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By ESEC at 3:00 pm, Dec 03, 2024



ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

Office of the Archbishop

November 26, 2024

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
NW, Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

I write today to urge you to redesignate TPS for Nicaragua. Last year, there was hope in the Nicaraguan community that this administration was ready to redesignate TPS. However, this hope has so far failed to materialize. Yet since that time, the situation has deteriorated even further. Attacks on Catholics and the Catholic Church have intensified.

The 2023 report by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, documents that since 2018 the assault on the clergy has worsened². While the persecution began in 2018, 2022 was the first year that the regime detained and jailed members of the clergy. Earlier this year, Pope Francis highlighted the growing attacks on the Catholic Church underscoring the need for basic religious freedom in Nicaragua. Here in the Archdiocese of Miami, we have welcomed and assisted many political prisoners, including religious leaders, released through the efforts of the US State Department.

The 2022 Religious Freedom Report from Secretary of State Anthony Blinken was alarming. “In February, the National Assembly ordered the closure of the Catholic University of Dry Tropic Farming and Livestock, a university run by a retired Catholic bishop critical of the government. The government revoked the broadcasting licenses of three television stations and ten radio stations that the Catholic Church operated.” Universities, like the Central American University, have been seized and now operate under the government. Freedom of thought, like freedom of religion, is being strangled in Nicaragua. AP News reported that the Central American University was condemned by the government as a center of terrorism. Students, who were excited to continue their studies, were purged. The Holy See was expelled from Nicaragua, and the clergy is left vulnerable.

It is my fervent hope and prayer that this administration will redesignate Temporary Protected Status for Nicaragua. The need is great, the time is now, the capacity to do the right thing is yours.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Thomas Wenski
Archbishop of Miami

¹ Pope Raises Concerns About Church in Nicaragua, New York Times, January 1st, 2024

² 2023 USCIRF Annual Report, USCIRF–RECOMMENDED FOR COUNTRIES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN (CPC)

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ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

Office of the Archbishop

November 26, 2024

Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary of Homeland
Security
U.S. Department of
Security
301 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Mr. Mayorkas:

I write today to urge you to redesignate TPS for Nicaragua. Last year, there was hope in the Nicaraguan community that this administration was ready to redesignate TPS. However, this hope has so far failed to materialize. Yet since that time, the situation has deteriorated even further. Attacks on Catholics and the Catholic Church have intensified.

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9401 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami Shores, Florida 33138
Telephone: 305-762-1233 Facsimile: 305-757-3947

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ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

Office of the Archbishop

November 26, 2024

Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW,
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Blinken:

I write today to urge you to redesignate TPS for Nicaragua. Last year, there was hope in the Nicaraguan community that this administration was ready to redesignate TPS. However, this hope has so far failed to materialize. Yet since that time, the situation has deteriorated even further. Attacks on Catholics and the Catholic Church have intensified.

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**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

January 6, 2025

Most Reverend Thomas Wenski
Archbishop of Miami
9401 Biscayne Blvd.
Miami Shores, FL 33138

Dear Archbishop Wenski:

Thank you for your November 26, 2024 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requesting that Nicaragua be redesignated for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). I am responding on behalf of the Department.

I appreciate the concerns you have outlined regarding the situation in Nicaragua and your interest in its redesignation for TPS. Please be assured DHS is monitoring conditions in Nicaragua. DHS is committed to administering its programs, including TPS, in an equitable manner, pursuant to specific statutory criteria. As required by the statute, at least 60 days before the expiration of a foreign state's TPS designation or extension, the Secretary, after consultation with appropriate Government agencies, must review the conditions in the foreign state to determine whether conditions for the TPS designation continue to be met.¹ DHS will consult with other government agencies to explore whether to extend or redesignate Nicaragua for TPS.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) also offers support that may be available upon request to assist eligible noncitizens affected by emergencies or unforeseen circumstances.² Such support may include:

- Change or extension of nonimmigrant status if eligible nationals are currently in the United States, even if the request is filed after the authorized period of admission has expired;
- Expedited processing of requests for advance parole documents;
- Expedited adjudication of requests for off-campus employment authorization for F-1 students experiencing severe economic hardship;
- Expedited adjudication of employment authorization applications, where appropriate;

¹ See Immigration and Nationality Act sec. 244(b)(1), (b)(3), 8 U.S.C. 1254a(b)(1), (b)(3).

² Additional information is available on the USCIS website at uscis.gov/newsroom/immigration-relief-in-emergencies-or-unforeseen-circumstances.

Most Reverend Thomas Wenski

Page 2

- Assistance if applicants received a Request for Evidence or a Notice of Intent to Deny and were unable to appear for an interview, submit evidence, or respond in a timely manner because of the emergency or unforeseen circumstances; and
- Replacement of lost or damaged immigration or travel documents issued by USCIS, such as a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact the USCIS Public Engagement Division by email at public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ur M. Jaddou", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ur M. Jaddou
Director