

May 30, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Kelly:

As development and humanitarian organizations working in Haiti and US-based organizations advocating on behalf of Haitians in their country and ours, we welcomed your recent decision to extend Temporary Protected Status for 58,000 Haitians living in the United States for an additional six months.

We would very much welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the challenges currently facing Haiti, which have a bearing on the ability of Haitians currently in the United States to safely return home at the end of that extension. We would also like to make some suggestions as to places and organizations that you should visit in your upcoming trip.

First, we urge you to go to Canaan, which started as a camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) who had nowhere else to live after the 2010 earthquake, especially as other IDP camps were closed. While it is now recognized as a formal settlement, it is a town in name only. [Tens of thousands of people](#) live there in extremely difficult conditions, with precarious and hazardous infrastructure, and little access to major employment centers.

Second, we encourage you to visit one or more of the 31 sites housing post-earthquake internally displaced persons. According to the [International Organization for Migration](#), there are still 12,000 households, consisting of nearly 47,000 persons, who are living in formal IDP camps, which consist of tents or temporary shelters. More than half of the sites are located in the capital of Port-au-Prince or in nearby suburbs such as Carrefour, Cité Soleil, Delmas, Pétienville, and Tabarre. Both Canaan and these 31 sites demonstrate the lack of affordable decent housing in and near Haiti's capital, as well as lack of access to basic services such as water, electricity, and latrines.

Third, we hope you will take a firsthand look at the devastation caused by Hurricane Matthew this past October, by visiting Grande Anse. [The powerful storm](#), the worst hurricane to strike Haiti in 52 years, killed a thousand Haitians and affected nearly 20 percent of the country's population, destroying housing, infrastructure, and the crops and livestock of one of Haiti's key agricultural zones. It left hundreds of thousands without food or drinking water, exacerbated Haiti's cholera epidemic, and, combined with three years of punishing drought, has created a serious food insecurity crisis in Haiti. The hurricane will require humanitarian assistance over the next 18 months yet donors have only provided about 16 percent of the relief assistance that Haiti needs, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

We further hope you will learn about the cholera epidemic in Haiti, which the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has declared "the worst cholera outbreak in recent history." Members of the UN Stabilization Mission (MINUSTAH) introduced the disease, which had not been known in Haiti for at least 100 years, in October 2010. OCHA recently reported that cholera, which to date has killed 9,700 and sickened over 800,000 Haitians, remains a serious threat for the most vulnerable Haitians, with a 32 percent increase in cases and 56 percent increase in deaths over the past year. This extraordinary crisis and other public health issues will persist, given lack of safe water and sanitation, until the UN, which recently acknowledged

responsibility for the cholera outbreak, fulfills its as-yet-woefully-underfunded commitment to eradicate the disease from the country.

We urge you as well to visit the Haitian-Dominican border. Four years ago, the Dominican government retroactively stripped thousands of people of Haitian ancestry of their citizenship. [Some 100,000 persons of Haitian ancestry have left the Dominican Republic](#) either voluntarily or via deportation, and the Dominican authorities have threatened to deport [another 100,000](#). Haiti simply cannot handle the volume of people. For example, those arriving in Haiti face an unemployment or underemployment rate of [66 percent \(or two-thirds\)](#) and there are limited opportunities.

Finally, we recommend you meet with Haiti's leading microfinance institution, [Fonkoze](#), which helps the country's poorest people gain access to credit and other financial services. Fonkoze mobilizes its resources in part from transfers from the Haitian Diaspora. Its staff can tell you about the importance of transfers from people like those living in the United States with TPS. The money they send back to family and organizations like Fonkoze accounts for as much as [a quarter of Haiti's economy](#). If those who are protected by TPS are forced to return prematurely, Haiti will not be able to safely assimilate them or replace their crucial remittances, which sustain hundreds of thousands of family members in Haiti.

Meeting with these organizations will help you to make a thoroughly informed decision on whether to extend TPS designation to Haiti in the coming months. We believe that you will determine that the country is unable to adequately handle the return of its nationals at this time.

We would be happy to provide you with the contact information of the aforementioned and other organizations working on critical TPS-relevant issues in Haiti (see attachment) -- including the plight of those internally displaced by the earthquake, the unchecked cholera epidemic, Hurricane Matthew's devastation, and the food insecurity crisis -- and facilitate your meeting with them. Upon your return, we ask to meet with you to discuss these issues further.

Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

American Baptist Home Mission Societies
 American Friends Service Committee
 Boston Missionary Baptist Community Center, Inc.
 Catholic Legal Service, Archdiocese of Miami
 Center for Self Sufficiency
 Christian Community Development Association
 Church World Service
 Disciples Home Missions
 Fanm Ayisyen Nan Miyami/Haitian Women of Miami
 Fondasyon Mapou
 Franciscan Action Network
 GADH (Group of Action for the Defense of Human Rights)
 Global Justice Clinic, New York University School of Law (This communication does not purport
 To represent the institutional views, if any, of New York University)
 Grassroots International
 Haitian American Democratic Club
 Haitian Bridge Alliance
 Haitian Lawyers Association of South Florida

Haitian Neighborhood Center, Sant La
Halec
HIAS
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Immigration Law Center
NY NJ Joint Board, Workers United
Oxfam
Plant With Purpose
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Protect the People (PTP)
Refugees International
SEIU Florida
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Sisters of Mercy Institute Justice Team
Sosyete Koukouy
The Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society