

October 27, 2017

The Honorable Elaine C. Duke  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Duke,

We the 121 undersigned faith-based, legal, non-profit, academic, and other organizations from across the country condemn your decision to terminate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Sudan. We urge you to reconsider and extend TPS for Sudan for 18 months.

On November 4, 1997, the Attorney General designated Sudan for TPS due to: (1) an ongoing armed conflict, and that because of such conflict, requiring the return of nationals to Sudan would pose a serious threat to their personal safety; and, (2) extraordinary and temporary conditions within Sudan that prevented nationals from returning in safety. Since then, this designation has been extended and/or redesignated consistently, with the last redesignation being in 2013 and the last extension coming in 2016. In 2016, the Federal Register Notice extending TPS for Sudan noted that, “[t]he political and humanitarian situation in Sudan continues to be volatile and dangerous with internal armed conflicts in Darfur and in the Two Areas (South Kordofan and Blue Nile states). Reports of violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law persist, with those reports indicating that such violations and abuses have been largely perpetrated by the Sudanese government forces and pro-government militias against civilians.”

These country conditions have not changed. While the Federal Register notice terminating the Sudan designation (which was bizarrely retracted and re-published weeks later) argues that cessation of hostilities declarations have led to a decline in violence, this is simply not the case. In fact, a Human Rights Watch report from May 2017 notes that, “Sudanese Armed Forces and aligned forces, notably the newly created Rapid Support Forces, have continued to attack civilians in Darfur, Southern Kordofan, and Blue Nile with utter impunity”<sup>1</sup> and that national security agents continue to “engage in entrenched patterns of repression, targeting civil society leaders, human rights activists, and students for harassment, arbitrary detentions, and torture; restricting civil society organizations and independent media; and using lethal force to disperse protesters, killing hundreds in broad daylight.”<sup>2</sup>

Most recently, in September 2017, the Sudanese government attacked the Kalma Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Darfur. The attack was an especially egregious demonstration of the government’s atrocious human rights record and illustrates the continuing volatility of the situation on the ground. In fact, the U.S. Embassy in Sudan issued a statement condemning the attack, noting its deep concern with, “the excessive use of force by government forces in the September 22 clashes with internally displaced persons at Kalma camp in South Darfur” and calling on the Sudanese government to, “immediately launch a thorough and transparent investigation of the incident in which Sudanese security forces reportedly fired upon IDPs resulting in five deaths of both men and women and more than 26 injured.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Human Rights Benchmarks for Sudan: Eight Ways to Measure Progress* (May 3, 2017), [https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/05/03/human-rights-benchmarks-sudan#\\_ftnref38](https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/05/03/human-rights-benchmarks-sudan#_ftnref38)

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Embassy Khartoum, <https://m.facebook.com/khartoum.usembassy/posts/1687306041313968>

The Federal Register notice also notes that, “[as] a result of *continuing armed conflict* in these regions, hundreds of thousands of Sudanese have fled to neighboring countries.” Given this admission, it is inconceivable that Sudan no longer meets the conditions for TPS designation. In addition to those who have left Sudan, large numbers of IDPs are present in conflict-affected areas throughout the country. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IMDC), Sudan was home to **3.3 million IDPs** at the end of 2016. There is no evidence to suggest that this number has decreased since. According to OCHA, “[t]he Government of Sudan (GoS) estimates that 2.3 million people are displaced in conflict-affected areas. The United Nations and partners estimate that a further half a million displaced people live in host communities and settlements in Darfur. Armed movements in the Two Areas estimate that an additional 545,000 people are displaced in areas under their control.”<sup>4</sup> These facts make clear that returning Sudanese nationals to Sudan would pose an incredible threat to their safety and put their lives at risk.

The majority of Sudanese nationals with TPS have been living and working in the United States for almost 20 years. They have built lives and have been contributing to the American Dream. Sending these individuals back to a country still suffering from war and conflict is cruel, inhumane, and runs contrary to our American values. We urge you to reconsider your decision and extend TPS for Sudan for a full 18 months.

Sincerely,

Adhikaar  
Alianza Americas  
Ameinu (Our People)  
American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)  
American Federation of Teachers, Washington  
American Friends Service Committee Iowa  
Apostle Immigrant Services  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta  
Asian Services In Action, Inc.  
Assisting Latinos  
Barry Vega Law Group, Inc.  
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore  
Berkshire Immigrant Center  
Black Alliance for Just Immigration  
Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Boston  
Catholic Charities Bureau, Inc. Diocese of St. Augustine, Florida  
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington  
Catholic Charities Tompkins/Tioga  
Catholic Charities, Diocese of San Diego  
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.  
Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami  
Catholic Migration Services

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<sup>4</sup> United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview*, p. 7, [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/sudan\\_2017\\_humanitarian\\_needs\\_overview\\_0.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/sudan_2017_humanitarian_needs_overview_0.pdf)

Center for Gender & Refugee Studies  
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN-DC)  
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America  
Church Council of Greater Seattle  
Church of the Brethren  
Church World Service  
Colectiva Legal del Pueblo  
Comunidad Colectiva  
Council on American Islamic Relations - New York  
Detention Watch Network  
Diocesan Migrant & Refugee Services, Inc.  
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries  
DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
El Centro de la Raza  
Florida Immigrant Coalition, Inc.  
Franciscan Action Network  
Gainesville Interfaith Alliance for Immigrant Justice  
Global Justice Clinic, NYU School of Law  
Global Unity Project  
Haitian Community Partnership, Inc.  
Health Care Access  
Hispanic Federation  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA-JPIC  
Iglesia Ministerios Ríos de Agua Viva UCC  
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota  
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center  
International Refugee Assistance Project at the Urban Justice Center  
IRIS - Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services  
Jesuit Social Research Institute  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Commission, Priests of the Sacred Heart, U.S. Province  
Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Center  
La Casa de Amistad  
Law Office of Malathi Benjamin PLC  
Law Offices of Angela L. Williams, LLC  
Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer  
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service  
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition  
Michigan Conference United Church of Christ  
Migrant Support Center - Catholic Charities of Jackson, Mississippi  
Migration & Refugee Services/Catholic Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana  
Murphy Initiative for Justice and Peace  
Muslim Youth Network  
National Partnership for New Americans  
National Religious Campaign Against Torture

National TPS Alliance  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
New York Immigration Coalition  
NOVA Friends of Refugees  
Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America  
Olivares Law Firm LLC  
OneAmerica  
Pax Christi Florida  
Perretta Law Office  
PICO National Network  
Pierce County Labor Community Services Agency  
Presentation Sisters at Caminando Juntos  
Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action  
Refugee & Immigration Services, Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri  
RefugeeOne  
Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Western American Province  
Sauti Yetu Center for African Women and Families  
SEIU 32BJ  
SEIU California  
SEIU Minnesota State Council  
SEIU United Healthcare Workers West Latino Caucus  
SEIU United Healthcare Workers West AFRAM - African Americans Caucus  
SEIU United Healthcare Workers West Asian Pacific American Caucus  
SEIU United Healthcare Workers West Lavender Caucus  
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)  
Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network (SIREN)  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership  
Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Institute Justice Team  
Sisters of Notre Dame  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston  
Sisters of St. Joseph, Third Order of St. Francis  
Solidarity Committee, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, West Midwest Community  
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)  
St. Francis Community Services  
St. James Cathedral Immigrant Assistance  
Success Is Yours  
Tacoma Migrant Justice  
Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition  
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society  
Thrive International Programs  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee  
UNITE HERE  
United We Dream  
Walla Walla Immigrant Rights Coalition  
Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network  
Washington State Religious Campaign Against Torture

We Belong Together  
Welcoming the Stranger-Diocese of Cleveland  
Women's Refugee Commission