

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

**RECEIVED**

By ESEC at 12:44 pm, Sep 01, 2023

September 1, 2023

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
1401 Constitution Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas,

We are writing you today regarding the urgent need to extend and redesignate South Sudan for Temporary Protected Status (TPS), which is set to expire on November 3, 2023. South Sudan is currently experiencing intensifying violent conflict, food scarcity, and instability further exacerbated by the recent war in Sudan. Given the current conditions in South Sudan, the maximum protection of an 18-month extension and redesignation is vital to safeguard the lives of both current TPS holders and South Sudanese individuals who have arrived in the United States since the last redesignation in 2022. Additionally, the timely publication of a Federal Register Notice with at least a 180-day registration period is necessary for current TPS holders and those who would benefit under redesignation.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) last extended TPS for South Sudan on March 2, 2022. Five years after the civil war ended, the fragile peace process in South Sudan has been undermined by escalating violent conflict fueled by increasing civilian access to arms and ammunition.<sup>1</sup> According to the United Nations, over two thirds of the population currently need humanitarian assistance.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, loss of arable land due to four years of record flooding and extensive contamination by explosive hazards has contributed to increased food scarcity throughout the country.<sup>3</sup>

South Sudan is experiencing the third largest refugee crisis in the world and the largest on the African continent with roughly 2.3 million South Sudanese who have fled to neighboring countries and approximately 2.2 million who are internally displaced in South Sudan.<sup>4</sup> Further complicating the crisis, approximately 200,000 people have fled Sudan to South Sudan since April 2023, straining already limited government resources.<sup>5</sup> If the war in Sudan disrupts critical oil pipelines, the South Sudanese economy could be thrown into crisis as oil accounts for 70 percent of South Sudan's gross domestic product.<sup>6</sup>

Given the current conditions in South Sudan, we believe that an extension and redesignation of TPS is warranted. The U.S. should strive to provide safe haven to vulnerable populations, and not return individuals to countries where their lives or freedom would be at risk. Returning individuals to South Sudan would endanger their personal safety. The Biden administration has stated that championing America's values and human rights is one of its top priorities. We believe that allowing South Sudanese individuals to stay in the U.S. would

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/south-sudan/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/2023-08-01\\_USG\\_South\\_Sudan\\_Complex\\_Emergency\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_5\\_1.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/2023-08-01_USG_South_Sudan_Complex_Emergency_Fact_Sheet_5_1.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/protection-cluster-south-sudan-conflict-and-food-insecurity-may-2023-0#:~:text=In%20the%20lean%20season%20projection,and%20Fangak%20counties%20of%20Jong> and <https://www.wfp.org/emergencies/south-sudan-emergency>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unrefugees.org/news/south-sudan-refugee-crisis-explained/#:~:text=Nearly%202.32%20million%20South%20Sudanese,refugee%20crisis%20in%20the%20world>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/2023-08-01\\_USG\\_South\\_Sudan\\_Complex\\_Emergency\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_5\\_1.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/2023-08-01_USG_South_Sudan_Complex_Emergency_Fact_Sheet_5_1.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/12/clouds-gather-over-south-sudan-as-battles-rage-next-door>

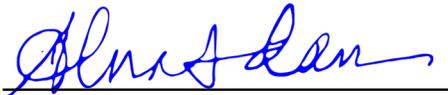
demonstrate our commitment to human rights and provide them with the stability and safety they would not experience in South Sudan.

We strongly urge you to extend and redesignate South Sudan for Temporary Protected Status in addition to publishing the Federal Register Notice in a timely manner. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



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



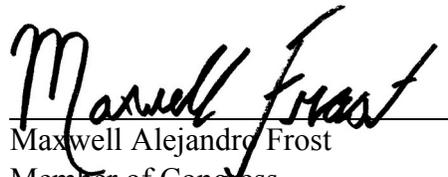
Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress



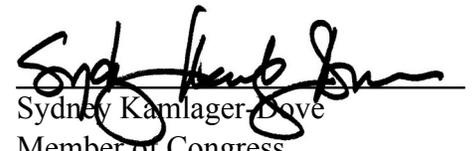
Jesus G. "Chuy" Garcia  
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



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



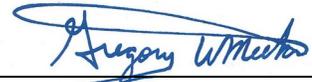
Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
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Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
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Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

October 6, 2023

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Pingree:

Thank you for your September 1, 2023 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requesting an extension and redesignation of South Sudan for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). I am responding on behalf of the Department, as U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is principally responsible for advising the Secretary on TPS and its implementation.

On September 5, 2023, after careful consideration, including a thorough review of the country conditions and consultation with interagency partners, Secretary Mayorkas announced the extension and redesignation of South Sudan for 18 months on the basis of ongoing armed conflict and extraordinary and temporary conditions.<sup>1</sup> This extension and redesignation is effective from November 4, 2023, through May 3, 2025. On September 6, 2023, DHS published a *Federal Register* notice detailing the announcement and providing providing instructions for TPS registration and re-registration, including applicable deadlines.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to TPS, USCIS offers support to assist eligible South Sudan nationals affected by conditions there, including the following:

- Change or extension of nonimmigrant status if eligible South Sudan 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;
- Flexibility for those who 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 conditions; and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2023/09/05/secretary-mayorkas-extends-and-redesignates-temporary-protected-status-south-sudan>

<sup>2</sup> 88 Fed. Reg. 60,971 (Sept. 6, 2023) (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/09/06/2023-19312/extension-and-redesignation-of-south-sudan-for-temporary-protected-status>).

- Replacement of lost or damaged immigration or travel documents issued by USCIS, such as a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).

More information on these options is available under “Immigration Relief in Emergencies or Unforeseen Circumstances” on our website at <https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/immigration-relief-in-emergencies-or-unforeseen-circumstances>.

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 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