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# ECDC NEWS

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## ECDC President Urges Immediate TPS Status for Haitians

Even as thousands of internally displaced Haitians were seeking refuge and survival in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake that struck their nation on January 12, as many as 30,000 of their fellow countrymen living in the United States as undocumented immigrants were awaiting forcible deportation under immigration policies established by the Bush administration. And while the Obama administration announced a “pause” in the deportation scheme, refugee and human rights advocates are urging that they be granted immediate Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

“With profound gratitude and admiration for the way President Obama and the American people have mobilized public and private resources in response to the crisis, a mere pause in the deportation program is wholly inadequate,” said ECDC President Tsehaye Teferra. “With TPS status, they will be able to work legally to support their surviving family members and help to restore their shattered nation.”

TPS is granted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to eligible nationals of countries that cannot safely return to their homelands because of armed conflict, environmental disaster, or other extraordinary and temporary conditions. It is currently available to immigrants from El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Somalia and Sudan.

“While the status grant to Somalia and Sudan resulted from the conflict-related causes traditionally associated with refugee flows” Teferra noted, “the grant to the Latin American countries resulted from natural disasters—hurricanes and earthquakes—akin to what Haiti is experiencing. From the apparent magnitude of human and economic losses, Haiti is no less deserving.”

ECDC is one of eleven national resettlement agencies working in partnership with the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and the Department of State in resettling refugees and providing reception and placement services.

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