

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 9, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
301 7th Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

We write to request that you protect Nigerian nationals currently in the United States by designating Nigeria for Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

Federal law provides authority to designate TPS in the case of ongoing armed conflict or extraordinary and temporary conditions. Specifically, the Immigration and Nationality Act provides discretionary authority to grant TPS when “there is an ongoing armed conflict within the state and, due to such conflict, requiring the return of aliens who are nationals of that state to that state (or to the part of the state) would pose a serious threat to their personal safety,” or when “there exist extraordinary and temporary conditions in the foreign state that prevent aliens who are nationals of the state from returning to the state in safety.”<sup>1</sup> Nigeria meets both the armed conflict and extraordinary and temporary conditions frameworks for TPS designation.

At present, Nigeria is facing an extraordinary level of insecurity in terms of the extent and protractedness of armed conflict. Ongoing armed conflict in Nigeria includes violent extremist insurgency in the northeast region by the terrorist groups Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa, intense gang fighting, violence between farmers and herders and an emergent separatist insurgency movement known as the Indigenous People of Biafra in the southeast region.<sup>2</sup> This armed conflict has recently escalated. Kidnapping and criminality have increased, often fueled by religious and intercommunal polarization.<sup>3</sup> According to the Centre for Democracy and Development, 109 people were killed amid recent election-related violence in February and March of this year.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> 8 U.S.C. § 1254a(b)(1).

<sup>2</sup> Tomás Husted, *Nigeria: Key Issues and U.S. Policy*, CONG. RES. SERVICE (Mar. 25, 2022), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47052>.

<sup>3</sup> Elian Peltier, “Ahead of Crucial Election, Security Crises and Kidnappings Plague Nigeria,” THE NEW YORK TIMES (Feb. 24, 2023), <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/24/world/africa/nigeria-election-kidnappings.html>.

<sup>4</sup> “Nigeria recorded 109 deaths in three months linked to 2023 elections – CDD,” PREMIUM TIMES (Mar. 18, 2023), <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/588325-nigeria-recorded-109-deaths-in-three-months-linked-to-2023-elections-cdd.html>.

The scale and geographic extent of insecurity in Nigeria is unprecedented in the country's history. Military operations are underway against insurgencies nationwide, and military forces have been deployed in each of Nigeria's 36 states to support internal security.

Nigeria's ongoing armed conflict has had a dramatic human cost. Estimates suggest the presence of between 3.1 million and 3.3 million internally displaced persons in Nigeria.<sup>5</sup> This does not include an additional 2.1 million "returnees," formerly displaced people who have returned to their home areas but may not be fully resettled. An additional 336,900 individuals are refugees—that is, displaced outside of Nigeria (mostly in neighboring Niger and Chad). Of particular concern, thousands of children in Nigeria have recently been kidnapped, forcibly recruited, injured or killed by Boko Haram and other terrorist groups.<sup>6</sup>

The White House has acknowledged the armed conflict and humanitarian crisis in Nigeria,<sup>7</sup> and the State Department has urged travelers to reconsider travel to Nigeria due to crime, terrorism, civil unrest and kidnapping.<sup>8</sup> We urge you to designate Nigeria for Temporary Protected Status.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



---

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

---

<sup>5</sup> "Nigeria," CIA WORLD FACTBOOK (Apr. 11, 2023), <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/nigeria/#transnational-issues>; "UNHCR Nigeria: All Population Snapshot," UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (Apr. 18, 2023), <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/100139>.

<sup>6</sup> "Conflict in NE Nigeria still affects children 9 years after Chibok girls 'nightmare': UNICEF," UN NEWS (Apr. 14, 2023), <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/04/1135662>.

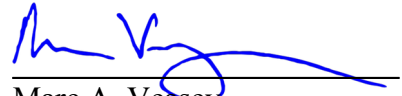
<sup>7</sup> "U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan African," THE WHITE HOUSE (Aug. 2022), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/U.S.-Strategy-Toward-Sub-Saharan-Africa-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> "Nigeria Travel Advisory," U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, BUREAU OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS (Jan. 20, 2023), <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/nigeria-travel-advisory.html>.



---

Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



---

Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



---

Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



---

Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
Member of Congress



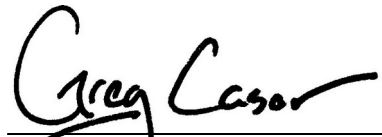
---

Cori Bush  
Member of Congress



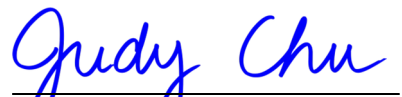
---

André Carson  
Member of Congress



---

Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



---

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



---


Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress




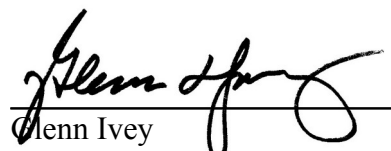
---


Valerie P. Foushee  
Member of Congress


  
Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress


  
Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress

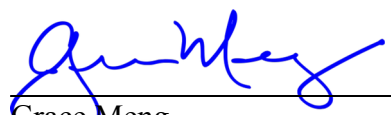
  
Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress


  
Glenn Ivey  
Member of Congress

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

  
Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

  
James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

  
Grace Meng  
Member of Congress

  
Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress

  
C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress

*Bonnie Watson Coleman*

---

Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress

*Frederica S. Wilson*

---

Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress