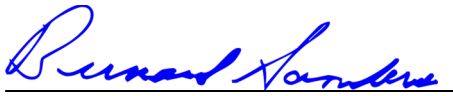
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Cori Bush
Member of Congress



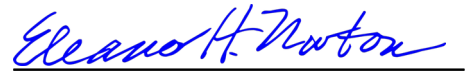
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator




Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



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

December 5, 2023

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lofgren:

Thank you for your September 28, 2023 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). I am responding on behalf of the Department.

I appreciate your concerns regarding the situation in Cameroon and interest in its extension and redesignation for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). On October 10, 2023, DHS published a Federal Register Notice (FRN) extending and redesignating Cameroon for TPS for an additional 18 months, from December 8, 2023, through June 7, 2025.¹ The redesignation of Cameroon for TPS enables Cameroonian nationals (and individuals without nationality who last habitually resided in Cameroon) who have been continuously residing in the United States since October 5, 2023, to file applications to register for TPS.

Pending applications that are approved after publication of the FRN announcing the extension and redesignation will be approved through June 7, 2025. Those who have initial applications pending with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) as of the date of publication of the FRN do not need to file a new application under the redesignation.

In addition to TPS, USCIS may, upon request, grant immigration relief to eligible noncitizens affected by emergencies or unforeseen circumstances. Such relief may include:

- Change or extension of nonimmigrant status if eligible nationals are currently in the United States, even if the request is filed after the authorized period of admission has expired;
- Expedited processing of requests for advance parole documents;
- Expedited adjudication of requests for off-campus employment authorization for F-1 students experiencing severe economic hardship;
- Expedited adjudication of employment authorization applications, where appropriate;

¹ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/10/10/2023-22375/extension-and-redesignation-of-cameroon-for-temporary-protected-status>

- Assistance if applicants received a Request for Evidence or a Notice of Intent to Deny and were unable to appear for an interview, submit evidence, or respond in a timely manner due to the circumstances; and
- Replacement of lost or damaged immigration or travel documents issued by USCIS, such as a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).

More information is available under “Immigration Relief in Emergencies or Unforeseen Circumstances” on the USCIS website.²

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. The cosigners of your letter will receive a separate, identical response. Should you require any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the USCIS Office of Legislative Affairs at (240) 721-3801.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ur M. Jaddou", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ur M. Jaddou
Director

² <https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/immigration-relief-in-emergencies-or-unforeseen-circumstances>