



**100+ ORGANIZATIONS URGE SECRETARY MAYORKAS TO DESIGNATE
TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS AND SPECIAL STUDENT RELIEF FOR
ETHIOPIA**

Community leaders and advocates call to secure at least 30,000 Ethiopians in the U.S.

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WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today, 113 organizations [wrote a letter to Secretary Mayorkas](#) and his counterparts in the administration to review country conditions in Ethiopia and designate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Special Student Relief (SSR) for those unable to safely return. The Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure Administrative Advocacy Coalition ([TPS-DED AAC](#)), along with its partners, called for an immediate 18 month designation in response to the escalating humanitarian crisis and violence unfolding in the country.

Ethiopia is currently experiencing one of the most catastrophic humanitarian disasters in the world. The ongoing armed conflict in Ethiopia has been [marked by violence against civilians](#) in conflict, ethnic cleansing, torture, arbitrary arrests, and gender-based violence as a weapon of war. There is widespread [targeted destruction of public infrastructure](#), including health care facilities and schools. The humanitarian crisis and climate crisis have resulted in [food insecurity](#), [lack of access to medicine and fuel](#), and the [worst drought](#) documented in the country in the last forty years.

An estimated [30,000](#) Ethiopians living in the United States would benefit from a TPS designation, and an additional [2,166](#) Ethiopian students in the country who are directly impacted by the crisis back home would be given relief under SSR. The repeated calls for action have previously been joined by [Members of Congress](#). The delay in designating TPS in the face of the extreme conditions in Ethiopia flies in the face of Congressional intent and calls into question racial disparity in TPS decision-making.

Tsehaye Teferra, Ph.D., President and CEO of the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC) stated: “In the face of the fresh outbreak of civil war, characterized by continuous air raids and drone strikes on hospitals, child-care centers, and civilian targets in an already war-torn and famine-ravaged region, we are urging, once more, for a proportionate humanitarian response from the United States government. There have been documented cases and reports of extra-judicial killings, massacres, gender-based violence, forced displacement, and the internment of civilians in Ethiopia. Moreover, more than five million people in the region are facing famine. The situation calls for swift humanitarian action. It is vitally important to designate TPS for Ethiopians who have fled the civil war.”

Dr. Mehari Taddele Maru, scholar of peace and security, governance, human rights, and migration issues stated:

“The war on Tigray and other parts of Ethiopia will reach the two-year mark on November 4th 2022. According to Ghent University in Belgium, the war has claimed over half a million lives, left over 5.6 million Ethiopians in Tigray starving, tens of thousands in arbitrary detention, and

displaced another 2 million Ethiopians. All those who oppose the war are considered enemies of the state, hunted down, jailed, or summarily executed. The Report of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia on September 19th, 2022, to the 51st Human Rights Council Session in Geneva, concluded that war crimes, crimes against humanity, and acts with "the intent to destroy the Tigrayan ethnicity" were committed. This corroborates the testimony of Secretary of State Antony Blinken before the US Congress on March 10th 2021, unambiguously confirming that the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments have committed "acts of ethnic cleansing" in Ethiopia. In light of these facts established by the UN and US governments that threaten the life and fundamental freedoms of thousands of Ethiopians, the Biden administration should grant Temporary Protected Status to Ethiopian nationals in the United States."

Lora Adams, Campaign Coordinator of the TPS DED AAC stated: "There is nothing temporary about the lives that Ethiopians in the United States have built here. They have grown homes and businesses and are integral to the social fabric of their communities. Ethiopians in the United States need humanitarian protection, and the delay is telling. Ethiopia is in the throes of a massive crisis and is in no position to receive an estimated 30,000 of its citizens in the middle of worsening conflict. TPS protects recipients from deportation to untenable conditions, allowing them to work and live without fear."

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The [TPS-DED AAC](#) is a national coalition of more than 100 organizations with deep expertise in law and policy surrounding TPS and DED. Member organizations range from community-based organizations directly serving impacted communities in the United States to international NGOs, working in and providing insight from affected countries.