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Acting Secretary Elaine Duke Announcement On Temporary Protected Status For Haiti



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WASHINGTON— Today, Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Elaine Duke announced her decision to terminate the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for Haiti with a delayed effective date of 18 months to allow for an orderly transition before the designation terminates on July 22, 2019. This decision follows then-Secretary Kelly’s announcement in May 2017 that Haiti had made considerable progress, and that the country’s designation will likely not be extended past six months.

The decision to terminate TPS for Haiti was made after a review of the conditions upon which the country’s original designation were based and whether those extraordinary but temporary conditions prevented Haiti from adequately handling the return of their nationals, as required by statute. Based on all available information, including recommendations received as part of an inter-agency consultation process, Acting Secretary Duke determined that those extraordinary but temporary conditions caused by the 2010 earthquake no longer exist. Thus, under the applicable statute, the current TPS designation must be terminated.

Acting Secretary Duke met with Haitian Foreign Minister Antonio Rodrigue and Haitian Ambassador to the United States Paul Altidor recently in Washington to discuss the issue.

In 2017 alone, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services conducted extensive outreach to the Haitian communities throughout the country. These include but are not limited to community forums on TPS, panel discussions with Haitian community organizers, stakeholder teleconferences, regular meetings with TPS beneficiaries, news releases to the Haitian community, meetings with Haitian government officials, meetings at local churches, and listening sessions.

Since the 2010 earthquake, the number of displaced people in Haiti has decreased by 97 percent. Significant steps have been taken to improve the stability and quality of life for Haitian citizens, and Haiti is able to safely receive traditional levels of returned citizens. Haiti has also demonstrated a commitment to adequately prepare for when the country’s TPS designation is terminated.

In May 2017, then-Secretary Kelly announced a limited extension for Haiti’s TPS designation, stating that he believed there were indications that Haiti – if its recovery from the 2010 earthquake continued at pace – may not warrant further TPS extension past January 2018. At the time, then-Secretary Kelly stated that his six-month extension should give Haitian TPS recipients living in the United States time to attain travel documents and make other necessary arrangements for their ultimate departure from the United States, and should also provide the Haitian government with the time it needs to prepare for the future repatriation of all current TPS recipients.

To allow for an orderly transition, the effective date of the termination of TPS for Haiti will be delayed 18 months. This will provide time for individuals with TPS to arrange for their departure or to seek an alternative lawful immigration status in the United States, if eligible. It will also provide time for Haiti to prepare for the return and reintegration of their citizens. During this timeframe, USCIS will work with the State Department, other DHS components and the Government of Haiti to help educate relevant stakeholders and facilitate an orderly transition.

Haitians with TPS will be required to reapply for Employment Authorization Documents in order to legally work in the United States until the end of the respective termination or extension periods. Further details about this termination for TPS will appear in a Federal Register notice.

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