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Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Somalia and Yemen Extended, But Not Redesignated – A Life-Threatening Mistake

January 22, 2020 — On January 17, 2020, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that it will [extend, but not redesignate](#), Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Somali nationals living in the United States for an additional 18 months through September 17, 2021.

The administration's decision to extend but not redesignate TPS for Somalia means that only Somali nationals who currently reside in the United States and who already have TPS are eligible for continued protections. Those who have arrived in the United States since 2012 cannot apply for TPS protection.

"Although we are pleased that TPS for Somalia was extended, to not redesignate is a life-threatening mistake," said Veena Iyer, executive director of the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM). "Redesignation is critical because those who have arrived from Somalia since 2012 have the same need for security and protection from deportation after fleeing dangerous country conditions and one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world."

Violent conflict continues in Somalia, with al-Shabaab's almost-daily attacks killing 1,600 people in 2019. Somali-Canadian activist and aid worker Almaas Elman became one of those victims of violence when she was [killed in Mogadishu in November](#).

More than two million Somalis have been displaced from their homes. In addition, as the [Department of Homeland Security itself noted in its 2018 extension of TPS](#):

"Decades of insecurity have devastated Somalia's physical infrastructure. Humanitarian agencies cite the need for the rehabilitation of crucial infrastructure, including airstrips, roads, and ports."

Earlier this month, DHS announced that it will extend, but not redesignate, TPS for an additional 18 months [for Yemeni nationals living in the United States who already have TPS status](#), despite the worsening humanitarian situation in Yemen.

One of the reasons for granting TPS is an ongoing armed conflict that poses a serious threat to the personal safety of nationals of the affected country. Somalia's state of internal war has

continued since the United States first designated TPS for Somalia in 1991, and remains an ongoing threat today. Yemen continues in a state of war, [which BBC calls](#) "the world's worst man-made humanitarian disaster."

The U.S. government deems both Somalia and Yemen too dangerous to travel to for Americans and yet it leaves Somalis and Yemenis stranded by not redesignating TPS.

Minnesota is home to the largest population of Somalis outside of Somalia. They have lived here for decades, working, contributing to their communities, and raising families. Somalis, Yemenis, and others who now have only the tenuous and temporary protection of TPS need the security of a path to permanent legal residence. Congress must act to create a path to permanent legal residence for all people with TPS.