

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 10, 2024

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

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

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

RECEIVED
By ESEC at 11:25 am, Apr 11, 2024

Dear President Biden, Secretary Mayorkas, and Secretary Blinken:

We write to you today to request that you issue an immediate 18-month extension and redesignation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Ethiopia.

While protections for Ethiopian TPS holders are set to expire on June 12, 2024, most of the conditions that led the administration to designate Ethiopia for TPS in 2022 still exist today. Ethiopia continues to experience multiple crises, including armed conflict, mass displacement, drought, and food insecurity. Despite the signing of the Pretoria Agreement on November 2, 2022, which formally ended the Tigray conflict, conflicts have continued unabated in other parts of the country.

A years-long conflict in Oromia, Ethiopia's largest and most populous region, has escalated due to repeated breakdowns of peace talks.¹ Kidnappings of civilians by rebel groups like the Oromo Liberation Army, which has been accused of massacres and other abuses, have become common in the region and make travel outside of cities unsafe.² A recent investigation has found that a secretive committee of senior government officials known as the Koree Nageenyaa – Security Committee in the Oromo language – has ordered extra-judicial killings and illegal detentions as part of its counterinsurgency efforts.³

¹ “Ethiopia talks with Oromo rebel group end without deal for a third time,” *Al Jazeera*, November 22, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/22/ethiopia-talks-with-rebel-group-ola-end-without-deal>

² “‘This is a pandemic’: Ethiopia’s Oromia region gripped by surge in kidnappings,” *The Guardian*, January 23, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/jan/23/im-scared-to-leave-addis-ababa-ethiopia-romia-region-gripped-by-kidnapping-pandemic>

³ “In Ethiopia, a secret committee orders killings and arrests to crush rebels,” *Reuters*, February 23, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/ethiopia-violence-committee/>

Since last year, a large-scale conflict has raged in Amhara, Ethiopia's second largest region, leading the Ethiopian government to declare a state of emergency on August 4, 2023, and renew it on February 2, 2024.^{4,5} The conflict in Amhara has resulted in hundreds of deaths and reports of widespread human rights abuses. The conflict has been marked by regular drone strikes and frequent reports of targeted killings of civilians.⁶ Another recent investigation has substantiated claims of extra-judicial killings by the Ethiopian National Defense Forces, in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.⁷

More than 3.45 million Ethiopians were identified as internally displaced according to data collected by the International Organization for Migration between August and September 2023.⁸ The 2024 Ethiopia Humanitarian Response Plan issued by the Ethiopian Government and humanitarian partners puts the number of internally displaced persons as high as 4.4 million.⁹

Drought is devastating communities in the Afar, Amhara, Tigray, Oromia, Southern, and Southwest Peoples' regions. The UN expects the number of critically food insecure people to rise over the next few months, reaching 10.8 million by this summer. Malnutrition rates in several regions have already surpassed globally recognized crisis thresholds.¹⁰

On September 7, 2023, President Biden issued a Notice on the Continuation of the National Emergency with Respect to Ethiopia, declaring that, "The situation in and in relation to northern Ethiopia, which has been marked by activities that threaten the peace, security, and stability of Ethiopia and the greater Horn of Africa region, continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States."¹¹

The U.S. State Department currently advises against travel to most of Ethiopia outside of the capital city and maintains a Level 3 travel advisory for the country overall due to "sporadic violent conflict, civil unrest, crime, communications disruptions, terrorism and kidnapping in border areas."¹² The conditions in Ethiopia remain dire; ongoing conflicts continue to pose

⁴ "Ethiopia declares a state of emergency in Amhara amid increasing violence," *The Guardian*, August 4, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/aug/04/ethiopia-declares-a-state-of-emergency-in-amhara-amid-increasing-violence>

⁵ "Ethiopia extends state of emergency in Amhara," *Reuters*, February 2, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopia-extends-state-emergency-amhara-2024-02-02/>

⁶ "Conflict in Ethiopia's Amhara kills dozens, rights body says," *Reuters*, October 30, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/conflict-ethiopias-amhara-kills-dozens-rights-body-says-2023-10-30/>

⁷ "Ethiopia: End Extrajudicial Executions in Amhara Region, Bring Perpetrators to Justice," Amnesty International, February 26, 2024, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/press-releases/ethiopia-end-extrajudicial-executions-in-amhara-region-bring-perpetrators-to-justice/>

⁸ "Ethiopia - Site Assessment Round 34," International Organization for Migration (IOM), December 21, 2023, <https://dtm.iom.int/datasets/ethiopia-site-assessment-round-34>

⁹ "Ethiopia - Situation Report, 1 Mar 2024," United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, March 1, 2024, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-situation-report-1-mar-2024>

¹⁰ "World News in Brief: Drought in Ethiopia, peacekeepers wounded in DR Congo, deadly strike on Ukraine aid workers," *UN News*, February 2, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/02/1146182>

¹¹ "Notice on the Continuation of the National Emergency with Respect to Ethiopia," The White House, September 7, 2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/09/07/notice-on-the-continuation-of-the-national-emergency-with-respect-to-ethiopia-2/>

¹² "Ethiopia Travel Advisory," U.S State Department, July 31, 2023, accessed February 26, 2024, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/>

serious threats to personal safety and drought continues to disrupt living conditions and exacerbate food insecurity and hunger.

We call upon the administration to do its part to continue to protect Ethiopians in the United States from deportation by extending and redesignating Ethiopia for TPS.

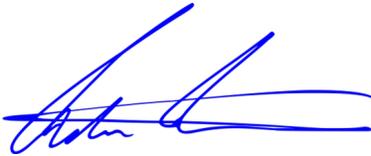
Sincerely,



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



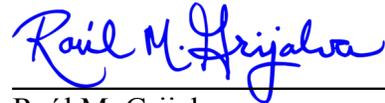
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



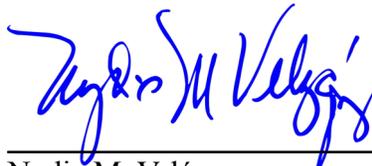
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



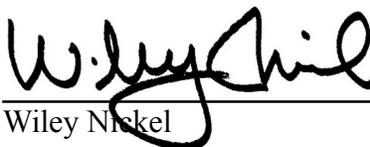
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



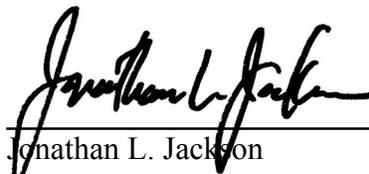
André Carson
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



Wiley Nickel
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Summer Lee
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



David J. Trone
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



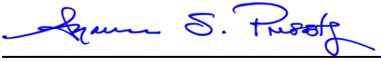
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress



Cori Bush
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Dean Phillips
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Colin Z. Allred
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Africa



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

April 25, 2024

The Honorable Madeleine Dean
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dean:

Thank you for your April 10, 2024 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). I am responding on behalf of the Department.

I appreciate the concerns you outlined regarding the situation in Ethiopia and your interest in its extension and redesignation. On April 12, 2024, after careful consideration, including a thorough review of the country conditions and consultation with interagency partners, Secretary Mayorkas announced the extension and redesignation of Ethiopia for 18 months on the bases of ongoing armed conflict and extraordinary and temporary conditions.¹ This extension and redesignation will be in effect from June 13, 2024, through December 12, 2025. More information, including instructions for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) registration and re-registration and applicable deadlines, is available in the Federal Register Notice (FRN).²

I also note the additional requests you made to provide a minimum 180-day registration period and launch a public information campaign to notify the impacted community of the decision and any actions they must take. The FRN provides a 60-day re-registration period for current TPS beneficiaries and the full designation period for initial applicants. I will share these requests with the appropriate agencies at DHS. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will also plan and coordinate outreach opportunities to provide more information and answer questions from the public on the extension and redesignation of Ethiopia for TPS.

¹ See USCIS Press Release, *Secretary Mayorkas Announces Extension and Redesignation of Ethiopia for Temporary Protected Status* (Apr. 12, 2024), available at: <https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/news-releases/secretary-mayorkas-announces-extension-and-redesignation-of-ethiopia-for-temporary-protected-status>.

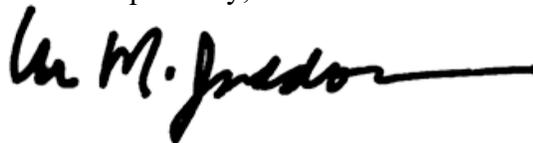
² See *Extension and Redesignation of Ethiopia for Temporary Protected Status*, 89 FR 26172 (Apr. 15, 2024), available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/15/2024-07643/extension-and-redesignation-of-ethiopia-for-temporary-protected-status>.

USCIS also offers support that may be available upon request³ to assist eligible noncitizens affected by emergencies or unforeseen circumstances. Such relief may include the following assistance:

- 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;
- 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 because of the emergency or unforeseen circumstance; and
- Replacement of lost or damaged immigration or travel documents issued by USCIS, such as a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).

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 have your staff contact the USCIS Office of Legislative Affairs at (240) 721-3801.

Respectfully,

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

³ Additional information is available at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website at: <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/special-situations>.