

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 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



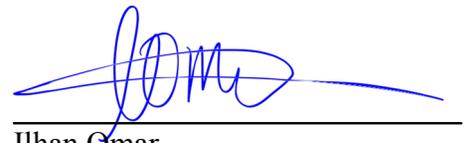
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



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



David J. Trone
Member of Congress



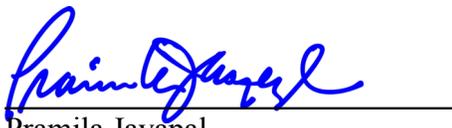
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



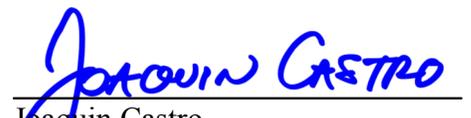
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



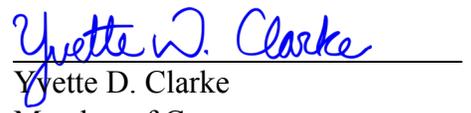
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



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



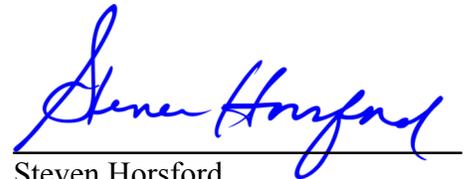
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Member of Congress



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
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Frederica S. Wilson
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Steven Horsford
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Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Stacey E. Plaskett
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Tina Smith
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator