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Secretary Mayorkas Designates Cameroon for Temporary Protected Status

On April 15th, DHS [announced](#) that Cameroonians already residing in the US as of April 14th are eligible for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). [This decision](#) arose from the recent rise in attacks by the Islamist military group Boko Haram, along with the longstanding internal conflict between the country's English-speaking minority and French-speaking majority. The civil war in Cameroon that first erupted in 2016 and significantly intensified last year, has triggered a "humanitarian crisis" of economic and food insecurity. The ongoing violence has led to "several hundred thousand displaced Cameroonians without access to schools, hospitals, and other critical services."

[The designation](#) was based on two out of the three criteria under TPS: (1) an ongoing armed conflict, and (2) extraordinary and temporary conditions in Cameroon that prevent Cameroonian nationals, and those of no nationality who last habitually resided in Cameroon, from returning to Cameroon safely. TPS beneficiaries are shielded from deportation and are eligible for work permits during the 18-month period. DHS estimated that approximately 11,700 Cameroonians may receive protection under this designation.

The announcement by DHS Secretary Mayorkas comes after persistent advocacy by human rights groups such as Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (a coalition of more than 230 national organizations) which recently called for the "immediate designation" of TPS for Cameroon, citing a report by Human Rights Watch that documented abuse of deported immigrants and their family members by government security forces. According to [immigration advocates](#), this treatment fits within a larger pattern of discrimination against Black immigrants. The American Immigration Council asserted that "Granting TPS for Cameroon is a vital step toward addressing the needs of Black immigrants."

By Genesis Iscoa, Legal Intern